



# **SAINT RITA SCHOOL**

## **PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Faith, Family and Excellence  
Since 1949**



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## Daily School Schedule

7:45 a.m.	All students enter buildings
8:00-8:05 a.m.	Tardy bell/morning announcements
8:10 a.m.	Classes begin
11:10-11:55 a.m.	Lunch & Recess Grades 4-8
11:55-12:40 p.m.	Lunch & Recess Grades K-3
2:45 p.m.	Afternoon announcements
2:50 p.m.	Dismissal of car riders, walkers, and students attending After School Childcare Buses called upon arrival

## **Parental Responsibility**

As the primary educator of your child/children, you have chosen to send your children to Saint Rita School because you want them to be educated in a Catholic Christian environment. This environment is to be a continuation of the Christian upbringing the children have received and are continuing to receive at home. Having chosen Saint Rita School, it is vital that you support the educational efforts of the administration and teachers by your cooperation and involvement in the established policies.

It is our expectation that parents:

- Show courtesy and respect for administration, teachers, support staff and students;
- Support decisions of the school administration especially in regard to disciplinary matters;
- Resolve any academic conflicts with the classroom or departmental teacher(s), then principal;
- Pay tuition fees in a timely manner;
- Follow the rules of the school and the provisions of this handbook;
- Attend special and regular conferences;
- Respect the instructional time in the classroom;
- Understand our secretaries in the Primary and Middle School Office are available to relay messages to students and teachers.

## **Child Custody**

In the case of divorce or separation, a certified copy of the entire and most current court order stating who has custody of the child and other issues that relate to custody is to be sent to the principal. The court order shall contain the signature of the judge and clerk of court filing stamp. This information should be kept current. If custody or arrangements that affect the child change, a new copy should be provided. The school isn't the place to exchange custody or begin visitation.

- A child is released only to the custodial parent, persons designated by them on the FACTS online emergency account, or per specific written request signed by the custodial parent.
- Nonresidential parents have the same right of access to the child's records as the residential parent unless specified limits are indicated in the legal custody agreement.

Information about the child and scheduled conferences are communicated to the residential custodial parent who shares it with the other parent according to their court agreement.

## **General Safety**

School doors are kept locked and visitors are to go to the main doors to enter and announce themselves to the office staff. This is a state law. If a visitor is expecting to go to a classroom, they must secure a visitor or volunteer badge from the secretary. No parent should be in the classroom or locker areas during school hours. All materials that a student forgot at home should be left at

the office and the student's teacher will be contacted.

## ATTENDANCE

### Reporting Absence

- In regard to the Missing Child Act, the police will be called if the family cannot be reached by 2:30 p.m. The principal will contact children services concerning cases of truancy. (This includes excessive unexcused tardiness.)
- Tardiness is when a student arrives late for school in the morning or leaves early at the end of the day. Tardiness is disruptive to the learning environment of the classroom. Students who are tardy must report to the school office. In the primary building, the child will be escorted to the classroom. In the middle school, a student will receive a pass to give to the teacher. A student must be in the classroom and seated by 8:00 a.m.

Children between the ages of 6 and 18 are required to attend school regularly. Reasons for lawful absence may be personal illness, death in the family, or family emergency (if discussed with and approved by the principal). It has been found that effective educational programs include a positive high percentage of student attendance. The State of Ohio includes the attendance record as an integral part of the State Report Card issued to each system. We, at Saint Rita School, certainly want to reflect the same expectations from our families. The families must model the importance of the educational process by assuring their child(ren) are present and on time unless a "lawful" exception (see above definition) is involved. Absence from school is to be reported to the school office through a phone call, email or by a note (through another student) by 8:30 a.m.

**Primary School – Shannon Johnson 440-248-1350 x106 [sjohnson@stritaschool.com](mailto:sjohnson@stritaschool.com)** **Middle School – Carole Wenzel 440-248-1350 x102 [cwenzel@stritaschool.com](mailto:cwenzel@stritaschool.com)** Procedures for absence to be followed by respective offices:

- If no call, email or note is received, the office will call the home, or place of work to verify absence
- No tardy: Student is late due to a school bus running late or being detained by a school official thus causing the student to not be seated by 8:00 a.m.
- Excused tardy: Medical appointment
- Unexcused tardy: Student is late for other reasons

When a student accumulates ten (10) unexcused tardies, administration will contact the parent or guardian.

**Marking of Student Attendance:** The attendance record is kept carefully and is a record of student presence at school. This record is often used in legal proceedings. Absence is when a student is missing from school for a portion of or a whole day.

Absence is counted each quarter in the following manner:

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| <b>1 day</b> | 3.5 or more hours missed   |
| <b>½ day</b> | 1 hour to 3.5 hours missed   |
| <b>Tardy</b> | Student misses less than 1 hour of school for any reason. This includes arriving late or |

leaving early for doctor appointments, etc.

Repeated absence and/or tardiness can be a serious threat to learning and can be cause for retention, probation, and referral to outside agencies for assistance and/or disciplinary measures.

Children may not leave the school grounds during the school day without the written permission of the parents and the approval of the principal.

Appointments, which require absence from school, are discouraged and are marked against a child's attendance record. This includes leaving early at the end of the day.

More than ten (10) absences or tardies without doctor verification is considered excessive and a conference with the principal will be scheduled. This situation may also be reported to Cuyahoga County Children Services. Copies of the letters to these agencies will be sent to the home and will be placed in the student file. Failure to improve attendance/punctuality could affect financial assistance or prompt a request that the student not return to Saint Rita School.

## Early Sign Out

Although early sign out is discouraged at Saint Rita School, when appointments do occur during the school hours, parents and guardians must sign out before leaving the building. Parents are to park in the Primary School or Middle School parking lots. A parent is asked to report to the office and make the request for early dismissal. The respective secretary will call for the student and the student will meet the adult in the office. Early dismissal will be marked as a tardy for the student. If a student is taken out of school for a doctor appointment during the day and returns, he/she will also be marked tardy.

## ACADEMICS

### Grading Scale – Grades K-1

Standard Based Progress Report K-3	
<b>3 Mastered:</b>	Student meets or exceeds the demonstration or knowledge of target content for grade-level learning with consistent success, accuracy, and independence.
<b>2.5</b>	No major errors or omissions regarding 2.0 content and partial knowledge of the 3.0 content.
<b>2 Developing:</b>	Student illustrates base knowledge of prerequisite content, knowledge, or skills necessary for mastery of target content.
<b>1.5</b>	Partial knowledge of the 2.0 content, but major errors or omissions regarding the 3.0 content.
<b>1</b>	Assistance needed to demonstrate partial understanding of a score of 2.0 or 3.0.
<b>Blank:</b>	Was not assessed in the grading period.

