



Your path. Your connection. Our journey.

# ***PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK 2021-2022***

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# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## **I. Mission Statement**

*Within our diverse cultural environment and our ministry to Pre-K through eighth grade students, St. John the Baptist Catholic School community is committed to teaching Catholic principles and values, striving for personal academic excellence, and developing Christ-like leadership through service to others.*

### **Our Creed**

#### **We believe:**

- a. That as a Catholic school, we are dedicated to working toward a common understanding of a dependence on Jesus as a teacher, friend and Lord.
- b. That by our example, we hope to develop in our students an awareness of who Jesus is and a desire to live by His teachings.
- c. That a Catholic education is an expression of the mission entrusted by Jesus to the Church.
- d. That education is one of the most important ways by which the Church fulfills its commitment to the dignity of the person and the building of the community.
- e. That Christian education is intended to make people's faith become living, conscious and active through the light of instruction.
- f. That St. John the Baptist Catholic School must integrate religious truth and values with the rest of life.
- g. That the Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Catholic practice. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (#2118) teaches that because the Eucharist is the heart and center of our faith, 'the faithful are obligated to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason.' Therefore, we agree that our child/children will attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. From the beginning of Second Grade, our child/children will turn in a weekly church envelope at Mass, submitting a good deed, a monetary offering or both. Further, it is understood that attendance at Mass will be a condition upon which the child is to be admitted to our school.

## **II. Administrative Staff**

### **A. Principal**

The Principal is the responsible, administrative head of the School. It is the Principal's responsibility to provide Catholic educational leadership for the members of the staff and the School system. The Principal attends all meetings of the St. John Advisory Board and implement the policies established by the Board. Provides assistance, whenever possible, to all teachers and is available for parental concerns. The Principal maintains all of the School records required by law, attends (personally or by representative) all School-sponsored activities and evaluates and supervises the professional staff. The Principal is responsible for all official School communication and most importantly maximizes student learning.

### **B. Assistant Principal**

The assistant principal has a wide variety of duties that include student discipline, staff supervision, oversight of the curriculum, textbook orders, supply orders, state compliance, and more. The assistant principal serves as Principal in the absence of the Principal.

## **III. Instructional Staff**

### **A. Employment**

1. Teacher applications must be processed through the Diocesan School Office.
2. According to Diocesan School Office Regulations, all applicants to St. John the Baptist Catholic School must be certified by the State of Indiana (or be actively seeking certification in Indiana).

3. The salary schedule adopted by the Diocese shall be followed. (Revised 2021)
4. Teachers must fulfill diocesan requirements by becoming Virtus trained, be compliant with training bulletins and submit to an extended criminal background check.

#### ***B. Duties and Responsibilities***

1. A teacher's role is, in part, that of assessing each child's needs and potential. Following from this assessment, the teacher will provide the atmosphere wherein thinking is stimulated and student learning takes place.
2. As a Catholic school educator, the teacher should assist in the formation of a Christian attitude in the student.
3. The teacher should inform the parents about the academic progress and conduct of their child.
4. In planning for special activities (i.e., field trips, etc.), the teacher must receive prior approval from the Principal and written approval from the parents.
5. Teachers will attend and participate in all in-service or other teachers' meetings of the School.
6. The teacher shall be professional in his/her attire as well as their demeanor towards colleagues.

#### **IV. Tuition Policy**

The amount of tuition is set each year by the Finance Committee, with the approval of the Pastor in consultation with the Principal. Tuition rates are based upon the projected cost of educating a child which includes additional expenses associated with:

- Salaries and benefits mandated by the Diocese
- Professional development to maintain a highly qualified staff
- Continuous improvement to the academic program
- Utilities and inflation rates
- Infrastructure costs associated with the upkeep of an aging and much-utilized building
- Cost of educational material.
- ***Please note: The school and parish operate on a strict budget so it is necessary that all tuition payments be made when due via FACTS Tuition Management.***
- Payments not received by the due date will have late fees applied.
- Book fees are included in the tuition.
- Tuition payments are no longer taken in the Main Office. St. John the Baptist Catholic School (SJB) has partnered with *FACTS Tuition Management* to manage tuition payments. By moving to a tuition management system, SJB joins other private schools utilizing such services to better serve families. The partnership with *FACTS* allows for a confidential system where families can see for themselves a complete report of their tuition account. A secure log-in ID enables parents to view and edit your own profile, including your contact information, payment options and much more. You can review and print your monthly billing details and payment history at any time of the day. ***Enrollment in the program is mandatory!*** If you have questions regarding your account please contact the FACTS Help Center at **866-441-4637** which is open for your convenience 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- The registration fee must be paid at the time of registration and is ***non-refundable***.
- The technology fee, per student in Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, must be paid prior to May 15<sup>th</sup> of the preceding year, or at the time of registration for a new family.
- There is a \$35.00 handling fee for all checks returned for insufficient funds. Cash or money orders will only be accepted thereafter.
- Post-dated checks are not acceptable.
- **Report cards, transcripts, or other official school records will not be accessible to parents whose tuition and other fees are delinquent at the end of any grading period.**
- Any student whose tuition and/or fees are outstanding at the time of graduation will not receive their diploma at the time of the Graduation Ceremony. A blank page will be placed inside the diploma cover. SJB will not release report

cards/official transcripts until all outstanding tuition and fees are paid in full.

- ***Tuition and fees must be paid in full by April 30<sup>th</sup>. If payment in full is not received by May 1<sup>st</sup>, registration for the next school year will be invalid and records will not be released.***
- Families whose ancillary charges, including Lunch, Helping Hands, Library and related assessments, are not paid in full by **April 30<sup>th</sup>** may have their students removed from the school until all delinquent payments are made.
- Payments made after April 15<sup>th</sup> must be made by cash or money order only. Checks are not accepted.
- Payments for next year's tuition can be made after July 1<sup>st</sup> according to your FACTS payment schedule.
- ***Student transcripts and records will not be released if there remains an outstanding balance.***
- **In case of an extended learning period related to any public health and safety, or severe weather event, the school will provide continuous education services remotely for students. Tuition agreements, policies and practices, will remain in effect and binding.**
- *I hereby agree to pay the tuition and fees outlined on our school website. I will also comply with the policies, rules, and regulations of the school, as outlined in the School Handbook.*

### FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

There are three common types of financial assistance available.

