

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Handbook For Students & Parents (INCLUDING ADDENDUMS)

2026-2027

“Be Brave In Christ”

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For
Students & Parents
(INCLUDING ADDENDUMS)
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“DISCIPLES OF CHRIST”

MISSION STATEMENT
OF
ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL, STAFF, PARENTS, AND PARISH FAMILY ARE
COMMITTED TO TEACHING QUALITY, CHRIST-CENTERED CATHOLIC BELIEFS, AND
VALUES.

OUR UNIQUENESS IS DISPLAYED IN OUR STAFF DEDICATION,
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, AND COMMUNITY PRIDE WHICH MAKE
ST. JOSEPH’S A LEADER IN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, SOCIAL
INTEGRATION AND APPRECIATION OF EACH INDIVIDUAL AS A CHILD
OF GOD.

ST JOSEPH CATHOLIC SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Our philosophy of education is based on the belief that all truth is from God, the divine Creator. We are committed to teaching students that God’s truth is the integrating factor for all of life. Therefore, our educational curriculum encompasses religious and general academic studies.

St. Joseph Catholic School is part of a Catholic Parish Community, made up of individuals striving for the common goal to be “grounded in the values and truths of our Catholic faith”. We are concerned with modeling the values and principles of Jesus and instilling these in our children. In partnership with parents, who are the primary educators, we believe that given the right conditions, all children can learn. Teachers and families work together to empower the whole child to become:

A faithful witness of Jesus Christ;
a seeker of academic, moral, and ethical excellence;
an independent yet cooperative learner;
and a global citizen in service to the common good.

St. Joseph School is accredited by the Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools!

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INTRODUCTION

“Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you, he will never let the righteous be shaken.”

This quote from Psalm 55:22 truly puts things into perspective. As “Disciples of Christ” we must truly live by those words each and every day and hold steadfast to our Catholic beliefs and values.

The following handbook provides information to our families, and staff members, and serves as a point of reference. At any time families have questions or other inquiries, we urge that you follow the steps provided in contacting the staff member and/or administration.

Please note the addendums located at the end of this document for further information as we continue our efforts to provide a safe and proper learning environment for the children of St. Joseph School.

SCHOOL HOURS MONDAY-FRIDAY

7:40a	First Bell
7:45a	Second Bell
11:30a-12:05p	Lunch-All Grades
12:05p	Bell/Classes resume
2:45p	Dismissal

OFFICE/SCHOOL HOURS

The school office hours are 7:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The daily instructional hours are 7:40 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Monday through Friday during the school year. Teachers/staff may be expected to work outside of these hours and days.

Teacher hours are 7:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m. daily. Parents are strongly encouraged and welcomed to make appointments to discuss needs or concerns they may have during these times.

DAYS OF INSTRUCTION/CALENDAR

St. Joseph Catholic School follows the school year calendar as set forth by the Diocese of Grand Rapids and Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools. This calendar meets state guidelines for 180 days and hours of instruction. These guidelines are also in accordance with Diocesan policies concerning required days/hours of instruction.

VISITORS

All visitors to St. Joseph Catholic School are welcome. For the safety of our children, all doors are locked; parents and visitors are asked to ring the entrance bell for access and sign in. Items brought to school for students must be dropped off in the school office.

ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT POLICY

General Policies

Admission of students to St. Joseph Catholic School shall be given the following consideration:

1. Present students
2. Sisters or brothers of students currently attending St. Joseph Catholic School
3. Children of active parishioners of St. Joseph Parish
4. Any child of the Catholic faith, whose parents demonstrate interest in having them attend St. Joseph Catholic School
5. Any child whose parents demonstrate interest in having their child attend St. Joseph Catholic School

*No child whose parents desire to enroll him/her in St. Joseph Catholic School shall be denied admission on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

The parents or legal guardians must provide the school administrator with the following information:

1. Legal verification of your child's birth
2. Academic records from the school previously attended
3. Your child's baptismal record (if applicable)
4. Current health certificate (immunizations) from previous school year or family doctor
5. DOGR Enrollments (Infinite Campus)

Children with Special Educational Needs

Children with special educational needs requiring special class placement are accepted if their needs can be adequately met at St. Joseph Catholic School. Initial enrollment should be on a tentative basis with the understanding that in the event the placement proves unsatisfactory, the parents will agree to enroll their child in another school system which can provide for the needs of their child.

Financial Assistance

Assistance may be made available at the discretion of the pastor and principal, to those who demonstrate need and meet requirements as set by the above-mentioned authorities. Families are encouraged to apply for assistance through the Kremer Foundation, and/or Bishop's Scholarship Fund offered by the Diocese of Grand Rapids.

Weapons Policy Violations

A student seeking admission to St. Joseph Catholic School who has been expelled from another school for a confirmed violation of a weapon policy will be refused admission to St. Joseph's.

Non-Admission of Students Due to Tuition Delinquency (DOGR revised 2014)

-See under Tuition

ENTERING AND LEAVING THE BUILDING

Any student entering the building late or leaving early must report to the school office before going to their classroom or leaving for an appointment. A student(s) who must leave for an appointment or other reason must bring a permission slip to school or the parent must call or email to inform the school office. **Parents are asked to report to the school office when picking up a child or dropping an item off for the child. It is extremely important that you sign in or out at the school office.**

TARDIES & ABSENCES

Students are expected to be in their classrooms when school starts. If a student is late three times in a quarter (unexcused), they will be issued a detention session which will be held at a scheduled time. A student arriving after 9:40 a.m. will be marked absent for ½ day. A student arriving after 11:40 a.m. is considered absent for the entire day.