## Grading Scale – Grades 2-3

<b>First Honors:</b>	3.7-4.0
<b>Second Honors:</b>	3.5-3.69
<b>Merit Roll:</b>	3.2-3.49

Honor students reflect a desire to learn. Each semester, special recognition is given to students who have earned honors. Honors are based upon the following point system:

<b>A+</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>100-98</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>97-95</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>94-93</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>92-90</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>89-87</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>2.67</b>	<b>86-85</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>84-82</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>81-79</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>1.67</b>	<b>78-77</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>1.33</b>	<b>76.75</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>74-72</b>
<b>D-</b>	<b>.67</b>	<b>71-70</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>69-0</b>

<b>Religion</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Computer</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Social Studies</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Art</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Math</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Spanish</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Reading</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Science</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Phys. Ed.</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>English</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Spelling</b>	<b>1</b>
		<b>Health</b>	<b>1</b>

Grade point average is calculated as follows: Grade times class value = points for class (i.e. Religion grade B+; class value 5 points –  $3.3 \times 5 = 16.6$  points) Repeat this process for every class. The GPA is calculated by adding up all the points and dividing that number by 36 credits (35 if no Spanish).  $115/36 = 3.19$  GPA.

Basic classroom instruction is supplemented in many ways. Students at all grade levels receive instruction from physical education, music, art, computer and Spanish each week. These co-curricular professionals assist the classroom teachers by supporting the curriculum in the holistic development of the child. Grades K-5 have time scheduled for use of the library each week.

## Promotion and Retention

Promotion is based on the satisfactory completion of the respective grade level work. Retention is considered in individual cases after thorough discussion by the teacher, principal, and parents. Retention may be considered for the following reasons:

**Kindergarten:** Social and emotional immaturity.

**Grades 1-3:** Failure to master fundamental skills of reading and math.

**Grades 4-8:** Failure in an individual subject is defined as receiving a grade of an F in two or more quarters or a D average in the year.

Failure must be remediated by summer school or by a tutor approved by the administration, for promotion to the next grade. Parents will be notified in the spring about situations where remediation will be necessary. Parents will then give the school written notice of their plans for remediation by June 1st of the school year. Parents will also supply the school with written verification of the remedial work done by August in order that the student may be admitted to the next grade. Failure to comply with this procedure may make re-admission to Saint Rita School impossible.

## **Class Assignment**

Students are assigned to classrooms after consultation between teachers and principal at the end of the school year and when a new student is enrolled through the course of the year. Changes will not be made, unless in rare exceptions for the betterment of student academic performance, as the students are placed in the grade and homeroom in which they are hoped to have the greatest success educationally. Teachers take into consideration all aspects of a child's educational development when determining placement. Class assignments are generally emailed a few days prior to the first day of school at the middle school.

**Progress Reports** – Progress reports are emailed to the parents between report cards for grades 1-8. Parents may check FACTS throughout the year to monitor progress for grades 4 through 8. Parents, please email teachers in grades K-3.

**Report Cards** - Report cards are given quarterly to students as a measure of their academic progress. Each child is evaluated according to his/her own performance, progress, and ability. Daily class participation, test scores, home and classroom assignments and effort are taken into consideration when grades are given. Report cards are to be signed by parents/guardians each quarter and returned to school within one week.

## **FACTS**

FACTS is accessible to all students in grades 5 through 8 to monitor their work. Parents should log in frequently to view student grades, homework, progress reports, and teacher-posted announcements (grades 4 through 8). FACTS also allows parents to order lunch and make payments directly into their family account to pay for lunch. Registration and re-registration is also done via FACTS. (grades K- 8).

## **Homework**

Homework is intended to promote independent study, provide extra practice in basic skills, enrich learning, and teach responsibility. No definite time limit can be determined for all, since children work at different rates of speed. Parents can assist by providing quiet time and a place conducive to study, checking for neatness and accuracy, and listening to oral recitation. Please also monitor the time on task factor for efficiency and productivity of homework time. If you notice your child

spending too much or too little time on homework, please discuss this with the classroom teacher.

## **Absent Work**

Absent work due to illness or family emergency is allocated one day per day of absence for the students to complete and turn in assignments. Points may be deducted for overly late work. All work must be picked up in the respective offices. No work will be transported between buildings.

## **MAP Testing**

Students are assessed in fall, winter, and spring using Measure of Academic Progress (MAP). MAP is a computerized adaptive test which assesses students' reading, language usage, math, and science skills and provides teachers, parents, and administrators with accurate and actionable evidence to help target instruction.

It is imperative students get sound restful sleep and eat a good breakfast during testing. A quiet, non-rushed time in the morning sets the tone for the day, and the children are more focused. The MAP test results will be distributed in the fall and within the final report card.

The following testing programs are designed to serve the needs of students as well as meet State standards in testing:

Grades K-8	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Testing
Grades 5 and 8	Assessment of Catechesis/Religious Education Test (ACRE)

**Parent-Teacher Conferences** - Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, once in each semester. We schedule conferences in the fall and winter. If a conference is desired at any other time, however, parents are to contact the teacher through email. Teachers can then assign a time and notify the parents.

## **COMMUNICATION**

School communications, calendars and newsletters will be sent via email through the Principal's Newsletter. Saint Rita School has a very user-friendly website. Visit [www.stritaschool.com](http://www.stritaschool.com) often to read about current events, find important forms, access FACTS, and much more.

Saint Rita School also utilizes Constant Contact to send newsletters and important messages by email. Your email address is added to the database when you register your student at Saint Rita School.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Saint Rita School is committed to providing learning opportunities that enable each student to develop his/her potentials to their fullest. The administration, faculty, and staff strive to cultivate in our students the Catholic virtues of honesty, integrity, truthfulness, justice, and charity, as well as to help them to acquire a sense of responsibility, respect for authority, and respect for each

other. This requires self-discipline plus the help and cooperation of students, teachers and parents.

Viewed in the context of these values, school rules are meant to safeguard the safety and rights of all students. They are meant to foster a positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior, while at the same time outlining the consequences of negative behavior. Ultimately the enforcement of the Code of Conduct resides in the duties of the administrators as the recognized leader of the school. However, these duties are also shared with other school staff (teachers, aides, lunchroom personnel) so that an atmosphere of Catholic love and Gospel value permeates our school as a Catholic education institution.

One of the primary objectives of our school is to help students achieve self-respect and self-discipline. This objective will be reached by providing learning experiences that enable students to:

- Develop Christian attitudes of respect toward oneself, others and their property
- Accept responsibility for their actions
- Develop a cooperative attitude in working with others
- Understand the need for personal safety and the safety of others
- Understand and apply school rules

### **Saint Rita School Falcon Code of Conduct**

We follow the virtues instilled by Jesus's Golden Rule. We believe that everyone has the right to learn and work in a safe and comfortable environment. A positive attitude and respectful behavior is expected from everyone:

- Teachers, substitute teachers, aides, members of administrative and custodial staff and visitors present in the school are to be treated as we want to be treated
- Respect fellow students, their person, and their possessions
- Be accepting of others and their ideas with an open mind
- Be honest, truthful, and supportive of one another
- Follow school rules and classroom regulations
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times
- Participate fully and be attentive during Liturgy, classes, assemblies, and all school gatherings
- Work at all times toward self-improvement in academics, activities, and personal goals

Saint Rita School is a family oriented community. Our behavior demonstrates our belief in each person's worth as a human being. Abuse to others in language (both written and oral), in pictures, or in physical actions is not permitted. Behaviors that will not be tolerated includes:

- Abusive language, ridicule of a person written, verbal or on social media that affect a person's self-esteem (teasing, bullying or threats)
- Obscene language, gesture or pictures including all text messages or on the internet

- Talking back
- Name calling
- Negative comments and actions that affect the climate of the classroom
- Vandalism, destruction or defacing the school building, materials or personal property
- Stealing
- Cheating on schoolwork and tests as determined by the teacher
- Disrupting class
- Fighting

Since proper discipline plays an important role in creating and maintaining a positive learning climate, the Code is flexible based on the age of the student. Each teacher maintains a plan of classroom management.