1. The Diocese has a Tuition Assistance Program that offers financial aid to families based on need. Applications for this program are available in February of each year and must be completed and returned to the school office by early March.
2. Other Catholic Parishes (outside of the Whiting-Robertsdale Catholic Community) may offer tuition assistance to the children of their parishioners. To qualify for this type of aid, you must speak with your Pastor and bring a letter from your Pastor at the time of registration that specifies the amount of assistance he will provide so that your family tuition requirement can be established.
3. St. John the Baptist Catholic School participates in the Indiana School Choice program which provides vouchers for eligible families. Consult the School Choice website to check on eligibility at:

<https://www.in.gov/doi/students/indiana-choice-scholarship-program/>

**All monthly tuition payments for PK-8th will be due on the date that you have selected in FACTS. Payment dates can be changed up to two times during the school year.**

### FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH PROGRAMS

SJB participates in the federally supported free and reduced lunch program. This program is extremely confidential. Families that qualify will receive either free or reduced price lunches. In addition, the school receives benefits and special programs from the State of Indiana based on the number of qualifying children. All eighth grade students who qualify will be nominated to the Twenty-First Century Scholars Program. This program guarantees that the State of Indiana will pay the cost of Indiana State operated colleges when identified criteria are met by the student and family.

## V. STUDENTS

### A. Admission and / or Continued Enrollment

#### **Coronavirus and COVID-19 Warning:**

**The risk of exposure to coronavirus exists anywhere that people (and even pets) are present, especially in larger groups. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the virus spreads easily between people and can cause severe illness and even death. The risk is higher for certain people. Risk factors include being 65 years of age or older or having serious underlying medical conditions.**

**By attending a Diocese of Gary School, you voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to viruses, including the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.**

**Enhanced health and safety measures have been recommended to protect each of us. You must follow all posted instructions while attending a Diocese of Gary School.**

**1. Policy**

SJB welcomes the opportunity to enter an agreement with parents to meet their child's/children's spiritual, educational and social needs while enrolled in a school devoted to the work of Catholic education. As part of this agreement, parents agree to pay the determined fees and tuition.

**2. Application Procedures**

- a. SJB admits students without any discrimination in regard to race, ethnic origin, or creed, though the school was and always will be primarily for Catholics who can and will be granted preference whenever open enrollment is available. Likewise, the admission of Catholics also may be prioritized on the basis of parish membership when enrollment spaces are limited and all enrollment procedures have been observed in a timely fashion.
- b. Academic & Sacramental records are to be submitted.
- c. Transfers and health records are **required** from the previous school.
- d. The requirements of the State of Indiana regarding immunization must be observed by all students.
- e. Students entering from another Indiana school must have successfully passed the State's testing program and have been eligible at the previous school for the grade the student is seeking to enter.

**f. All new students will be accepted on a provisional, 90-day basis.**

- g. Student report cards will be reviewed at the end of each year to determine continued enrollment.

**3. Procedures for Continued Enrollment**

- a. SJB presumes students and parents are totally aware of the school's rules and have a willingness to abide by and observe them. The spirit of the regulations must also be kept in mind since it is never possible to list every conceivable action which might disrupt or contradict the school's mission/vision.
- b. SJB is free to cancel, at its discretion, the agreement with parents or students who do not wish to observe the rules of the School.
- c. SJB has the discretion to automatically suspend its agreement to educate a student whose parents object to the regulations of the School (and/or their implementation) to the extent that the parents seek to file civil suits against the School until such actions are resolved, be it by civil courts or by other means.
- d. Students currently enrolled (K-7) are given a preferred re-registration time period in January/February for the subsequent school year and **MUST** re-register during this time or pay a late registration fee.
- e. Students who are enrolled in SJB whose parents choose to withdraw from the school are not permitted to re-register in subsequent years without approval of the Pastor and Principal. **Admission to SJB is without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or disability.**

**4. Grade Level Retention**

The goal of SJB is to help each student attain his/her academic potential. When the need arises, a teacher may suggest that a student be retained at a specific grade level. Decisions regarding retention **must be** based upon:

- A statement of alternatives and strategies attempted to help the child.
- The findings of a study team composed of the parents, teacher, principal and other vital parties.

The final decision to retain a student shall rest with the Administration. If the parents decline to have their student retained, then an alternative school will be required. **No child shall be retained more than one time at SJB.**

**B. Student Assessments**

**1. REPORT CARDS**

Report Cards are issued quarterly. Students' grades are updated weekly on SJB's FACTS Family Online

system. Mid-quarter grades (Progress Reports) must be viewed by parents with verification sent in to their child's teacher when requested.

Parents are also required to check your child's grades weekly on FACTS in order to keep aware of your child's progress in both academics and behavior.

## 2. **CONFERENCES**

Conferences take place at the end of the first quarter in all grades. Parents will sign up for a time to attend with their child if possible. Report cards will not be released without the conference taking place and all outstanding balances paid. Parents who are not able to meet on the scheduled day must arrange with the teacher to meet on a day **after** the scheduled conference day.

### **Academic Integrity and Grading during Extended Learning**

**Students will continue their respective academic exercises remotely, should that become necessary. The school's expectations of all students' academic integrity and performance will be upheld and enforced during periods of extended learning. Academic integrity includes honesty in citing sources, sharing work on assignments only with permission, and prohibits cheating of any kind on assignments and assessments. Academic integrity also charges us to demonstrate responsible stewardship of our gifts and a strong work ethic. Students and families who find challenges during extended learning periods must initiate communications about those challenges to the classroom teachers and school principals in a timely manner.**

**The school grading policies and practices remain intact and continue during any extended learning period.**

## 3. **HONOR ROLL CRITERIA — GRADES 4-8**

- A Honor Roll:
  - Must have all A's in **all classes**.
  - Must have all 3's or 4's in conduct and effort in **all classes**.
- AB Honor Roll:
  - Must have all A's and/or B's in **all classes**.
  - Must have all 3's or 4's in conduct and effort in **all classes**.

## 4. **IDOE Assessments—GRADES 3-8**

The IDOE's ILEARN state assessments are administered in the Spring of each year to students in grades 3-8. The tests measure student achievement in the areas of Reading/Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies and provide a growth model to assess each student's progress over the years. Visit [www.doe.in.gov/assessment](http://www.doe.in.gov/assessment) for more information.