Excessive Absences

Students: If a student is excessive with absences (excused or unexcused) and exceeds more than ten absences in a nine-week period, steps will need to take place to determine a course of action to review any circumstances:

- Present a doctor's note indicating that the student could not attend school
- Proof of a court ordered appearance
- Present a plan in which the student agrees to make up the time he/she has lost.
The parents and review committee must agree upon this plan

The student will have one week to set up a hearing. After that time, if no hearing is arranged, the student will receive their adjusted grade.

Excused Absences

- Illness
- Appointment for health-related reasons
- Death in the Family
- Court ordered appearance
- Religious holiday
- Pre-arranged absences (family vacations)

Parents will need to provide the school with information for any pre-excused absence; under emergency conditions, parents should call the school office.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are absences not defined above or cleared through the principal or school office.

ATTENDANCE

If a student will be absent or tardy from school, parents are requested to please call the school office prior to 8:00a. To assure the safety of all our students: PARENTS MUST CALL, EMAIL, OR SEND A NOTE; WE CANNOT RELY ON SIBLINGS. When calling to inform the school of the student's illness, please provide the reason for the illness. If parents are not certain if their child has a cold, the flu, etc., please list his/her symptoms. A weekly report is issued to the Health Department listing all illnesses.

For a student to participate in athletic practices, game(s), or competition, the athlete must be in school for a half day, unless they have a pre-excused absence (i.e. doctor's appointment, dentist appointment, funeral, etc.). Exceptions are made only by the principal. For weekend games, tournaments or competitions, students must be in school a half day on the preceding Friday. St. Joseph Catholic School staff is not allowed to take a child home (i.e. homework, clothing, etc.).

MAKE-UP WORK FOR ABSENCES

It is the policy of St. Joseph Catholic School that students will have one day for each day absent to make up any work missed due to that absence. Work should be made up after the student returns to school. Please do not request student work until after the student returns to school and is over any illness.

EXTENDED ABSENCES:

Chronic illness – If a student is unable to attend school for a long period of time due to a serious or chronic illness, the parent(s) should meet with their child's teacher and/or the principal to discuss arrangements for modified or alternative assignments.

Guidelines for Sick Children Returning to School: Please follow the guidelines below to help protect your child and prevent the spread of illness to others.

Do not send your child to school if:

- They have had a fever (oral temperature above 100°F) within the past 24 hours. They must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication such as Tylenol or Motrin.
- They have vomited or had diarrhea in the past 24 hours.
- They show symptoms of a contagious illness (e.g., strep throat, conjunctivitis/pink eye, flu, or an undiagnosed rash).

Your child may return to school when:

- They have been fever-free for 24 hours without medication.
- They have not vomited or had diarrhea for 24 hours.
- If applicable, they have completed a 24-hour dose of antibiotics and/or have a doctor's note clearing them to return to school.

Vacations/extended absences not due to illness – While St. Joseph Catholic School appreciates and respects parent requests for student work ahead of time for planned absences, this approach is not practical for the student or the teacher. Students miss instruction time that has not yet occurred. This makes it impractical for teachers to assign work on subjects not yet covered by the teacher. This is especially true in the lower grades and in mathematics at all grade levels.

Teachers do not have an accurate way to estimate how much time a particular concept may take for a group of students to learn satisfactorily while a classmate is absent. Questions or situations may arise during instruction that teachers can instruct students on once they return to school.

Therefore, it is the policy of St. Joseph Catholic School that student work should be made up after the student returns from an absence due to vacation or not due to an illness. As with all other absences, students will have one day for each day missed to make up work. For example, if a student misses five days, they will have five days to make up missed work.

EMERGENCY DISMISSAL

St. Joseph Catholic School will close if Pewamo-Westphalia announces a closing due to weather conditions. Snow, bad weather and other emergencies will be announced on TV channels 6, 8, 10, 41, and 53 and also radio stations WFMK, WJIM, Q106, WILS, WITL, WVIC and several others. It is not always possible to contact some of the stations. * In the RARE event that school is canceled once students have arrived, please list on the Emergency Contact Form any person(s) who would have permission to pick up your child. The school will also make contact via e-mails through Infinite Campus, posts to Facebook, and by phone.

MEDICATIONS

The following definition of “medication” is adopted for use in this school: medication includes prescription, non-prescription and herbal medications, and includes those taken by mouth, by inhaler, those that are injected, and those applied as drops to eyes, nose, or medications applied to the skin. The following will be observed:

- The student’s parent/guardian will give the school written permission to administer medication.
- Written instructions from a physician, which include the name of the pupil, name of the medication, dosage of the medication, route of administration, and time the medication is to be administered to the pupil shall accompany the request and be kept on record by the school.
- Parental or guardian request/permission and a physician’s instructions for administration shall be renewed every school year.
- The building administrator will designate an individual(s) responsible for administering medications to pupils at school (in our case secretary/principal).
- Medications must be administered by one adult in the presence of a second adult, except when an emergency threatens the life or health of the pupil.
- All medications shall be kept in a labeled container as prepared by the pharmacy or physician with the pupil’s name, the name of the medication, dosage, and the frequency of administration.