Violation of one or more of the rules of conduct will result in discipline including, but not limited to such actions as:

- Assignment of a detention or demerit
- Parental contact
- Conferences
- Removal from class
- Suspension or expulsion

## **General Discipline Plan**

Saint Rita Discipline Plan is established to assist students to be the best they can be academically and to help each student grow in faith and in the knowledge of God. These educational purposes are accomplished best in a climate of student behavior which is acceptable and conducive to the teaching/learning process. Student behavior which stops the teacher from teaching, prevents other students from learning and violates the best interest of any individual in the school will not be tolerated.

Disciplinary action for violating school wide or classroom rules may include but not limited to the following:

- Teacher-student conference
- Demerits (grades 4-8)
- Time out in the classroom or office
- Individual classroom consequences
- Lunchtime detention
- Communication with parent via email, telephone or conference
- After school detention
- Referral to Administration
- Loss of a classroom privilege such as a field trip
- Individual behavior plan
- In-school suspension

- Out of school suspension
- Expulsion

Demerits and detentions may be issued to students in grades 4 through 8. Kindergarten through grade 3 will follow their classroom discipline policies. However, a detention may be issued for violations in grade Kindergarten through grade 3 at the discretion of the principal.

**Lunchtime Detention:** Lunchtime detention is defined as eating lunch out of the cafeteria under supervision.

**After School Detention:** Defined as being retained for disciplinary reason after school. Detention forms are signed by the parent and returned to the teacher the following day. This procedure assures the school that the parent is aware of the detention and the necessity to provide transportation home. Detentions will also be entered in Facts and a notice emailed to the parents.

Should a student receive 3 after school detentions, a conference may be held with the teacher, principal/assistant principal, student and parent and a behavior contract may be initiated. Reception of a 4<sup>th</sup> detention may warrant an in school suspension depending on the severity of the offense, the number of times the offense has been committed, the factors precipitating the behavior and the age of the child.

Anyone who is given a school initiated behavior contract will be periodically evaluated by the principal to determine the student's future placement at our school.

**In School Detention:** Is removal of a student from classes or activities. During this time the student will remain in an appropriate independent learning environment. No school activity, including sports, music, clubs or others will be allowed on the day of the in school detention.

During in school suspension, students will be isolated from their class for a minimum of one day, but will complete assigned lessons and homework for that day. Students will also complete a behavior contract which documents needed improvement and expectations for behavior change. Parents must agree to follow the behavior contract.

**Out of School Suspension:** This denies a student permission to attend school and participate in school activities. Make-up work will be given and graded at the discretion of the teacher.

**Expulsion:** Expulsion of a student from school is a serious matter. In some cases, the principal and or pastor may deem an action by a student so severe that it would result in immediate expulsion from school. This decision is the right and responsibility of the principal and or pastor. If expulsion is contemplated, notification will be provided to the parents. A conference may be held with the student, parent, pastor and or principal.

Grounds for suspension (in school or out of school) or expulsion may include but not limited to:

- Tobacco or alcohol possession, usage, transmission or sale on school grounds, at school

- related activities or on public school buses
- Profanity or obscene language, written, oral or pictorial directed to school personnel/students. This includes obscene gestures or signs
- Insubordination in refusing to comply with the directions of school personnel or school volunteers
- Theft of school property, personal property of another student or school personnel
- Falsifying by using (in writing) the name of another, or changing records of school data, including report cards
- False fire alarm or false 911 call
- Bringing any weapons, fireworks, smoke bombs, stink bombs, lighters or matches to school
- Fighting
- Misconduct after an in school suspension
- Bullying of another student or adult
- Disruptive or immoral behavior that presents a clear and present danger to oneself or others
- Assault and battery or sexual harassment of any school personnel/student while on school property, including busses or any school sponsored activity
- Damage to school or private property on school premises. Any damage to private property of any school/parish personnel. Total retribution is required for any repairs or replacement costs.
- Failure to comply with behavioral contract
- Repeated violation of school or classroom rules after disciplinary actions have been attempted

### **Dress Code General Guidelines (All Students)**

The wearing of a school uniform encourages discipline, concentration on learning, unity and eliminates competition. Putting on a uniform provides students with visual and subconscious cues that work is ready to begin. To promote good grooming and pride in oneself, students' clothing is to be clean, neat, and sized appropriately. If a style is in question, and it does not meet the requirements, parents will be called and a request will be made for proper attire to be brought to school.

The following discipline may be used in the event of a dress code violation:

- Warning to student
- A detention
- Contact parent
- Written or notice through FACTS about dress code violation

Consistent dress code violations will be addressed by administration.

**SCHOOL UNIFORM - [Schoolbelles.com](http://Schoolbelles.com)**

**BOYS – GRADES K-8**

- **Pants** - black or khaki with belt; elastic waistband permitted for grades K and 1 only
- **Belt** - brown or black leather (belt is required in grades 2 through 8)
- **Shorts** – (length no more than 4 inches above the knee) black or khaki walking shorts to the knee with belt; **elastic waistband permitted for grades K and 1 only. Shorts may be worn August through October and April through May.**
- **Shoes** – black, grey or brown – leather loafer
- **Socks** – **Plain** white, brown, khaki or black - must cover the ankle
- **Shirt** - black or red with collar; short or long sleeve with school monogram – May be purchased from Schoolbelles or Lands End - [www.landsend.com](http://www.landsend.com).
- Monogram ¼ Zip Black or Red ordered through RDP Sports
- **BOYS GRADES 6 – 8** - Boys in Grades 6-8 will be required to wear white oxford shirts (long or short sleeve) and the Saint Rita tie purchased from Schoolbelles on all school Mass Days.