## 5. **I-READ3 TESTS—GRADE 3**

I-READ3 Tests are administered in March/April to assess the reading progress of all third graders. Students who do not pass these tests are then involved in remediation sessions before taking the re-test in the summer. Students who do not pass the retest **may be retained in Grade 3 or placed in Grade 4 with reading instructions at the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level.** Further information is available from the third grade teachers or the SJB administration.

## 6. **NWEA MAP GROWTH TESTS (Northwest Evaluation Association) GRADES K-8**

NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) are ongoing formative assessments administered three (3) times during the year (September, January & May) to monitor student growth and progress over time. The tests are computer-based and provide data used by teachers to plan and structure lessons and strategies based on student needs. More information can be found at <https://www.nwea.org/assessments/map/>.

## 7. **Record Requests**

Requests for 8<sup>th</sup> grade records to be forwarded to high schools must be made two (2) weeks in advance of the due date in order to allow teachers adequate time to complete the necessary forms and recommendations. ***Paperwork will be sent directly to the school and will not be sent home to the family.***

### C. Religious Activities

The duty of a Catholic school is the religious education of its students. Religious development depends on two facts:

1. The primary responsibility rests with the parents. If the child does not encounter a Catholic example at home, true Catholic development is most certainly hampered.
2. SJB, as a Catholic school, must continually espouse the Catholic way of life in all facets of the school. In regard to liturgy, students attend Mass weekly. The administration of First Holy Eucharist, First Reconciliation, and Confirmation shall be determined by the Pastor of the parish in conjunction with the Director of Religious Education (DRE). Sacraments are available throughout the year to students and staff. Grades Pre-K thru 8th will attend weekly mass and celebrate Holy Days of Obligation as a Catholic School Community.

### D. Attendance/Absences

Students are expected to be in attendance on all school days in order to benefit from the instructional program provided by each teacher and the school. Actual in-class instructional time and educational experiences are vital and can never be made up. In order for your children to receive the full benefits of their education at SJB, they must be in attendance and arrive on time each day.

The State of Indiana requires the school principal under I.C. 20-33-2-25 to “report a child who is habitually absent from school in violation of this chapter to an intake officer of the juvenile court **or the department of child services.**”

*In the event of an extended learning period arising out of any public health and safety, or severe weather, event, daily attendance for remote instructional days will be required. The principal will communicate how attendance will be taken. During such extended learning periods, current attendance policies will remain in effect and enforceable. In the event a student’s doctor recommends the student not return to the school building should his or her health be compromised related to a contagious disease event, the school may provide reasonable alternative accommodations for this student. The school shall determine the level and character of any such reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations may depend on various factors, including class size, grade level, staffing, financial concerns, etc.*

Except for excused absences (**not beyond 18 total days for the school year**), students are to be present in school.

Excused absences include:

- Illness verified by a note from parent/guardian
- Illness verified by a note from Physician (for absence of more than 2 consecutive days)
- Family funeral
- Other—as determined by the principal

Unexcused absences include:

- Family vacations
- Sporting events outside of SJB of Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) sanctioned contests.

Teachers are the first line of contact with parents regarding their children. They are also the primary interveners or first responder to a possible or perceived crisis. Teachers are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS) and to file a report.

If a teacher suspects that a child is in serious need of assistance (physical, mental, emotional, psychological), the teacher will contact the child's parent(s) immediately. The principal will also be notified immediately of any child in need of assistance. In the event of possible serious or critical physical or mental incapacity, appropriate referrals shall be made to physicians, psychiatrists, and/or counselors in order to provide the necessary assistance for the health and welfare of the child. In instances of serious or critical health concerns, a release from a medical practitioner will be required in order for the student to return to school.

**\*\*\* All absences, excused or unexcused, will affect perfect attendance. \*\*\***

**Students who are absent and/or tardy from school more than 18 days during the year may be retained in the current grade. Extenuating circumstances are considered by the administration.**

1. When a student is absent, a parent (or guardian) must report the absence to the Main Office 60 mins before the school bell either a phone call (219) -659-3042 or via email to Mrs. Jones at jjones@stjohnbap.org. The school will attempt to contact the parents/guardians if we have not received notification.
2. Homework will be posted online using *Google Classroom* or *SeeSaw*.
3. Students may return 24 hours after they are free of fever, or have no signs of a fever, without use of fever-reducing medicines.
4. Requests to be excused from class during the school day in order to keep appointments with doctors should be made in writing by a parent at least one day in advance, if possible.
5. If a child constantly misses school for a chronic illness, a doctor's notice is required each time the child returns to school. SJB Administration reserves the right to require a physician's release or explanation regarding the student's chronic absences.
6. If a parent anticipates that their child will be absent from school for more than two (2) consecutive days, the parent must notify the principal in advance of the absence. Absences due to family vacations are considered unexcused absences. Vacations taken during school time are *strongly discouraged for academic reasons*.
7. **A doctor's note is required if the student is off school for more than two (2) consecutive days.**
8. Extended absence disrupts a child's learning patterns and places the child at risk of missing important material. If a parent chooses to take the student out of school for a family vacation, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school in writing indicating the reason and the dates for the anticipated absence. Responsibility for the missed work rests with the student and the parent(s). **Teachers will not be held responsible for preparing the work ahead of time.** Missed assignments will be given to the student upon his/her return. Students are allowed the number of days absent to make up missed work. Any penalty for missed assignments turned in after that reasonable time period will be at each teacher's discretion. If the student does not return the missed assignments within the set time period, the student will receive **zero credit** for the missed work. Students will be expected to keep up with their current assignments along with making up missed assignments.
9. No student or parent may enter a classroom if the teacher is not present. In an effort to teach responsibility to students, students and/or parents are **NOT** permitted to re-enter school after dismissal to get forgotten books/materials.
10. Students will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities (e.g. athletic practices, games, contests) on days they are absent from school.

**E. Tardiness**

Students are expected to arrive at school **on time each day**. Students who arrive late miss a very important part of the school day and disrupt the order of the classroom. Parents/guardians are responsible for getting their children to school on time.

Students who are tardy must report to the school office to receive a pass. Consistent tardiness will not be tolerated. Tardiness will be monitored by both the teacher and the school office. Excessive and/or chronic tardiness will necessitate a conference with the teacher and the principal or his designee.