POLICIES FOR SELF-ADMINISTRATION/SELF-POSSESSION OF MEDICATION:

The following definition of “self-administration/self-possession” is adopted for use in this school: Self-administration means that the pupil is able to consume or apply prescription and non-prescription medication in the manner directed by the physician without additional assistance or direction. Self-possession means that the pupil may carry medication on his/her person to allow for immediate and self-determined administration. For example, a pupil who requires the use of an inhaler for relief or prevention of asthma symptoms will be allowed to carry and use the inhaler if there is written approval from the pupil’s physician and parent/guardian on record at the school (as described in the Michigan Revised School Code, Section 380.1179). A pupil who is in possession of an inhaler under the above conditions shall have each of his/her teachers notified of this by the building administrator. For safety purposes, we prefer only inhalers and asthma medication to be in students’ possession.

MEDICAL TREATMENT RELEASE

- Parents are required to fill out a Medical Treatment Release Form.

MOMS’ HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

MOMS’ HOT LUNCH- For the 2026-2027 school year, like last year the hot lunch program is a full YES or NO option. This means that you will pay one price at the beginning of the year and be included in all of the year’s Wednesday hot lunches. However, this means there is no longer any picking and choosing of certain lunches. If you have a need for special arrangements, please contact: Emily Simon [517-285-6239](tel:517-285-6239)/brentsimon@gmail.com. Participation in this program is completely optional. If you choose not to participate, your child will need to bring a cold lunch everyday.

Cost: Wednesday Hot Lunch costs approximately \$3.00 per lunch (including dessert).

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO EMILY SIMON NO CASH PLEASE! **If you are facing financial difficulty, there are anonymous people who have offered to pay for your child's hot lunch. Please contact the school (confidentiality is observed).

The Wednesday Hot Lunch program is not run by St. Joseph School administration; it is run independently by parent volunteers, including all accounting and banking. The goal of the program is to continue the special and unique experience of a home-cooked meal and to give families a day off from packing lunches! We do not aspire to make money but to simply be sustainable and continue this experience for our St. Joseph School students! Anyone is welcome to view the accounting for the hot lunch program, at any time.

Young 5 Tuition
(2026-2027)
\$1,300 per child

Grades K-8 Tuition	
<u>\$2,999.00</u>	<u>1 child</u>
<u>\$4,850.00</u>	<u>2 children</u>
<u>\$6,000.00</u>	<u>3 children</u>
<u>\$6,650.00</u>	<u>4 children</u>
<u>\$7,000.00</u>	<u>5 children</u>

*** Tuition should be paid according to the tuition plan selected.**

Tuition Delinquency

Families failing to pay tuition from the previous school year will not be re/admitted to the school (DOGR 3161; adopted June 2014). Payment must be received 10 days prior to the beginning of school for delinquent families.

If the student is in their final year at school, he/she will not receive his/her diploma until payment is made; will not be eligible for a parish subsidy to any other Catholic school in the diocese until payment is made in full; will not have his/her completed records/transcripts released until payment is made in full.

At the end of the school year, all report cards and student folders will be held until tuition is paid in full. Please contact the office to discuss the matter and arrange to make payments. Report cards and files will be released if the family is making payments, as arranged with the school.

SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures will be taken by HR Imaging for the 2026-2027 school year. The following date is set: **Wednesday, September 9, 2026.**

CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the goal of St. Joseph to turn out respectful, honest and obedient students; therefore, under no circumstances will the following be allowed:

- Fighting - Swearing - Destruction of School property
- Disrespect for any school personnel including students and staff

- Any use of tobacco or alcohol

In keeping with our Mission Statement and to promote positive and productive learning, seven Christian behavior expectations have been adopted. They will be shared with all students at the beginning of the school year and reinforced throughout.

1. BE PROMPT AND PREPARED.

- A. Come on time.
- B. Come with needed materials.
- C. Come with assignments completed.

Be on guard, therefore, the Son of Man will come when you least expect it. - Luke 12:40

2. RESPECT AUTHORITY.

- A. Listen to authority and follow school rules.
- B. Follow directions promptly and without argument.
- C. Accept responsibility for your own behavior.

Pay attention and you will have understanding. What I am telling you is good, so remember it. - Proverbs 4:2

3. RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS.

- A. Use appropriate voice and language.
- B. Listen and pay attention to the speaker.
- C. Respect the right of others to have differing opinions.
- D. Refrain from harassment and retaliation.

Whatever you do for the least one of these you do for Me. - Matthew 25:40

4. RESPECT PROPERTY.

- A. Respect the property of others.
- B. Respect your own property
- C. Use materials and equipment appropriately.
- D. Keep things clean

Every good gift and every perfect present comes from God. - James 1:17

5. DISPLAY A CONCERN FOR LEARNING.

- A. Remain on task.
- B. Allow others to remain on task.

If you want to be wise, keep the Lord's commandments, and He will give you wisdom in abundance. - Sirach 1:26

6. DISPLAY APPROPRIATE SOCIAL SKILLS.

- A. Display courtesy and tact.
- B. Interact with others appropriately and inclusively.

Love your neighbor as yourself. - Matthew 22:39

7. DISPLAY APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.

- A. Display a positive Christian character.
- B. Display a productive character.

Each one as a good manager of God's different gifts must use for the good of others the special gifts he or she has received from God. 1 Peter 4:10

HARASSMENT POLICY

St. Joseph Catholic School believes that every individual deserves to be able to come to school without fear of demeaning remarks or actions. The harassment of other students or members of the staff, or any other individuals is not permitted. This includes any speech or action that

creates a hostile, intimidating or offensive learning environment. Harassment could result in suspension or expulsion from our school.