## **GIRLS – Grades K-8**

- **Skirt** - (length no more than 4 inches above the knee) black, red and white checked skirt – wrap skirt or kick pleat skirt - **Purchased from Schoolbelles only.**
- **Pants** - black or khaki
- **Shorts** – (length no more than 4 inches above the knee) black or khaki walking shorts to the knee. **Shorts may be worn August through October and April through May.**
- **Shirt** – red or black banded shirt (short or long sleeve) **–Purchased from Schoolbelles only.** The banded shirt is worn with the skirt.
- **Shoes** - black, grey or brown - leather loafer, Saddle Shoe or Mary Janes (1" inch or less heels)
- **Socks** – **Plain** black or white (must cover ankle)
- **Tights or Leggings** – **Plain** white or black only
- **Monogram ¼ Zip** - Black or Red ordered through RDP Sports
- **Red monogram Cardigan sweater** - ordered through Schoolbelles
- **Hair Accessories** - solid white, black, red, grey or St. Rita plaid (including any beads)

## **Gym Attire – Grades K-8 (Boys & Girls)**

- **Shirt** - grey t-shirt purchased from RDP Sports
- **Shorts** - black with Saint Rita logo - purchased from RDP Sports – (length no more than 4 inches above the knee)
- **Sweatshirt** - black with Saint Rita logo - purchased from RDP Sports - worn in colder months
- **Sweatpants** - black with Saint Rita logo - purchased from RDP Sports - worn in colder months (must be worn over the gym shorts during the school day other than in gym class)
- **Shoes** - athletic shoes
- We do have used gym clothes available to any family that may be interested. Please call Shannon Johnson at 440-248-1350 x106 or email [sjohnson@stritaschool.com](mailto:sjohnson@stritaschool.com) to inquire

about availability.

## **Spirit Day Shirt**

On Friday's the students are permitted to wear Saint Rita Spiritwear shirts other than the uniform shirt. This includes team jerseys for CYO sports. Students must wear their uniform bottom and school uniform shoes.

## **Out-of-Uniform Days**

Students may be out-of-uniform for birthdays (dress up or dress down) and any other days designated by the principal.

### **Grades K-8:**

- No tanks, sleeveless shirts, or shirts with narrow straps.
- No tops that are revealing, have low cut necklines, or expose bare midriffs when sitting, stretching, stooping, etc.
- No yoga pants, pajama pants, knit pants, tear away pants, leggings, jeggings, no pants with holes in them, or any pants with writing on the back or sides. Pants may not be worn low-waisted or sagging. Capris may be worn. Skirts or dresses (length no more than 4 inches above the knee)
- Shorts may be worn from August-October and April-May. Shorts should be no more than 4 inches from the knee and have no holes.
- Shoes – athletic, no flip flops, slides, sandals without backs, shoes with wheels, or crocs.
- No inappropriate words, designs, pictures, or gestures on any clothing.

## **Additional Dress Code Guidelines**

**Hair:** is to be well groomed with styles appropriate for our Catholic school. No fad hair styles such as mohawks, shaved parts of head, designs, or initials, etc. No unnaturally dyed hair permitted. Boys' hair is to be above the collar, eyebrow, and ears and no more than 3" in length from the scalp. Ears and eyes must be completely visible. Boys will be clean shaven. Sunglasses, hats, and baseball caps are not permitted in school.

**Make-Up:** is not permitted. Eye make-up including eye shadow, eye liner and mascara is not permitted. Tattoos and body piercing are NOT permitted. Wearing of perfume is also not permitted.

**Birthdays:** On birthdays, students may dress up or dress down using the given guidelines.

**Jewelry:** One set of small post earrings or small hoops are permitted for the girls. Boys may not wear earrings. Only one necklace, bracelet, ring or chain may be worn. A simple wrist watch that only tells time can be worn (ex: no fit bit or apple watch).

## **Purchase Plaid School Uniform**

School uniforms are purchased from Schoolbelles. The plaid uniform must be purchased from

Schoolbelles. Parents may also choose to purchase pants and shorts at local retailers such as Old Navy, Kohl's or Target. The monogrammed polos are to be purchased from Schoolbelles (boys and girls) or Lands End (boys only).

Orders can also be placed online [Schoolbelles.com](http://Schoolbelles.com). At the prompt, type in our school code-S0011-- and only Saint Rita School uniforms will be displayed.

### **Purchase Monogram Logos**

The monogrammed polos may be purchased at **Schoolbelles or Lands End (boys only)** [www.landsend.com](http://www.landsend.com)

### **Purchase Gym Uniforms**

Saint Rita School Gym Wear is purchased through RDP Sports Plus. Online orders/payments are available by going to <https://rdpsports.com> and clicking on the "Saint Rita" option. The school password is: rita2013. RDP Sports Plus is located at 9261 Ravenna Road, Suite B-8, Twinsburg.

### **Purchase Monogram Logos**

- The monogrammed polos may be purchased at **Schoolbelles or Lands End (boys only)** [www.landsend.com](http://www.landsend.com)

## **MEDICAL POLICIES**

All medications must be dropped off at the school clinic by a parent/guardian in its original unopened container or box.

### **Parent Request for Administration of Medication by School**

No prescription medication shall be given without a Prescriber and Parent Request for the Administration of Medication at School Form (MAR), indicating dosage and other pertinent information. To protect your child(ren) it is required that both the prescriber and parent signatures must be on file for prescriptions. For non-prescription medications only a parent signature is required.

**If your child is highly allergic or has a severe medical condition, please call the school prior to the first day of class and ask the child's physician to provide the school with a written plan of care.** A medical plan must be on file for students with medical conditions that require a higher level of care such as allergies that require an epi pen, diabetes, asthma, seizures, etc. Forms may be obtained by contacting the school nurse's office at 440-248-1350 ext. 123/136 or [nurse@stritaschool.com](mailto:nurse@stritaschool.com).

### **Medical Policies and Management of Communicable Diseases**

If a communicable disease has been diagnosed in a child, the school nurse will determine if a

letter/email will be sent to each family to inform the parents about what their child has been exposed to.

If a child becomes ill/injured during the school day, he/she will report to the clinic as soon as possible. If the illness/injury requires further treatment the nurse will contact the parent/guardian to arrange for the child to go home. Please do not send your child to school if he/she has:

- A temperature of 99 degrees Fahrenheit by auxiliary (under the arm) method
- Vomiting (one time)/nausea
- Diarrhea
- Undiagnosed/untreated skin rash
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Stiff neck
- Unusually dark urine and or gray or white stool
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis (pink-eye): Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) discharge or matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Sore throat
- Evidence of lice, ringworm, pinworm, or scabies infestation
- Severe coughing

In order to minimize transmission of Communicable Diseases, please keep your child/children home and notify the office immediately if your child/children has any one of the following: Chicken Pox, Croup, Diarrheal Disease, Fifth Disease, Flu, Hand Foot and Mouth Disease, Hep A, Herpes Simplex Virus, Impetigo, Lice, Measles, Meningitis, Mumps, RSV, Scarlet Fever/Strep Throat, or Whooping Cough.

**Fever Policy** - If a child has a fever of 99 or above, the student may not attend school and cannot return to school until child is fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications.

**Strep Throat Policy** - A child may not return to school following a positive strep throat culture until they have completed a full 48 hours of medication and have been fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications.