The school day for students in grades Preschool-8 begins at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:00 p.m. on regular school days. The students may enter the building at 7:45am and report directly to their homeroom classroom. The 8:00a.m. bell will ring and our school prayer begins the day.

#### **F. Lunch Time/Recess**

1. SJB has a closed lunch policy: all students must remain on campus for lunch.
2. Students must follow all rules and regulations.
3. Students will go outside for a recess period. Students may not stay indoors during the lunch hour unless the school is given a written notice from a doctor stating that the child is unable to go outside for medical reasons or the student is receiving specific academic assistance from a teacher.
4. When the temperature reading is less than 30 degrees outside, including wind chill, or when it is raining, the students will remain indoors for recess. The principal or her designee will monitor the weather and make a decision on recess daily.

#### **G. Internet Usage**

Internet use is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in cancellation of those privileges and school disciplinary action. Student files may be inspected at any time without prior notice by the administration.

##### Restrictions

1. Students must stay out of chat rooms.
2. Students are not allowed to play or download networked or live games.
3. Students must not purchase software, products or services online.

#### NOTE TO PARENTS REGARDING VANDALISM AND DAMAGE TO EQUIPMENT

Vandalism will result in immediate cancellation of user privileges and possible disciplinary action. Uploading or downloading computer viruses is vandalism. Parts, services and labor charges for repair or replacement of damaged equipment (at current market value) will be paid by the student(s) and / or parent(s), regardless of the student's intent at the time damage was done.

Students who have access to Chromebooks, email accounts, and other G-Suite privileges will be subjected to following proper procedure and protocol as outlined in the "Acceptable Use Policy" found in the Appendix of this handbook. A signed copy will be kept in the Main Office in the student's file. Please refer back to this document as often as necessary. All equipment is owned and operated by SJB. ***A student's privilege can be revoked at any time for a specific amount of time by the principal or her designee.***

#### **H. Conduct and Discipline Policies**

In any society, general rules and policies are necessary for orderly operation and for ensuring the safety of all members. Good discipline and order are positive aspects of school rather than negative. It is the duty of St. John the Baptist Catholic School to help students adjust -- rather than punish -- and turn unacceptable behavior into acceptable. Good discipline is the absence of distractions, frictions or disturbances that interfere with the functioning of the individual, class or school. It is the presence of a friendly, yet business-like atmosphere where all work together for the common good. The following information applies not only to the school day, but includes all extracurricular activities involving the school.

Serious misconduct from a student will result in an immediate Parent-Pupil-Teacher-Principal conference, immediate suspension and possible expulsion. No pupil shall be expelled except by the authority of the Principal, after consultation with the Pastor. A student identified as a chronic disciplinary problem may be suspended or recommended for expulsion on the basis that despite prior punishment, such student has persistently violated the rules of the school even though each prior violation may not alone have warranted suspension or expulsion.

### **I. Mental Health**

Students who are exhibiting mental health issues can be asked to obtain a doctor evaluation.

## **Discipline Policy**

Our discipline policy is based on the Christian Values of respect, love, mercy, and forgiveness.

The school atmosphere should be one which allows the teacher to teach and every student to learn. All staff members are responsible for developing good discipline and should model good behavior. To ensure that every child is provided an adequate learning environment, students and parents will allow teachers to teach, respect the right to learn, and behave in ways that support the best interests of the class and school.

Discipline is a process, not a single action or statement. The ultimate goal is to have students become self-disciplined individuals who know and accept personal boundaries, standards, and expectations. Self-disciplined persons are motivated to do the right thing, whether observed or not.

This discipline policy applies to students in school and at school sponsored events, as well as in the school/parish community and outside the school/parish community where the behavior is contrary to Catholic teachings, or could bring disrepute or embarrassment to the school. SJB reserves the right to discipline students for conduct, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, including matters that the school is aware of on social media (e.g.: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, House Party, SnapChat, etc.)

The following general rules are to be adhered to by students, but are not limited to the following:

### **GENERAL RULES:**

- Be in class and ready to learn before the 1st bell - 8:00am.
- Listen to **ALL ADULT** supervisors within the school environment.
- Respect school property at all times.
- Follow the Uniform Policy.
- Respect other students' personal space and property: No pushing, shoving, hitting, tripping, etc.
- Improper language, music, gestures, drawings, or writings are not tolerated.
- Fighting will not be tolerated.
- Gum is not allowed in school.
- Follow specific classroom rules as determined by teachers and students.
- Once distributed, students in grades 5-8 should have the school ID on at all times.
- Weapons of any kind are not permitted.
- Alcohol and drugs are not permitted.
- Never trade, share, sell, play with, or throw food due to food allergies or other circumstances.
- Follow the policy for electronic devices and cell phones (*See Acceptable Use Policy*)

### **Classroom Rules:**

- Each classroom will post classroom rules within the classroom. Classroom rules will be discussed, modeled,

practiced, reinforced, and reviewed periodically. All students will follow these rules as expected or consequences will be enforced.

**Bullying/Teasing:**

SJB is committed to providing an environment free from physical, psychological, verbal and virtual harassment. Any behavior that creates, or is intended to create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating school environment constitutes harassment. SJB prohibits any form of harassment and views such action as extremely serious. Any allegation of bullying made to an adult, teacher, staff member, or administrator will be investigated and documented.

The discipline policy is implemented and enforced by all faculty/staff members and the administration throughout the year. A copy of this policy is sent home to all parents at the beginning of the school year in the handbook. Each parent is asked to read it, review it with their child, and sign/return the *Handbook Acknowledgement Form* indicating they have done so. The handbook from the previous year will stand in place until a current handbook is published and distributed.