Harassment includes but is not limited to the following:

A. Verbal

1. Written or oral innuendoes, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's gender, national origin, religious belief, etc. toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the school.
2. Conducting a "campaign of silence" toward a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the school by refusing to have any form of social interaction with the person.

B. Nonverbal:

Placing objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or making insulting or threatening gestures toward a fellow student, staff member or other person associated with the school. In addition, taking other people's possessions.

C. Physical

Any intimidating or disparaging action such as hitting, hissing at, spitting on or inappropriate touching of a fellow student, staff member or other person associated with the school.

D. Cyberbullying

Harassment conducted through electronic communication, including text messages, email, social media, messaging platforms, or other digital means that targets or harms a member of the school community.

Retaliation against any individual who reports harassment or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

Disciplinary procedures as included in the current Handbook for Parents and Students: will be implemented for violations. NOTE: Expulsion policy may be invoked immediately for serious offenses.

CONCERN/COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

If a parent has a concern that arises out of a classroom situation or a disciplinary action, the following procedures and timeline should be followed:

Step 1. The parent is asked to make an appointment with the teacher involved to discuss the concern and resolve, if possible. This step should take place in a timely fashion in relation to the date of the incident.

Step 2. The parent is to make an appointment with the school principal within five school days of meeting with the teacher if they wish to appeal the teacher's decision.

Step 3. If the parent does not agree with the principal's decision, they can appeal to the pastor.

Step 4. Upon receiving the decision of the Pastor, the parent has five school days to present their written appeal to the St. Joseph School Board of Limited Jurisdiction.

Step 5. The final step in the procedure is to appeal to the Diocesan Superintendent. This

appeal is for review of due process only; decisions are not affirmed or reversed but rather the process followed is reviewed for adherence to the above stated procedures.

PARENT NOTES ARE REQUIRED WHENEVER A STUDENT *:

* Leaves the building to go home for lunch; * is staying after school (other than scheduled practices); *attending a field trip (Diocesan Field Trip Form); *is being picked up by someone other than a parent; *is changing their regular method of going home (car as opposed to bus and vice-versa); * wishes to receive an excused absence.

OVERNIGHT SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS

School field trips which are out of state and/or overnight, will be permitted only when approved upon by the administration. One legal guardian per student is required to be present or a representative of the legal guardian. The representative must be at least 21 years of age, adhere to diocesan requirements, and the parents must sign a permission note excluding St. Joseph Catholic School from any responsibilities.

FIELD TRIPS/MOVIES/PARTIES

Written consent of the parents must be obtained for every child participating in a field trip. No child may participate unless a signed parent permission slip is on file with the school. Whenever possible, bus transportation will be provided. Parents must have a volunteer driver form on file in the school office, as well as meet the insurance requirements, in order to drive students on a field trip or other school sponsored event. Drivers must be at least 21 years of age.

MOVIE GUIDELINES

R- Are never to be shown at St. Joseph School or school functions (field trip, party, etc.)

PG-13-This movie is viewable if everyone in the room is already 13, each parent signs a permission slip, and the movie ties into the curriculum (names of those parents objecting WILL be kept confidential)

PG- Can be shown to any grades ONLY with a permission slip from every parent AND if the movie ties into the curriculum (names of those parents objecting WILL be kept confidential)

G- Can be shown to any grades without a permission slip as long as the movie ties into the curriculum.

*Please note that St. Joseph Catholic School takes the following into consideration: Older movies that are PG, may by standards today be considered a PG-13 rating. Teachers will evaluate this before showing one of these movies.

*Each movie shown will be watched by the teacher first.

CLASSROOM PARTY

Students may have up to three holiday parties throughout the school year. The parties may include Halloween, Christmas, (after January 1st) and Valentine's Day. Any individual changes to this are up to the classroom teacher or administrator. All parties may last up to one hour. There is to be no gum at school with the exception of the above parties or with teacher permission.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

Once students get to school, they are not allowed to leave the school grounds unless they live in

town and go home for lunch OR are picked up by a parent for an appointment.

- Parent notes are always required to leave school grounds.

PHONE USE

Students will be permitted to use the school phone **ONLY** when sent to do so by the teacher. Calls are only for lunches and information about getting home.

POSSESSION OF ELECTRONICS

Students are not permitted to have or use “personal electronic devices” while on school grounds. Items will be confiscated and returned at the end of the school day; school disciplinary action will be taken. Violations could result in suspension. School staff and principal can make exceptions to this rule. Students will abide by the St. Joseph Catholic School Electronic Information and Acceptable Use Policy.

BICYCLES

Students are permitted to ride bicycles to school provided the safety rules set up by the school are followed: 1. Bicycle riding on the playground is not permitted. 2. Bicycles are to be parked near the convent on the east side of the building as soon as the student arrives. 3. If others are present on the sidewalk, the student must walk his/her bike. 4. Students are asked to come directly to school and not ride around town or the neighborhood.

ILLNESS AT SCHOOL

In case your child becomes ill at school, you will be contacted. We will not send any child home without you knowing it. Parents should come to the school office to pick up their child.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

In order for St. Joseph to take a serious approach to academics we must have a firm, yet fair, discipline policy. We ask our teachers to handle minor discipline problems within the confines of their own classroom. Furthermore, we will allow our teachers to use various forms of punishment to maintain order as long as they are reasonable and do not include excessive physical force.

Reprimands may include: Virtue sheet, giving zeros on homework assignments, suspension of library and/or recess privileges and after-school detentions.