**Conjunctivitis Policy** - A child must leave school and be seen by a doctor if they have a suspected case of conjunctivitis (pink-eye). A child may not return to school until they have had a complete 24 hours of treatment and there is no discharge coming from the eyes.

**Head Lice Policy** - Saint Rita has a no-nit policy. This means a child found to have head lice may not return to school until all nits (eggs) and lice are completely removed from the student's hair. Upon returning to school, students must be checked by the nurse before returning to his/her classroom. Parents need to be vigilant as well, especially during outbreaks.

## **SAINT RITA PROCEDURAL EXPECTATIONS & RULES**

### **Birthday Celebrations**

**Birthday treats may be sent in with your child – non-edible only.** On birthdays, students may dress up or dress down using the given guidelines.

Please note that invitations to special events need to be mailed from the home. Invitations are not to be passed out in school where other students may be hurt by not receiving one.

### **Care of Books and Technology**

Children are to assume responsibility for the books and technology they borrow from the school. Personal backpacks/book bags are to be used for carrying books to and from school. Parents are financially responsible for the loss of or damage to textbooks, technology, and library books borrowed by the student. Backpacks on wheels are not permitted for safety reasons.

### **Cell Phone**

Cell phones and electronic watches may only be brought to school under the following conditions:

- Phones and electronic watches must be kept in the OFF position and in a backpack in the locker during school hours, including recess and field trips.
- No cell phones or electronic watches may be used for picture taking or recording.
- No harassment or threatening of persons via the cell phone or electronic watches are permitted.
- Cell phones or electronic watches may not be used for game playing, Internet, e-mail, texting, gambling or making purchases of any kind, taking pictures or texting to cheat.

A report of a student using a cell phone or electronic watch during school hours or the ringing of a cell phone or electronic watch during the school day will result in the confiscation of the offender's phone or watch, a detention issued, and parents being required to pick up the phone or watch in the school office.

If a second violation of the rules regarding cell phones or electronic watches occurs, the student will be issued a detention and banned from bringing a cell phone or watch to school for the rest of the year.

### **Electronics**

No MP3 players, magazines, cameras, iPods, electronic watches, laser pointers, or electronic games may be brought to or used during school or recess. Students found disobeying this directive are subject to immediate disciplinary action. In the event of loss or theft the school is not responsible for financial reimbursement of personal property.

### **Emergency School Closing**

If the Solon or Twinsburg School Systems are closed, Saint Rita School is closed. If Aurora is closed

due to severe weather, there is NO busing to Saint Rita School from these districts but we will remain open if Solon or Twinsburg has not closed.

Saint Rita School follows the Solon and Twinsburg School Districts for school closings due to inclement weather. If either school district is closed, Saint Rita School is also closed. If either district delays 2 hours, Saint Rita will be closed.

Parents are advised to do one of the following if they suspect Saint Rita School is closed: check the local news broadcast for school closings or listen to the radio. Saint Rita School also utilizes an automated phone call service that will notify families of all school closings. You will be given an opportunity to opt-out of this automated phone service if you choose not to participate.

**Delayed Start:** If a district calls a delayed start, please keep in mind that Saint Rita School does not follow that schedule. If your home district is on a delayed start, you must either drive your child to school or send your child on the bus at the delayed time. If you choose the delayed time, your child will be responsible for any make-up work he/she missed. If Twinsburg or Solon delays 2 hours, Saint Rita will be closed.

## **Family Vacations**

Scheduling a vacation during a time when school is in session causes a serious interruption in the instructional process and cannot be reproduced by a workbook page. At times when this is unavoidable, parents must notify the school in writing and a vacation request form will be sent home. The days that a child will not be present in school should be stated, along with other requested information. If parents decide to take students out of school for vacation, they may check their teachers' homework and assignment postings on FACTS or Google classroom while away. Teachers are not required to give work and assignments individually ahead of time.

We strongly discourage taking children out of school for vacation. If a student is taken out of school, the student is responsible for all class work and homework missed due to absence. It is the teacher's discretion whether to send homework with students on vacation or have them complete it upon return. If makeup work is given in advance, it is due the first day upon the student's return to school. Absent work policy does not apply for vacations.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are pre-planned educational experiences related to the curriculum and followed by evaluation. Although field trips are educationally based, students may be denied participation if they fail to meet behavior standards or parental permission requirements. A substitute assignment or project will be given to a student who cannot attend a class field trip.

## **Movement between Buildings**

Students are monitored when moving between buildings. The adult appointed to be in charge will supervise the students during all school activities that require outdoor movement.

## **Personal Property/Clothing**

All items/clothing should be clearly labeled with the student's full name. In the event of loss or theft, the school is not responsible for financial reimbursement of personal property.

## **Playground/Recess**

Play equipment is provided by the school for recess. Students must follow the directions of the recess monitors. Toys should not be brought from home. Saint Rita School is not responsible for any toy or games brought to school. The Principal or his/her designate shall determine whether recess will be outdoors. Anytime the temperature is below 20 degrees, recess will be held within the classrooms. Wind chill will also be considered in the decision.

## **Playground Recess Rules**

- Student health and safety is our primary concern.
- The buildings are off limits during recess except for restroom use. NOTE: Student must obtain permission from the playground supervisor to use the bathroom.
- Students have access to all visible areas of the grass and black top.
- During the months of December through March, children will play on the blacktop only.
- Students are to remain within the marked areas on the playground.
- Students should speak to one another in a kind and respectful manner.
- Keep hands, feet, and body to oneself.
- Students are never to leave the playground without permission from a playground supervisor.
- Soccer or playground balls may only be kicked while on the grass.
- Dangerous, expensive toys/objects/electronics must be left at home, i.e., bats (wood or metal), hard balls, sharp objects, radios, game boys, DS, etc.
- There will be no tolerance for physical or verbal abuse. Students will be reprimanded for using threatening words such as "I am going to kill you."
- All games and activities are open to anyone who wishes to participate, including those involving playground balls brought from home. Game participation restrictions by grade level may be approved by the playground supervisor.
- If an appropriate ball is brought from home, it should be labeled plainly with the student's name and homeroom.
- Throwing or kicking of rocks, sticks, pine cones, snowballs, etc. is a danger to other students and is not allowed.
- Only playground balls that are 6" in diameter or larger are allowed for play by the primary students during recess.
- Dangerous games are not allowed. These include tackling, kicking, piggyback, tripping, wrestling, pushing, games involving a ball being thrown at someone, and any other activity designated as dangerous by the playground supervisors.
- No play or pretend fighting is allowed.
- The participation in recess activities is a privilege; therefore, any inappropriate play will result in the loss of these privileges.

Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by these rules. Infractions will be dealt with by the supervisor on recess duty. Repeated offenders will be instructed to report to the teacher or principal to determine a fair consequence depending upon the frequency and severity of the infraction(s)

### **Trading Cards (Pokémon, Sports, etc.)**

Trading cards are not to be brought to school for any reason. They are not permitted in the classroom, at lunch or recess, or in aftercare. There have been too many instances of cards disappearing and coerced trading. If trading cards are brought to school, they will be taken from the student and the parent will have to pick the cards up in the office.