**Behavior Management and Consequences**

<b>One hour detention</b>	<b>Behavioral Contract</b>	<b>Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) 1-10 days</b>	<b>Expulsion</b>
Distrptive, uncooperative behavior on school property (e.g., classrooms, church, hallway, cafeteria, bathrooms, and playground)	Receiving a 3rd infraction or directly in relation to areas listed below.	Receiving a 4th infraction, after having a contract, or directly in relation to the areas listed below. No detention served.	Receiving a 5th infraction, after an OSS, or directly in relation to the areas listed below. No detention served.
Negative Behaviors include but are not limited to: class disruption, destruction or misuse of school property, disobedience, disrespect/insubordination, failure to appear for detention, forgery, infraction of classroom policies, in off-limit areas of campus, inappropriate language/behavior, lying, stealing Unauthorized cell phone usage during school hours Misuse of school property Multiple warnings will be given prior to a detention being issued for the following: Chewing gum, uniform violations, excessive	Racial/sexual harassment, bullying, and/or threats.  Damage to, or theft of, school/personal property, extortion or gambling  Excessive/repeated defiance or refusal to cooperate.	Possession of tobacco or tobacco products including matches, lighters, cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and smoking pipes  Fighting. A student, who takes any physical action toward another including: students, teachers, or teacher aides, is considered a participant in a fight. Students must keep their hands to themselves at all times.  Videotaping or taking pictures of students or staff without their consent for purposes of ridicule or bullying.	Unlawful activity, including, possession/use of weapons, drugs, or alcohol, including “look-alikes”  Sending, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, emails, or other material of a sexual or threatening nature in electronic or any other form, including the contents of a cell phone or other electronic device.

tardiness/truancy Cheating/plagiarism will also result in an automatic zero.  Any conduct that might detract from the educational environment.		Missed work must be completed, but zero's will be given for the assignments, and homework. Tests and quizzes may be made up.	
Not limited to the above examples, may be given at the discretion of administration	Not limited to the above examples, may be given at the discretion of administration	Not limited to the above examples, may be given at the discretion of administration	Not limited to the above examples, may be given at the discretion of administration

*Parents are asked to follow the chain of command by contacting the teacher first for more information regarding the situation and decisions regarding action taken.*

**This discipline policy will be strictly and consistently enforced by the School Staff and Administration.**

**After School Detention**

SJB are expected to follow school policy regarding attendance, assignments, uniform and behavioral expectations. Failure to do so may result in the student serving an hour detention after school from 3pm-4pm. Parents will be notified the day of the behavioral incident and mandatory detention must be served and arrangements must be made to pick up the student after detention.

**Drugs and Alcohol**

SJB does not tolerate the use or possession of illegal drugs or look-alike drugs, marijuana, narcotics, controlled substances, alcoholic beverages or intoxicants of any kind, as well as drug apparatus or paraphernalia. Using, transmitting, possessing or being under the influence of any of the items listed above, by any student while on school property or at any function connected with SJB, will result in suspension and expulsion procedures will be initiated.

**Medications**

When a child is placed on prescription medication and the medication is to be taken during school hours, **a note from the physician is required with the following information:**

- Child's Name
- Name of Medication
- Dosage of Medicine
- Time(s) to be taken

**IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO COME TO THE OFFICE TO TAKE THE MEDICATION AT THE REQUIRED TIME.**

**The student will NOT be called to the office and reminded to take the medication.**

Written permission from parent or guardian is valid for one school year. The medicine must be delivered to school

by the parent or guardian in the original bottle from the pharmacy with the child's name and dosage. ***SJB reserves the right to dispose of any/all medications that are expired. Medication not picked up at the end of the school year will be disposed of on the last day of school.***

Over-the-counter (OTC) medications (including but not limited to: cough/cold/sinus/flu/multi-symptom) will not be administered to students during school hours. Parents must administer OTCs at home. Cough drops are permitted in the classroom only with a note from the parents.

### **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices**

Students attending SJB are permitted to be in possession of cell phones. Once the student enters the school building, the cellular telephone must be completely turned off unless specific permission is given from a teacher after consulting with Administration. If a student is found using his/her cell phone during normal school hours, without specific permission for education purposes only, it will be confiscated and a parent will have to pick it up in the school office. SJB is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen cell phones and/or accessories. If a student must make a call at the conclusion of the normal school day, the cell phone call will be made from a school vestibule outside of Door "A."

Students are not permitted to be in possession of any smart watches, gaming devices, or any other electronic device on school property unless specifically authorized by the teacher or administrator. Any such item must be turned completely off and stored in the student locker and the device cannot be turned on until the student leaves the school building. If, during normal school hours, a student is found to be in possession of an electronic device, the item will be confiscated and a parent will have to pick it up in the school office. SJB is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen cell phones or other electronic or digital devices.

### **Tattoos and Body Piercing**

Desecrating the body with tattoos or body piercing jewelry is not allowed. A student who has a tattoo or body piercing will be suspended from school until he/she complies with school standards.

### **Gang Related Activities**

A gang is defined as any group of students who are perceived as a distinct group (not an approved organization) which prompts a disruptive response in the school community. A student engaging in gang-related activities is subject to suspension and expulsion from school. SJB will not tolerate any open display of gang symbols, colors or gestures, the recruitment of members or any form of intimidation, including bringing knives or weapons of any sort to school.

### **Weapons**

Students possessing, handling or transmitting any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon are subject to expulsion. Storage of a weapon in one's locker or on one's person is included in the definition of possession. Students found in possession of a weapon will immediately be suspended for a period of five (5) days with possible expulsion as a consequence.

### **School Lockers**

All lockers are the property of SJB. They are provided to the students as a service and as a way to store clothing and school items. Lockers may be searched at any time when the administration deems it necessary. Posting pictures, etc. in the lockers is not allowed.

### **Fighting**

Students who get into a fight on their way to school, during school or on their way home from school or at any school-related activity will be suspended for up to five days, subject to expulsion.

### **Field Trips**

#### **Due to COVID-19 this year there will be no field trips.**

According to Indiana Code, field trips must be educational and properly documented as part of the State School Accreditation process. Field trips should begin with the school day and end when school is dismissed. Exceptions for travel time may be made. The Diocese of Gary does not endorse overnight field trips. After careful consideration and consultation with the principal, it may be the judgment of a teacher that a student is withheld from participating in the privilege of a class field trip, or that a child's parent/guardian be in attendance. This decision may be due to the student's deliberate actions resulting in disciplinary notices, detention or consistent tardiness. ***Parents serving as chaperones are not permitted to bring other children on the trip.*** Chaperones are not permitted to smoke or consume alcoholic beverages on the field trip nor to engage in extensive cell phone conversation or texting.

### **Messages for Students**

Parents are asked not to call school with messages to be given to students. All after-school plans and arrangements should be taken care of in advance. **Only emergency messages will be conveyed to students.**

### **Phone Use**

**Students are not allowed to call home for forgotten items or to arrange after school activities.** They may use the office phone only in **emergencies** and with permission of the office personnel. Except for emergencies, neither teachers nor students are called to the phone during school hours.