- I. Detentions may be issued by any of the staff, playground supervisors, substitute teachers, or anybody in a position of authority that is connected with the school for any discipline problem. Detentions will also be given for three unexcused tardies in a quarter. A 24 hour notice will be given to students serving detention. Parents will be notified of their child's detention by phone or by written notice from the teacher, principal, or secretary. Failure to show at a detention will result in the issuing of another detention, giving that student 2 detentions that he/she must serve. If a student receives a third detention, he/she will be required to attend a parent meeting with the principal to discuss the circumstances of the detentions and how to solve the situation in the future. Students will not be allowed to serve detentions at lunchtime or during the school day. In addition, if a student does not show up for a detention due to parent indifference or non-cooperation, the following will be imposed:

First: no-show=1 more detention

Second: no-show=2 more detentions

Third: no-show=suspended for one day of school without work provided by the classroom teacher

- II. Suspensions may be used to discipline students whose conduct is of a serious nature (including but not limited to fighting, vandalism, stealing or truancy). The length of suspension will be determined by the principal. Students serving a suspension are responsible for all materials covered during that time. No credit will be given for daily work. Tests may be made up, however, a suspended student will receive only 80% of whatever grade would have been earned.
- III. The Principal, with the Pastor, reserve the right to expel any student whose conduct, influence, or academic work indicates a very serious problem. Expulsion is final. An expelled student may not be readmitted to St. Joseph's or receive a diploma.

Cheating/Plagiarism

Homework -If it is determined a student has cheated on a homework assignment, the student is subject to the following consequences:

- Parents are contacted. All work must be done again. The highest score the student may obtain on this work is 80%.
- Each instance of cheating is subject to one detention. In the case of multiple assignments, the number of detentions given will be at the discretion of the principal.

Tests-In the event a student is caught cheating, the student is subject to the following consequences:

- Parents are contacted. The student shall receive a grade of zero for that test. This work may not be made up. Detentions may be given.

School Hall Laws

1. The hallway is a quiet zone; classrooms should not be disturbed
2. No running, pushing, or shoving in the hallway
3. Keep hands and feet off other students and the walls
4. No loitering or "hanging around" in the hallway
5. Do not touch art or projects on the wall
6. Do not peek into classroom windows
7. Do not disturb others who are working in the hallway
8. Do not litter

WEAPON POLICY

The possession, use or distribution of weapons by students, parents or visitors is strictly prohibited in the school, on school premises or at any school-sponsored activity. No student, parent or visitor shall possess, use or distribute any weapon or any object device or instrument having the appearance of a weapon. Any student found in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to, permanent expulsion.

A “weapon” is any object, device or instrument designed as a weapon, capable of producing bodily injury or used for the purpose of threatening or intimidating another person, including, but not limited to loaded and/or unloaded firearms, air guns, pellet guns, or bb guns; all knives; blades, clubs or bats; explosive devices and fireworks; metal knuckles; nunchucks; throwing stars; stun guns; chains; arrows; poison; ammunition; and any other object modified or intended to serve as a weapon.

If there is a legitimate, educational purpose to have an item at school that could be considered a weapon (such as an antique firearm and saber when studying the Civil War or to cut a birthday cake at a room party), then written permission from the building principal must be obtained in advance, specifying when the object may be brought to school and under what circumstances (Adopted DOGR Policy 2151).

A student found in violation of this policy will be given an immediate indefinite suspension pending a complete investigation and School Board hearing. If the investigation confirms the student has violated the St. Joseph School weapon policy, the student will be expelled for the state mandatory 180 days.

(Addendum A): Possible exceptions to expulsion are:

- A. The object or instrument possessed by the student was not possessed by the student for use as a weapon, or for direct or indirect delivery to another person for use as a weapon.
- B. The weapon was not knowingly possessed by the student.
- C. The student did not know or have reason to know that the object or instrument possessed by the student contained a dangerous weapon.
- D. The weapon was possessed by the student at the suggestion, request, or direction of, or with the express permission of, the school or police authorities.
- E. If the student is expelled, the permanent records shall so indicate.
- F. Within three days of expulsion the St. Joseph School Board of Limited Jurisdiction must ensure that the School Administrator refers the student to the appropriate County Department of Social Services or Mental Health Agency and notifies the parents or guardians.
- G. Student expelled may not seek reinstatement to the local school district for at least sixty days; and if successful, may not be readmitted for ninety days. Check with P-W Schools for additional information.
- H. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to prepare and petition for reinstatement to St. Joseph Catholic School.

I. Within ten days of receiving a petition for reinstatement, the St. Joseph School Board of Limited Jurisdiction shall appoint a committee to review the petition and any supporting information provided by the parents. The committee shall consist of:

Two School Board of Limited Jurisdiction members
The Pastor and Principal
One teacher, and
One parent of a student in the school

J. No later than 10 days after all members are appointed, the committee shall submit a recommendation to the St. Joseph School Board of Limited Jurisdiction on the issue of reinstatement.

The recommendation shall be for: (1) Unconditional reinstatement, (2) Conditional reinstatement, or (3) Against reinstatement, and shall be accompanied by an explanation of the reasons for recommendation and of any recommended conditions for reinstatement.

The recommendations shall be based on consideration of all of the following factors:

- a. The risk of harm to pupils or school personnel
- b. Risk of school district or individual liability for Board of Limited Jurisdiction or school district personnel
- c. The age and maturity of the individual
- d. School record of student before the incident
- e. Attitude of student concerning the incident
- f. Student's behavior since expulsion and prospects for remediation
- g. Cooperation of parent that can be expected including receptiveness toward possible conditions placed on the reinstatement

BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS

BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS

Students will abide by all public school district safety guidelines.