### **After School Activities**

No students have permission to be on the property after school closes unless they are involved in an extra-curricular activity under the supervision of an adult.

## **SAINT RITA PROCEDURAL COMPLAINT POLICIES**

### **Complaint Procedure**

Saint Rita School expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying/harassment to the principal or his/her designee. Staff members are expected to immediately intervene when they see a bullying/harassment incident occur. "A school employee, student, or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with a policy if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying promptly in good faith and in compliance with the procedures specified in the policy." (ODE Model Policy, Rev.03/05/14/07 #2.2.11)

The principal, upon receiving a complaint, will notify parents or guardians of any student involved in a prohibited incident and provide access to any written reports pertaining to the prohibited incident within the spirit of the Ohio Revised Code 3319.321 (hereinafter designated as O.R.C.) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended.

The principal may appoint an investigator. Any evidence of the harassment, including but not limited to letters, tapes, and pictures should be turned over to the principal. The principal has the authority to initiate an investigation in the absence of a written complaint.

Any witness to the event is encouraged to complete a form provided by the principal. Information received during the investigation is kept confidential to the extent possible.

Saint Rita School prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant, witness or any participant in the complaint process. Any person who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

## Bus Conduct

The following regulations pertain to school bus conduct and are intended to ensure the safety and welfare of the students, the bus driver, and other drivers on the road and to ensure the safety and proper maintenance of school buses.

Students will:

- Adhere to the rules of the school district that operates the bus.
- Be careful in approaching bus stops – walk to the left, toward oncoming traffic; be sure the road is clear both ways before crossing the highway.
- Be on time for the bus in order to permit the bus to follow the time schedule.
- Sit in assigned seats: bus drivers have the right to assign a student to a seat in the bus and to expect reasonable conduct in a manner similar to that of a teacher in a classroom.
- Reach assigned seat in the bus without disturbing or crowding other students and remain seated while the bus is moving.
- Obey the driver promptly and respectfully at all times.
- Keep the bus clean and sanitary; no eating on the bus at any time including chewing gum, candy or soft drinks.
- Do not engage in loud talking or laughing. Unnecessary confusion diverts the driver's attention and may result in a serious accident.
- Be courteous to fellow students and the bus driver.
- Treat bus equipment as they would treat valuable furniture in their home.
- Remain seated until the bus stops to unload and wait for the signal from the bus driver and then cross the road in front of the bus.
- Only bring items on the bus that can be held on the lap. Larger items will need to be transported in another way.
- Aurora, Solon and Twinsburg School Districts do not permit bus passes for nonresidents of their respective district. A district may allow a resident student to take a different bus home. Parents are advised to contact the appropriate school district regarding their bus pass rules.

## Cigarettes, Chewing Tobacco, and E-Cigarette Policy

Recently we have become aware of an unfortunate trend among high school and middle school students nationwide - the use of e-cigarettes, also known as “**vaping**.” E-cigarettes deliver a nicotine high through heated vapor. A recent study has found that "vaping" is on the rise among teenagers. We are updating the Parent Handbook to include this new trend and behavior which identifies the use of tobacco, including e-cigarettes & vaping as a major violation, carrying the penalty of a potential suspension.

Smoking and chewing tobacco are strictly prohibited at school or school-sponsored events. This includes the use of any tobacco products including, but not limited to, e-cigarettes and personal vaporizers. Students may not carry tobacco, cigarettes, matches, e-cigarette paraphernalia or

other smoking material on their person. Students in violation of this policy will receive appropriate discipline.

### **Drug Policy: Regarding Possession, Sale, Use or Abuse**

Possession of controlled substances is a crime. If drugs or evidence of drugs are found, the police will be immediately contacted.

We recognize that alcohol and drug abuse is a serious societal problem, not limited to any age group. The dependency stage of alcohol and drug abuse is a treatable illness and we strive to support our families should this illness be identified. We also provide an educational program that addresses the challenges and responsibilities of alcohol and drug abuse use in the effort to steer our students to make healthy, life-giving choices. We also recognize that we have an obligation to the individual child as well as the welfare of the entire student body.

Continuing education programs for parents, students and teachers convey the message that drug and alcohol abuse is harmful and usage is not permitted. Prevention programs are implemented at middle school grade levels.

### **Sexual Harassment**

For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Disseminating obscene or sexually explicit material, whether in the form of music, written lyrics, pornographic pictures transmitted through cell phones or the internet or other literature;
- Having such material in one's possession in the school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities;
- Obscene or sexually explicit graffiti anywhere in the school or on the school/parish grounds, continuing and unwanted written or oral communication directed to another of a sexual nature;
- Spreading sexual rumors/innuendos;
- Obscene T-shirts, hats, or buttons;
- Touching oneself sexually in front of others;
- Obscene and/or sexually explicit gestures; and
- Any other inappropriate behavior of a sexually explicit or obscene nature that demeans or offends the recipient.

The above list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but is intended to provide guidance as to what may constitute sexual harassment.

Allegations of sexual harassment (as listed above) are to be reported to the teacher and the principal. Parents of both the offender and the victim will be informed of the allegations. The matter is to be kept confidential by all parties involved, and every effort will be made to protect the alleged victim from retaliation. The parents of both the offender and the victim are obligated to cooperate in remedying the situation.

Some forms of sexual harassment of a student by another student may be considered a form of child abuse, which will require that the student-abuser be reported to proper authorities.

**Sexual Violence:** Some acts of sexual harassment may also be criminal in nature. If an incident of sexual violence occurs, the principal, pastor or other school authority is required under state law to report the incident. (O.R.C. 2151.421). The Department of Human Services and the police will be contacted immediately if there is any knowledge or suspicion that sexual abuse or violence has occurred involving a child less than eighteen years of age. Generally, sexual harassment should be construed as sexual violence when: the recipient is physically touched without his/her consent in a sexual manner; is expressly threatened or perceives a threat of physical harm for purposes of the offender's sexual gratification; or is the victim of sex offenses under Ohio law, including: Gross Sexual Imposition (O.R.C. 2907.05), Sexual Battery (O.R.C. 2907.03), Rape (O.R.C. 2907.02), Importuning (O.R.C. 2907.07), Voyeurism (O.R.C. 2907.08), Public Indecency (O.R.C. 2907.09 or Felonious Sexual Penetration (O.R.C. 2907.12).

**Gender/Ethnic/Religious/Disability Harassment:**

- Written or oral innuendoes, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's gender, national origin, religious beliefs, etc., toward a fellow student, staff member or other person associated with the school;
- 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.

**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.

**Physical Contact:** Any intimidating or disparaging action such as hitting, hissing, or spitting on a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the school.

Any student who believes that he/she is the victim of any of the above actions or has observed such actions taken by another student should contact with the principal.