### **Parent Newsletters**

Parent newsletters are sent via email weekly on Sunday's. **All parents are responsible for reading and complying with the information included in the weekly newsletters.**

### **Uniform Policy**

All students are expected to be in full uniform on the first day of school. Students who violate the uniform code will receive further discipline. The school uniform is purchased through Dennis School Uniforms in Highland at 8345 Indianapolis Boulevard (219)838-7120. <https://www.dennisuniform.com/schools/GBQGH>. Uniformity of dress is the mandatory attire for all students at SJB in Kindergarten through eighth grade. Gym uniforms are purchased through The Junkyard in Whiting at 1504 119th Street; (219) 473-1501.

Students who are not in proper uniform/attire will be sent to the office to make arrangements to obtain the proper uniform. **Dress-up and/or dress-down days are not allowed on days students attend Mass.**

#### **General Uniform Guidelines:**

- Must be tucked in at all times.
- Belts must be worn at all times.
- Anything worn under the uniform that is exposed must be solid white.
- Shorts/skirts length is not shorter than 3" above the knee.
- Uniform shorts may be worn on the first day of school through October 14th and April 16th through the last day of school.
- Uniform pants are to be worn October 15th through April 15th.
- Hoodies or any other non-SJB sweatshirt/sweater/jacket are not allowed to be worn during the school day as part of the SJB uniform.

- Shoes
    - Solid color athletic-type shoes, or a combination of black, white, and/or grey.
    - Black, navy or brown dress shoes with or without ties
    - Student's entire foot must be enclosed
    - Students may wear boots to school but they must be changed once at school
  - Socks
    - must be a solid color: black, white, or grey
  - Hair
    - No outlandish hairstyles (Mohawk, shave designs, etc.)
    - No hair color or highlights - hair color must be student's *natural* human hair color
    - Hair must be out of the eyes
    - Boys hair must not cover the ears and not touch the shirt collar
    - **No** facial hair
  - Jewelry
    - Only scapulars or one religious medal to be worn tucked into the shirt
    - No smart watches
    - Girls may wear one pair of stud earrings in the ear lobes only
    - No other piercings or tattoos
    - Nothing is to be worn on the wrists or fingers with the exception of a medical ID band
- \*No make-up, tinted lotion, nail polish, or fake nails unless otherwise granted permission by SJB administration.**

### Dress Up Days

#### **Girls**

- Shirts/top pieces
  - No tank tops/crop tops
  - No sheer material
- Pants
  - No leggings /jeggings
  - No shorts
  - No jeans
- Dress/Skirts
  - Length is not shorter than 3" above the knee
  - Must hang loose - skin tight is not acceptable
  - Dress tops should be cap sleeve or longer
- Shoes
  - No flip flops

#### **Boys**

- Shirts
  - No t-shirts; collar preferred
- Pants
  - No Jeans
- Shoes
  - No flip flops

### Dress Down Days:

Good judgment must be exercised on dress down days. If there is doubt about any item, it is best not to wear it to school. Students who fail to wear the appropriate clothing for the dress-down day will be required to make arrangements to obtain

their school uniform. Clothing must be clean and in good condition and not disruptive to the educational process. (e.g.: too tight/baggy, too short, no holes or rips, low cut or otherwise revealing).

**Girls:**

- Shirts/top pieces
  - Writing or pictures must be appropriate for school.
  - No tank tops/crop tops.
- Pants
  - Blue or black jeans/denim are acceptable - **NO rips, tears, or holes in pants.**
  - Sweatpants/joggers are acceptable.
  - No leggings/jeggings.
  - Shorts must be no shorter than 3” above the knee.
- Dress/Skirts
  - Length is to be no shorter than 3” at the knee.
  - Must hang loose / skin tight is not acceptable.
- Shoes
  - No flip flops

**Boys**

- Shirts
  - No tank tops
- Pants
  - Blue or black jeans / denim are acceptable. **NO rips, tears, or holes in pants.**
  - Sweatpants/joggers are acceptable
  - Shorts must be no shorter than 3” above the knee.
- Shoes
  - No flip flops

The Principal or her designee will be the final judge in regard to a student’s proper attire. Three violations will result in a conference between Administration and the parents to determine whether or not the student intends to comply with the standards of this school. A suspension may result from repeated non-compliance.

**J. Physical Education Program**

A doctor’s note is required when there is some physical problem which would prevent a student from participating or restrict the student’s participation in PE class. It is the responsibility of the parents to secure the doctor’s notes and send it to school. Students in grades PreK-8 are required to wear the SJB gym uniform on all days they have class.

**K. Cafeteria**

SJB participates in a federally subsidized school lunch program and hot lunches are served. Children who wish to bring their lunch may purchase milk and use the cafeteria. “Fast Foods” such as McDonald’s and Burger King are not allowed to be brought in for students because they violate the meal standards set forth by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). More information about this program can be found by visiting <http://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp/national-school-lunch-program-nslp>.

**L. Boy-Girl Parties/Off-Campus Parties**

1. Families should assume any off-campus party is not sanctioned by SJB. What transpires at the party is totally out of the school’s control. Questions of proper supervision and responsibility rest solely on the shoulders of the adults initiating the party.

2. Invitations for off-campus parties should be passed out off-school grounds and outside of normal school hours – 8:00am-3:00pm, Monday thru Friday.
3. Those attending the party are not covered by any school insurance and all legal matters arising from such a party would be the responsibility of the adults sponsoring the party.
4. All students are not capable of dealing with the social and psychological demands that an exclusive party creates. When it is exclusive, someone is always left out. SJB does not want to subject any student to the extra pressure of trying to determine why he or she was not invited.
5. Parents must be aware that behavior and incidents at the party could very well carry over into the regular school life, which could be detrimental to the learning environment and may result in further consequences.
6. Should any incidents arise that carry over into the normal school day, the Principal will notify all necessary parties, including teachers, parents, coaches, etc. A meeting may be scheduled to determine the best course of action and proper consequences should the situation(s) call for them.

**M. Security**—For the safety of all students and staff, all doors are locked.

1. Once in the building, all visitors must sign in at the office and obtain a visitor’s badge. Upon departure, the visitor must report to the school office, sign out and return the badge.
2. Parents must pick up sick children in the Main Office and sign them out.
3. Conferences with teachers must be arranged prior to school visits and may not take place during instructional time. Parents are not allowed in the classrooms or staff-only areas without the proper authorization from the Main Office.