St. Joseph Catholic School students will adhere to the Transportation Policy implemented by the Pewamo-Westphalia School System, including current health department and diocesan mandates. Students riding school transportation are required to follow some basic safety rules. This applies to school owned buses, as well as contracted transportation that may be provided.

If a student is reported to have misbehaved, and his/her actions were recorded on videotape, that tape will be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these tapes are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with federal law.

The following behaviors are expected of all students.

A. Prior to loading (on the road and at school), each student shall:

1. Be on time at the designated loading area
2. Stay off the road at all times
3. Line up single file off the roadway to enter
4. Wait until the bus is completely stopped
5. Not cross a roadway until signaled by the bus driver
6. Go immediately to a seat and sit down

Parents must inform the bus driver when their child will not be riding the bus.

B. During the trip, each student shall:

1. Remain seated
2. Keep all body parts inside the bus at all times
3. Not litter on the bus or throw things out of the bus
4. Keep everything, including feet, out of the aisle
5. Be courteous to the driver and other riders
6. Eat only when allowed by the bus driver
7. Not tamper with the bus or any of its equipment
 - A note is required from parents if non-route students want to ride or change their drop off destination, with the approval of the Principal.

C. Leaving the bus, students shall:

1. Remain seated until the bus stops
2. Cross the road, when necessary, at least ten feet in front of the bus, but only after the driver signals it is safe
3. Be alert to a possible danger signal from the driver

The drivers will not discharge students at places other than their regular stop at home or at school unless she/he has proper authorization from school officials.

Consequences- Loud, distracting, impolite behavior, eating and drinking, throwing things, horsing around, changing seats, among others will result in:

- 1st Offense--assigned seat
- 2nd Offense--report to the principal
- 3rd Offense--3 to 5 day suspension from the bus
- 4th Offense--removal from the bus indefinitely

Dress Code Policy

It is the goal of St. Joseph School to implement a more streamlined uniform code for our students. This will be initiated at the start of the 2026-2027 school year. All clothing must be neat, clean, in good condition, modest, and properly fitted. The following is a list of acceptable clothing:

Shirts:

- Collared polo shirts (long or short sleeved) in solid colors that are black, navy blue, royal blue, white, and gray
- At least one royal blue polo for special occasions (Ex. All School Picture)
- Long sleeve shirts to go under school polo shirt are allowed, as long as they are solid in color
- Sleeveless shirts are NOT allowed at anytime

Sweaters:

- Sweaters (approved color) must have a polo shirt underneath
- Acceptable sweaters include: Hooded sweatshirts with St. Joseph School logo only, V-neck, crewneck, cardigan, or sweater vest

Pants:

- Khaki, black, navy, or gray pants; jeans
- Denim clothing is not allowed on Mass days (Unless otherwise specified)
- Leggings/Yoga Pants are not allowed

Shorts:

- Shorts may be worn between May 1st and October 1st
- Shorts must be no shorter than 3" above the kneecap (No athletic apparel - Except on Thursdays and Birthdays)
- All shorts must be in good condition, plain and in approved school colors (Khaki, black, navy, or gray)
- Shorts and skorts are allowed on Mass days

Skirts, Dresses, Jumpers:

- Khaki, black, gray or navy skirts
- Khaki, black, navy or gray dresses with a collar or a collared shirt underneath the dress (approved colors)
- Dresses cannot be sweater material
- Lengths must be no shorter than 3" above the kneecap
- Leggings, of a solid color, maybe worn underneath the dress; socks must be worn with leggings

Footwear:

- Socks/nylons must always be worn
- Socks must be white, black, or gray. Patterned socks, designs, or any other colors are NOT permitted. Simple logo socks ARE permitted (examples: Adidas, Nike, Puma, etc.)
- Acceptable shoes include: casual, boots, dress, tennis, sandals, and heels. All shoes must have backs.
- At all times shoes must be tied or buckled

Jewelry:

- Only watches, post and non dangling earrings (no more than two per ear), religious medals and crosses on plain silver or gold chains, and scapulars
- Wearable technology pieces that have the capability to connect to a SmartPhone for the purpose of texting, calling, Internet browsing, etc. MAY NOT be worn.

Make-up and Hair:

- Make-up should be light, natural colors only. Students will be asked to remove make-up that is deemed excessive or distracting.

- Nail polish is acceptable if presented neatly and without distraction
- Hair for all students should be well groomed and maintained. Students' eyes should be visible and hair should not be a distraction to learning.
- No tattoos or body piercings
- **If an item of clothing is not listed under "acceptable clothing", it is not allowed**

Dress Code Violations

- **First Violation**--The student will be asked to get a change of clothing by calling home or wearing a school district garment.
- **Second Violation**--Same as first
- **Third Violation**--Same as second violation; serve a one-day "In House" suspension.
- **Additional Violations**--Considered defiance of authority and will result in an "out of school" suspension.

A Dress Code promotes a school's academic environment, maintains discipline, and prevents disruption of the educational process. Having good taste in dress and grooming establishes school pride.