The student may make contact either by a written account, by telephone, or by personal visit. During this contact, the reporting student should provide the name of person(s) whom he/she believes to be responsible for the harassment/bullying and the nature of the harassment/bullying incident(s). A written summary of such report will be prepared promptly and a copy forwarded to the pastor.

Each report will be investigated in as timely and confidential a manner as possible. While under investigation, no information will be released to anyone who is not involved with the investigation, except as may be required by law or in the context of a legal or administrative proceeding. No one involved is to discuss the subject under investigation.

If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, then appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action will be taken promptly to prevent continuance of the harassment or its recurrence.

Given the nature of the harassing/bullying behavior, the school recognizes that false accusations can have serious effects on innocent individuals. Therefore, all students are expected to act responsibly, honestly, and with the utmost candor whenever they present harassment/bullying allegations or charges.

**Student Threats:** Any and all student threats to inflict any harm to self or to others will be taken seriously and immediate action will take place. Action will be as follows:

- Threats reported to the principal will be investigated in a timely manner.
- The student will remain in the principal's office under supervision.
- The parent/guardian of the student who has made the threat shall be notified immediately.
- The student may be placed on "home study" or suspended until a comprehensive mental health evaluation or risk assessment has been conducted by a psychiatrist and/or psychologist (PhD). Upon completion of the primary evaluation, the psychiatrist/psychologist shall determine the need for psychiatric consultation. The evaluation shall comply with the provision of O.R.C. 2305.51.
- The principal shall provide the mental health care professional (psychiatrist and/or psychologist (PhD)) with all relevant facts, including but not limited to, aggressive behavior, details of the threat as known to the principal, copies of any drawings or writings, disciplinary history of the student, behavioral concerns, and the names of any known victims or potential victims.
- The principal shall receive a written, comprehensive, detailed evaluation and report and address the concerns raised by the principal to the mental health care professional. The evaluation and report shall be made available to the principal who will share them with legal and/or mental health care consultants and administration assisting the principal in his/her documented treatment plan in accordance with O.R. C. 2305.51. The mental health care professional's opinion (reached by factual and risk factors and testing results) will help to determine if the student poses a danger to self or others. The report shall also make an evaluation regarding the readmission of the student to school. If the student is readmitted to school, the psychiatrist or psychologist (PhD) shall provide a follow-up assessment of the student within thirty (30) days. This assessment shall be provided to the principal and shall inform him/her if therapy, counseling, and/or treatment will be needed and/or provided.

Documentation from the mental health care professionals concerning any student is to be placed in a separate, confidential file and should not be a part of the student's academic/disciplinary file with access only by the principal and/or pastor. This documentation may be kept for a period of one year beyond the time when the child leaves the school as a result of expulsion, withdrawal by parent/guardian, graduation, or non-readmission before being destroyed.

**Searches:** All property of the school, including students' desks and lockers as well as their contents may be opened, searched or inspected at any time and without notice. School personnel have an unrestricted right to search these structures as well as any containers, backpacks, purses or articles of clothing as well as other containers left unattended on school property.

**Youth Gangs:** A gang is defined as any non-school sponsored group, possibly of secret and/or exclusive membership, whose purpose or practices include the commission of illegal acts, unlawful or anti-social behavior, violation of school rules, establishment of territory or “turf,” or any action that threatens the safety or welfare of others or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

**Consequences:** If a student is suspected or identified as being a member of a gang, shows interest in joining a gang, initiates or participates in any gang-related activities, or has been approached for recruitment, any or all of the following steps may be taken:

- Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and appropriate intervention initiated.
- A behavior contract will be prepared stating the behavior conditions for the student in order to remain in the school.
- Student may be referred to counseling (personal and/or family).
- Student may be referred to Children Services or other welfare or childcare agencies of the respective county.
- Student may be referred to outside agencies or programs for treatment when use of drugs and/or alcohol is involved.
- Police, Juvenile Court and other appropriate authorities will be notified of violence and/or illegal activities.
- Student may be suspended and/or expelled as already outlined in the school discipline policies.
- Parents/student will be held liable and financially responsible for all forms of vandalism.

**Weapons:** Saint Rita School prohibits the use, possession, sale, or discharge of any weapons, dangerous objects, dangerous ordinances and instruments or explosive devices in the school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities. This policy applies to all students, participants in parish programs, teachers, administrators, volunteers, and other personnel in the school or parish.

This policy includes, but is not limited to, any firearm, knife, dangerous object, object used as a weapon, deadly weapon, or an object that is indistinguishable from a deadly weapon, or explosive or incendiary device. An object that is indistinguishable from a deadly weapon is prohibited if a person indicates that he/she possesses the object and further indicates that it is a deadly weapon or the person brandishes or displays the object and indicates that it is a deadly weapon. A deadly weapon is any “instrument, device, or thing capable of inflicting death, and designed or specifically adapted for use as a weapon, or possessed and used as a weapon” (O.R.C. 2923.211(A)). Firearms shall include any loaded or unloaded gun of any caliber or type. This prohibition includes any pistol, rifle, or other device that uses air or gas propelled projectiles.

Violators of this policy usually warrant notification of the police, immediate suspension, and possible expulsion. If possession of a weapon is suspected, the principal or other administrator shall immediately call the police department and the area superintendent before confronting the individual. If it is determined that this policy has been violated, the parents of the violator will be immediately contacted and must cooperate with the disciplinary procedures.

## **Anti-Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy**

Saint Rita School teaches belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person. We believe that all students, school employees and volunteers have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. All members of the school community, in turn, have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

The principal will provide staff development training in bullying prevention and cultivate acceptance and understanding in all students and staff to build each school's capacity to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment. Teachers should discuss this policy with their students in age appropriate ways and should assure them that they need not endure any form of bullying.

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying behavior by any student/school personnel in Saint Rita School is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying," in accordance with House Bill 276, means any intentional written, verbal, graphic or physical acts including electronically transmitted acts (i.e. Internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA)), or wireless hand-held device, either overt or covert, by a student or group of students toward other students/school personnel with the intent to harass, intimidate, injure, threaten, ridicule or humiliate. Such behaviors are prohibited on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know the effect of:

- Causing mental or physical harm to the other student/school personnel including placing an individual in reasonable fear of physical harm and/or damaging of students'/personal property; and
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for the other student/school personnel. Saint Rita School will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student, school employee, or volunteer. A student, school employee or volunteer shall not intimidate or harass another student, school employee or volunteer through words or actions whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school or at school sponsored events, or from any computer not on school property.