**N. Traffic Flow**

For all those who drive their children to / from school, the following plan must be followed:

1. **Morning Drop-off:** Students should be dropped off in the parking lot behind the rectory or on Lincoln Avenue along the north playground. Lincoln Avenue in front of the school is closed during the morning drop-off. All students will enter through Door A. Doors open at 7:45am.
2. **After School Pick-up:** There are two designated pick-up areas for children after School.
  - a. Children in grades PK – 3rd grade should be picked up on the playground north of the School. (Door B)
  - b. Students in Grades 4-8 should be picked up at the playground behind the Rectory (Church Parking Lot)

**STUDENTS WHOSE RIDES DO NOT ARRIVE ON TIME WILL BE SENT**

**DIRECTLY TO THE HELPING HANDS PROGRAM WHERE THEY MUST BE PICKED UP.**

- Parents are also responsible for notifying the teacher in writing of any changes in their child’s normal routine.
- Parents are also responsible for informing those who pick up their children of the above procedures.

Because the children cross Lincoln Avenue to get to the playground behind the Rectory, **Lincoln Avenue (in front of the School) is closed to all cars at dismissal.** Parents or guardians should make sure that this procedure is shared with all individuals who may pick up their child. Any inconvenience created is surpassed by the safety brought to all of the children at SJB.

**O. Emergency School Closing**

When it may be necessary to close school early, an automated phone message and text message will be sent to all families and on the SJB social media accounts (@stjohnbap). **Any announced school closing is for that day only.**

**P. Excessive heat policy and procedures**

The following reflects a plan for the school in case of severe heat. Most of the school building is NOT air conditioned. Therefore, a plan is necessary to insure the safety of all students, faculty, and staff. The HEAT

POLICY may be put into effect due to a predicted temperature humidity index (THI) of **over 90 degrees**. The THI is reported as the feel-like temperature. Procedures to take when policy is put into effect.

1. Non air-conditioned classes can relocate to air-conditioned areas. The air-conditioned areas include the Cafeteria, Mural Room, and Founders' Room.
2. Students will be allowed to possess water bottles and cold water will be made available to students, faculty, and staff.
3. With a predicted temperature humidity index of over 90 degrees, an early dismissal schedule may be implemented for the next school day or possibly the next few school days depending on the extent of the heat wave. All students will be released from school at **1:00pm** when the early dismissal schedule is put into effect, or sooner should the conditions dictate.
4. Prior to the implementation of the early dismissal schedule, parents, students and staff will be notified. Notifications will be made using the following methods:
  - FACTS communication system, P.A. announcement to all students and staff, automated telephone messaging system, mass texts, and/or paper notes sent home with all students.

#### **Q. Delayed Start of School**

In certain cases, when there is inclement weather early in the morning, the start of classes may be delayed until 10:00 a.m.

#### **R. Smoking Policy**

SJB's building is a smoke-free building. Smoking is not permitted in the Gymnasium, Marian Theater Guild Auditorium, Pastoral Center, Cafeteria, Mural, Founders' Rooms and all adjacent areas. **By law, smoking is not allowed within eight feet (8') from the school building.**

### **VI. COMMUNICATIONS/SOCIAL MEDIA**

Student and/or parent use of social media, (Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, FACTS, etc.) whether inside or outside of the school, that demeans or defames others in our school community including, but not limited to, teachers, administrators, students, or other school personnel, or communication that is detrimental to the reputation of the school or any school personnel will result in immediate suspension of **five (5) days** and possible expulsion of the student and/or termination of the student and family from SJB. Parents/family members may also be permitted from volunteering their time for school events, such as field trips and class parties, as well as be prevented from having any interaction with SJB during normal school operating hours, 8am-3pm, Monday thru Friday and other special days.

### **VII. PARENTS**

#### **A. Home and School Association (H.S.A.)**

For a Catholic School to be viable, the relationship between home and school must be a positive one. The H.S.A. is the organization that develops positive school communications and support. All parents are automatically members of the H.S.A. and are encouraged to become active participants. A \$5 donation is strongly recommended to join.

#### **B. Room Parents**

Room Parents volunteer to be of service to the students and teachers throughout the academic school year. Interest sheets are handed out at the beginning of each school year. Since the needs of varied age-levels and classroom activities differ from teacher to teacher, Room Parents will be selected at the discretion of each teacher and/or grade level class. **Volunteers MUST be Virtus-trained, compliant with training bulletins, submit to and clear an extended criminal background check, comply with the Diocese of Gary Confidentiality Policy, and comply with the SJB Volunteer Guidelines.**

C. Parent Obligation

SJB depends upon volunteers to assist in many areas of the operation of the school. Besides assisting in the smooth operation of the school, volunteer parents receive a first-hand glimpse of the school on a daily basis.

**All parents of SJB students are required to work a minimum of 8 hours during the school year, with 4 occurring during the annual SJB WinterFest. Families who DO NOT meet this obligation will pay a \$400.00 fee. \$200.00 will be added to each of the March and April payments.**

To volunteer, please complete all paperwork and processes listed above.. An criminal background check is processed for all adults working with our children. The social security number is required for the background check. Volunteers must also attend the Virtus “Protecting God’s Children” workshop and comply with regulations for reading the monthly online bulletins. Consult your SJB School Calendar or the Virtus website to see when workshops are hosted here or at other parishes. Parent volunteers may sign up and complete the workshop at other Diocese of Gary Catholic Schools as well. For more information, please visit <https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/>, or call the Rectory and speak with our Director of Religious Education (DRE), Mrs. Jamie Sandona.

**Employee and Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement**  
**Office of Catholic Schools**  
**Roman Catholic Diocese of Gary**

Confidentiality is one of the cornerstones of professionalism and ethics in education. You have a responsibility to preserve and protect the confidentiality of the students, educators, school staff, families, and school professional expectations, ethics and laws.