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God and that you are not your own? For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body..." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Homework Responsibility Policy

- Homework assigned is to be done at home to reinforce or extend learning. It is work, also, that has not been completed during the allotted time at school. Homework may include reinforcement or extension of the daily lesson, special reports, studying for tests, or projects that require added effort and time.
- As primary educators, parents should help through encouragement and positive motivation, (not by doing the work for the student).
- Parents can further assist to see if assignments are complete and/or of acceptable quality.
- If a child is spending too much time or not enough on homework in relation to their age and ability, the teacher should be contacted.
- To promote student responsibility and accountability, phone calls home will not be made for forgotten homework. It is the expectation that students come to school prepared with all necessary assignments and materials. As outlined in the Phone Use Policy above, phones are not to be used during the school day to contact parents regarding forgotten items, including homework. Students are encouraged to develop organizational habits and take ownership of their academic responsibilities.

COMMUNICATIONS

To support clear communication and a healthy work/life balance for our staff, we ask that

families use email as the primary method of contacting teachers. This allows for thoughtful responses, proper documentation, and communication within contracted hours (7:30 am–3:15 pm). Emails may be sent at any time, and teachers will respond during the next workday. Please avoid using teachers’ personal phone numbers for school-related matters.

The school office is open from 7:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., and after 3:15 p.m. by appointment. To speak with your child’s teacher, please schedule a time outside of instructional hours. You may contact the school office at 989-593-3400 or via email. Teachers can also be reached through school email or Infinite Campus and will respond during designated times.

All students in Grades Y5-5 will be supplied with a “Friday Folder”. This folder will be sent home every Friday by the child’s teacher. It is to be returned the following Monday to the homeroom teacher. Other use of a “Friday Folder” is left to the discretion of the homeroom teacher.

TORNADO POLICY

A tornado watch means conditions are right for the formation of tornadoes. In case of a tornado watch, school will continue as planned while weather conditions are monitored by the office.

If a tornado has been sighted in the area, the school bell will sound one long continuous ring. When this occurs, all students will go immediately to the designated location in the school hallway and teachers will take roll call.

A minimum of two (2) tornado drills are required for each school year; at least one is to be conducted during March of the school year.

FIRE DRILLS

A minimum of five (5) fire drills are conducted during the school year. Three of the five are to be held by December 1st. For fire drills, students either exit the rear door and go to the area near the pavilion, or exit the side door (note diagrams within the school building). As soon as all have exited, the teachers take attendance.

EVACUATION DRILLS

St. Joseph School conducts evacuation drills throughout the school year. In addition, a minimum of three (3) emergency lock-down drills (internal and external) are required each school year; at least one conducted by December 1st. Drills are practiced in the event that we smell gas or another such emergency occurs. All students meet at the designated areas and wait for further instructions.

COMMITTEES

Finance	School Board	Cemetery	PTO
Athletic	Art and Environment	Altar Society	Faith Formation
Library	Ed. Trust Fund	Century Club	Festival
Technology	Pastoral Council	Bldg. & Grounds	School Improvement

* St. Joseph School holds open School Board of Limited Jurisdiction meetings. You are welcome to attend. Executive Board Sessions are called on occasion and are closed to the public, with

the Board, Pastor, and Principal in attendance.

SPORTS POLICY

Please refer to the St. Joseph Catholic School Athletic Handbook.

All students participating in sports will also be given a copy of the Policy. Additional copies are available in the school office.

BEHAVIORAL CONSEQUENCE CHART

Infractions	Warning	In School Suspension	Parent/Guardian Conference	Short Term Suspension (1-5 days)	Long Term Suspension (6-10 days)	Expulsion Procedures Initiated
Deliberate classroom disruption	X	X	X	X	X	
Failure to follow directives	X	X	X	X	X	
Cheating/Forgery	X	X	X	X	X	
Profanity/Vulgarity	X	X	X	X	X	
Leaving school grounds without permission	X	X	X	X	X	
Use of tobacco products				X	X	
Possession of tobacco products		X	X	X	X	
Fighting	X	X	X	X	X	X
Activating false fire alarm				X	X	X
Harassment		X	X	X	X	X
Sexual harassment		X	X	X	X	X
Interference with school purposes		X	X	X	X	X
Theft/Vandalism		X	X	X	X	X
Repetition of short-term suspension					X	X
Violating conditions of short-term suspension					X	X
Violating terms of long-term suspension					X	X
Repetition of long term suspension						X
Assault/sexual abuse						X
Use/possession of unauthorized /simulated substances/vaping						X
Arson						X
Robbery						X
Possession/use of weapons						X
Sale/distribution- unauthorized substances						X
Bomb threats/possession/ use of bomb						X

Fighting/striking faculty/staff member						X
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- Disciplinary action is imposed only after review of the facts (and/or special circumstances).
- The principal has all final decisions in disciplinary matters.

We, the undersigned, have read and understand the St. Joseph Catholic School Handbook and policies therein.

Please have each of your children who are students at St. Joseph School go over the Handbook with you and they should also sign here and return to the school:

Student Signature (s): _____
 Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date _____

GRAND RAPIDS DIOCESE POLICIES FOR YOUR REVIEW

Threats=suspension.

We are a gun-free school.

No weapons on school grounds or anything that could be considered a weapon--zero tolerance=suspension.

No bullying or harassment to others--can result in suspension

Strict substance abuse policy for staff and students--zero tolerance=suspension

Teachers are trained in communicable diseases and OSHA standards on blood borne pathogens are on file and records of training are kept.

No more than 30 in a classroom with a maximum of 3 with special needs--per Michigan Catholic Conference lawyers.

No more than 2 classroom movies per week will be shown by any given teacher--to accommodate all learning styles.

Teachers are not required to supply work before vacations but may want to and/or can be asked.

Continuous rash must have a doctor's note to return.