**Definition:** "Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students, school employee or volunteer exhibited toward another particular student, school employee or volunteer more than once and the behavior both:

- Causes mental or physical harm to the other
- Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other. Such behavior includes overt intent to

ridicule, humiliate or intimidate another student, school employee or volunteer. Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include:

1. Physical violence and/or attacks
2. Threats, taunts and intimidation through words and/or gestures;
3. Extortion, damage or stealing of money and/or possessions;
4. Exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors; and
5. Repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other Web-based/online sites (also known as “cyber bullying”), such as the following:
  - Posting slurs on web sites where students congregate or on web logs (personal online journals or diaries)
  - Sending abusive or threatening instant messages
  - Using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs of students and posting them online
  - Using web sites to circulate gossip and rumors to other students, excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting them for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

**Procedure for the Alleged Victim:**

1. Communicate to the harasser that the individual expects the behavior to stop, if the individual is comfortable doing so. If the individual wants assistance communicating with the harasser, the individual should ask a teacher, counselor or principal to help.
2. If the harassment does not stop, or the individual does not feel comfortable confronting the harasser, the individual should:
  - Tell a teacher, counselor or principal
  - Write down exactly what happened, keep a copy and give another copy to the teacher, counselor or principal including:
    - What, when and where it happened
    - Who was involved
    - Exactly what was said or what the harasser did
    - Witnesses to the harassment
    - What the student said or did, either at the time or later
    - How the student felt
    - How the harasser responded

**Complaint Procedure:** Saint Rita School expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or his/her designee. Staff members are expected to

immediately intervene when they see a bullying incident occur. "A school employee, student, or volunteer shall be individually immune from liability in a civil action for damages arising from reporting an incident in accordance with a policy if that person reports an incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying promptly in good faith and in compliance with the procedures specified in the policy." (ODE Model Policy, Rev. 03, 05/14/07 #2.2.11.) 56 The principal/ upon receiving a complaint must notify parents or guardians of any student involved in a prohibited incident and must provide access to any written reports pertaining to the prohibited incident within the spirit of the Ohio Revised Code 3319.321 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended.

The principal may appoint an investigator. The complainant completes an Anti-Harassment/Bullying Complaint Form. Any evidence of the harassment, including but not limited to letters, tapes and pictures should be turned over to the investigator. Each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated. The investigator, with the approval of the principal, or the principal has the authority to initiate an investigation in the absence of a written complaint.

Any witness to the event is encouraged to complete an Anti-Harassment/Bullying Witness Disclosure Form. Information received during the investigation is kept confidential to the extent possible.

Saint Rita School prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant, witness or any participant in the complaint process. Any person who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

**Investigation Procedure:** It is imperative that harassment, intimidation, or bullying be identified only when the specific elements of the definition are met because the designation of such prohibited incidents carry special statutory obligations. However, misconduct by one student against another student, whether appropriately defined or not, will result in appropriate disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator.

In evaluating whether conduct constitutes harassment, intimidation or bullying, special attention should be paid to the words chosen or the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim, and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred.

The investigator will reasonably and promptly commence the investigation upon receipt of the complaint. The investigator will interview the complainant and the alleged harasser. The alleged harasser may file a written statement in response to the complaint. The investigator may also interview witnesses as deemed appropriate.

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator will make written findings and conclusions as to each allegation of harassment and report the findings and conclusions to the principal. The investigator will provide a copy of the findings of the investigation to the principal.

**Resolution of the Complaint:** Following receipt of the investigator's report, the principal may investigate further, if deemed necessary, and make a determination of any appropriate

additional steps that may include discipline. Prior to the determination of the appropriate remedial action, the principal may, at the principal's discretion, interview the complainant and the alleged 57 harasser. The principal will file a written report closing the case and documenting any disciplinary action taken or any other action taken in response to the complaint. The complainant, the alleged harasser and the investigator will receive notice as to the conclusion of the investigation. The principal will maintain a log of information necessary to comply with Ohio Department of Education reporting procedures.

**Points to Remember in the Investigation:**

- Evidence uncovered in the investigation is confidential
- Complaints must be taken seriously and investigated
- No retaliation will be taken against individuals involved in the investigation process
- Retaliators will be disciplined up to and including suspension and expulsion

**Conflicts:** If the investigator is a witness to the incident, an alternate investigator shall be appointed to investigate.

**Elastic Clause**

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems that arise, this clause empowers the faculty and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior which violates the spirit, mission, and philosophy of Saint Rita School even though not specified under conduct and discipline. The guiding principle is to ensure a safe, nurturing environment conducive to learning. The definition of what constitutes serious behavior is determined by the administration with assistance from the Diocesan guidelines. The order in which steps are taken in following the school's disciplinary actions are determined by the administration and when necessary by a faculty member, as deemed necessary for the circumstance at hand.

**Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy  
Diocese of Cleveland**

**Intent**

Students may, in the administration's and faculty's discretion, learn how to use artificial intelligence ("AI") text generators and other AI-based assistive resources (collectively, AI tools) to enhance rather than damage their developing abilities as writers and thinkers. The following requirements constitute our school's AI use policy, in addition to all of the requirements in our Code of Conduct:

### **Students shall:**

- Not use AI tools in connection with any assignments, quizzes, tests, or examinations unless explicitly permitted and instructed and in such case students must following the instructions for AI use.
- Give credit to AI tools whenever used, even if only to generate ideas rather than usable text or illustrations.
- Use AI tools wisely and intelligently, aiming to deepen understanding of subject matter and to support learning rather than as a replacement for student work.

### **Instructors will:**

- Seek to understand how AI tools work, including their strengths and weaknesses, to optimize their value for student learning.
- Employ AI detection tools where appropriate to evaluate the degree to which AI tools have likely been employed.
- Impose an appropriate disciplinary consequence for inappropriate use of AI tools.

## **VIRTUS VOLUNTEER SCREENING PROCESS**

**Virtus Training** - To maintain the highest level of safety for our children and our volunteers, St. Rita Parish is continuing to adopt a screening process for all employees and volunteers who have access to our students.

“**Virtus**” is a Latin word that means, “**valor or moral excellence.**” The Virtus Program assists our Church in being a safe haven for children and a messenger for preventing child sexual abuse within the Church and society in general.

**If you wish to volunteer in our school** - chaperone field trips, volunteer for lunch monitor, help during classroom holiday parties, coach a CYO team, volunteer in the library, etc., the following items must be completed in our volunteer screening process: Our screening process includes four areas:

- A signed acknowledgment form must be on file with the parish office that read a cop the “**Policy for the Safety of Children in Matters of Sexual Abuse**” written by the Diocese of Cleveland.
- A signed acknowledgment form must be on file with the parish office that you have read, and will comply with the “**Standards of Conduct for Ministry**” written by the Diocese of Cleveland.
- Virtus Training – Virtus is a three hour training course that must be completed. There is no cost to you. . Visit [www.Virtus.org](http://www.Virtus.org) to register. Click on “registration” then “view a list of sessions”. Select “Cleveland Diocese” to find a session to attend. Upon completion of the session, send a copy of your certificate to the parish office to verify your attendance.

- To complete your volunteer requirements, in your Virtus account click TOOLBOX on the top bar, then choose background check on the sidebar, and fill in the information. The process takes about 10 minutes and is easy to follow. There is a onetime \$25 fee to register with Selection.com.

If you are new to Saint Rita School, and are already VIRTUS trained, please provide a copy of your certification to our School office. You will still need to perform a Criminal Background Check in the TOOLBOX section of your Virtus account.