Upon receipt of a records request from another school to which a student has applied for admission or which a former student is attending, all academic records and documented behavioral records will be forwarded to the requesting school. Student records will not be released until a request for records form signed has been received.--Diocesan Policy

Our hiring policy is compliant with civil rights laws and policies are in accord with the Family and Medical Leave Act.

Fair Labor Standards and Right to Know Law posters are displayed in the school office.

St. Joseph's School has a current asbestos inspection and management plan on file.



ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL 2026-2027 CALENDAR

AUGUST '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

24: First Day of School

FEBRUARY '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

10: Ash Wednesday
12: No School- Mid Winter Break
15: No School- Mid Winter Break

SEPTEMBER '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

04: No School
09: Picture Day
07: No School- Labor Day
11: Bike-A-Thon

MARCH '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

26: No School- Spring Break
26: Good Friday
28: Easter

OCTOBER '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

06: Parent/Teacher Conferences
07: Half Day- Parent/Teacher Conferences
16: No School- Staff PD, St. Joseph Only

APRIL '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

05: School Resumes

NOVEMBER '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

12: Picture Retakes
26: No School- Thanksgiving Break

MAY '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

31: No School- Memorial Day

DECEMBER '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

21-1/1: Christmas Break

JUNE '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

04: Last Day of School

JANUARY '27						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

01: No School- New Year's Day
04: School Resumes
18: No School- M.L. King Day
30: Century Club Dinner
31: Catholic Schools Weeks

- No School
- Half Day- Dismissal at 11:05
- Half Day in AM- Virtual Day PM
- Virtual Day
- Quarter End
- Students Full Day of School

REVISED 4/29/26
Subject to change

2025-2026 School Year Updates

Original:

1. Only watches, post earrings (no more than two per ear), Religious medals and crosses on plain silver or gold chains, and scapulars
2. Hair should be clean and neatly groomed and not cause a distraction.
3. **Financial Assistance**
Assistance may be made available at the discretion of the pastor, principal, and school board, to those who demonstrate need and meet requirements as set by the above-mentioned authorities. Families are encouraged to apply for assistance through the Kremer Foundation, and/or Bishop's Scholarship Fund offered by the Diocese of Grand Rapids.

Changed to:

1. Only watches, post and non dangling earrings (no more than two per ear), religious medals and crosses on plain silver or gold chains, and scapulars
2. Hair for all students should be well groomed and maintained. Students' eyes should be visible and hair should not be a distraction to learning.
3. **Financial Assistance**
Assistance may be made available at the discretion of the pastor and principal to those who demonstrate need and meet requirements as set by the above-mentioned authorities. Families are encouraged to apply for assistance through the Kremer Foundation, and/or Bishop's Scholarship Fund offered by the Diocese of Grand Rapids.

New Addition:

1. Sleeveless shirts are NOT allowed at anytime
2. **Guidelines for Sick Children Returning to School:** Please follow the guidelines below to help protect your child and prevent the spread of illness to others.

Do not send your child to school if:

- They have had a fever (oral temperature above 100°F) within the past 24 hours. They must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication such as Tylenol or Motrin.
- They have vomited or had diarrhea in the past 24 hours.
- They show symptoms of a contagious illness (e.g., strep throat, conjunctivitis/pink eye, flu, or an undiagnosed rash).

Your child may return to school when:

- They have been fever-free for 24 hours without medication.
- They have not vomited or had diarrhea for 24 hours.
- If applicable, they have completed a 24-hour dose of antibiotics and/or have a doctor's note clearing them to return to school.

Pastor: _____

Principal: _____

2026-2027 School Year Updates

Original:

1. There was nothing about cyberbullying
2. The school office hours are 7:15 a.m. to 3:30p.m. Monday through Friday.
3. Nothing was specific.
4. The school office will be open from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., and after 3:30 p.m. by appointment. If you wish to discuss a matter with your child's teacher, kindly make arrangements to do so when classes are not in session. Please contact the school at 989-593-3400 or rweber@stjosephpewamo.org or m.mowatt@stjosephpewamo.org. Teachers may be contacted by their school e-mail or Infinite Campus and will respond only during break times.
5. Nothing

New Addition:

1. D. Cyberbullying

Harassment conducted through electronic communication, including text messages, email, social media, messaging platforms, or other digital means that targets or harms a member of the school community.

Retaliation against any individual who reports harassment or participates in an investigation is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

2. The school office hours are 7:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Monday through Friday.
3. To promote student responsibility and accountability, phone calls home will not be made for forgotten homework. It is the expectation that students come to school prepared with all necessary assignments and materials. As outlined in the Phone Use Policy above, phones are not to be used during the school day to contact parents regarding forgotten items, including homework. Students are encouraged to develop organizational habits and take ownership of their academic responsibilities.
4. To support clear communication and a healthy work/life balance for our staff, we ask that families use email as the primary method of contacting teachers. This allows for thoughtful responses, proper documentation, and communication within contracted hours (7:30 am–3:15 pm). Emails may be sent at any time, and teachers will respond during the next workday. Please avoid using teachers' personal phone numbers for school-related matters.

The school office is open from 7:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m., and after 3:15 p.m. by appointment. To speak with your child's teacher, please schedule a time outside of instructional hours. You may contact the school office at 989-593-3400 or via email. Teachers can also be reached through school email or Infinite Campus and will respond during designated times.

5. Socks must be white, black, or gray. Patterned socks, designs, or any other colors are not permitted. Simple logo socks ARE permitted (examples: Adidas, Nike, Puma, etc.)

Pastor: _____

Date: _____

Principal: _____

Date: _____