Students in the Catholic Schools of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Gary have the right to expect that information about them will be kept confidential by **ALL** employees, volunteers, interns, student teachers, substitutes, and employees of independent contractors. All things that are witnessed and/or heard at school about children and their families should be considered privileged information and shall not be shared with anyone who is not directly involved in a student's education and certainly not outside of the school setting. Further, privileged information shall not be shared with those who are directly involved in a student's education unless it is relevant to the student's educational growth, safety, or well being. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Treating all student information as personal and confidential regardless of source.
  - Dealing impartially with students regardless of background, ability, physical or emotional maturity.
  - Not discussing student progress or behavior.
  - Never using information about individual students outside the school (such as photographs/names) without parental permission.
  - Ensuring all student educational records remain strictly confidential.
- 

**St. John the Baptist Volunteer Guidelines**

**General**

1. Volunteers are required to have a background check before a volunteer assignment begins.
2. Volunteers must be Virtus trained and be current on Virtus bulletins before a volunteer assignment begins.
3. All volunteers must sign both in and out in the main office. When entering the office, the volunteer must register in the Volunteer Sign-in Log on the counter and pick up a visitor's badge that must be worn during service. At the end of the volunteer time the volunteer must return to the main office to sign out and return the badge.
4. Volunteers must make outside arrangements for child care of non-school age children instead of bringing them to school during volunteer time.
5. Volunteers in school are asked not to use the time to deal with issues regarding their own children. If you wish to speak to the classroom teacher or another staff member, you must make an appointment in the usual way.
6. As a volunteer, you have the opportunity to impact the success of many students. Your willingness to contribute is highly regarded by all. Remember, the children model our behavior, professional statements and respect is a must (we are modeling the behavior) please simplify the statement we are expecting from our children. (Volunteers should model respect for teaching and learning by reporting to their designated area only.) The message is not clear to me
7. Please remember to focus on the children and save adult conversation for later.
8. Personal cell phone should be muted and use be limited to emergency use only.

9. Class room picture policy must be should be discussed with the teacher prior to any students being photographed.
10. Volunteers must reinforce and demonstrate the school's mission statement.

**Our Mission: Within our diverse cultural environment and our ministry to Pre-K through eighth grade students, St. John the Baptist Catholic School community is committed to teaching Catholic principles and values, striving for personal academic excellence, and developing Christ-like leadership through service to others.**

### **Classroom**

1. Volunteers should use proper judgement in supervising children and should in all instances respect each student's person and privacy. It is of the utmost importance that confidentiality is maintained. Volunteers should discuss any and all concerns directly and exclusively with the supervising teacher/staff.
2. Teachers are responsible for the students and the activities in his/her classroom.
3. When entering the classroom volunteers should come in quietly and wait for a break in the activity/lesson before communicating with teachers/students.
4. All volunteers must the classroom teacher before volunteering.
5. Make sure to have a good attitude, as adults we set the tone of the room.

### **Confidentiality**

1. It is very important that all staff, parent volunteers, and other adults working in the school honor confidentiality. You may see children struggling with work, be upset or misbehaving or hear/see other information concerning a child while you are here at school. It is vital that you do not share anything about specific children with friends or family or a child's parent. The teachers here have the responsibility of informing parents of any concerns about the child.
2. If a child tells you something that causes you concern, please tell the classroom teacher as soon as possible in an appropriate (private) setting so that others cannot overhear.
3. Volunteers working in classrooms should do so with the understanding that they support the teaching staff and will not pass opinion on such matters as discipline or teaching styles outside the school.
4. Volunteers are not to post or share information online through any means, including all areas of social media, eg Facebook, Twitter, which relates to any individual stakeholder that brings Saint John the Baptist school into disrepute.

# **St. John the Baptist Catholic School**

## **ADDENDUM**

### **SEXUAL MISCONDUCT TOWARD MINORS AND OTHERS AT RISK**

The Policy of the Diocese of Gary

THESE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ARE TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN RESPONSE TO AN ALLEGATION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT TOWARD OTHERS AT RISK.

7-10-93  
slightly revised 4-25-02  
further revised 6-27-02  
further revised 7-15-18

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In recent years there has been an explosive increase in reported cases of sexual misconduct towards minors and others at risk throughout our country. Because of the destructive impact of such incidents on the victim, the victim's family, the local Church community, as well as the accused, a diocesan policy exists to deal in a forthright and compassionate way with situations in which an employee, volunteer or cleric is accused of sexual misconduct toward a minor or other at risk.

Our purpose in establishing this policy is to assure victims of sexual misconduct the healing they need to help reduce the destructive effects of their traumatic experience. It is also our strong desire to ensure appropriate pastoral outreach to the affected families and local Church communities. Pastoral concern is also extended to the accused and to those ultimately found guilty of sexual misconduct as they are made aware of the destructiveness of their behavior by prescribing the necessary professional treatment.

With a profound respect for the dignity of each person involved, it is our goal that compassion and healing be the foundation upon which this policy is based. For those abused, those accused, and those found guilty of sexual misconduct, this is how we approach this work.

#### **Policies and Procedures**

#### **I. RESPONSE TO COMPLAINTS AND ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

- A. Indiana Code (I.C.) Sections 31-35-5-1, 31-35-5-3, and 31-35-5-4 (See Appendix II) require that staff members of a private institution, school or facility who have reason to believe that a minor has been physically or sexually abused shall immediately orally report such belief to the local Child Protection Service or law enforcement agency.
  - 1. Note that the statute says to report immediately when a person has "reason to believe" that physical or sexual abuse has occurred. This means that if a report is made of sexual abuse, it must be reported immediately and not after an "in-house" investigation,
  - 2. The definition of "Reason to Believe," according to Indiana Statute, means that if presented to individual of similar backgrounds and training, it would cause those individuals to make a judgment that a child was abused or neglected.

- B. It is the responsibility of every cleric, administrator, employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Gary who receives a complaint or allegation of sexual misconduct to report it immediately to the Bishop's Delegate. If he/she is not available, the report is made to the Bishop's Administrative Assistant. In the case of a minor, the public authorities will be notified and then the Response Team.
- C. The diocese will cooperate with the authorities in the investigation. The Bishop's Delegate will direct an investigation of all rumors, anonymous phone calls and unsigned letters. Members of the Response Team will be contacted to assist in this process.
- D. The Diocese of Gary will not enter into confidentiality agreements except for grave and substantial reasons brought forth by the victim. Such reasons shall be noted in the agreement.
- E. Any modifications to this policy will be made after consultation with the Response Team and if appropriate other consultative bodies of the diocese. Any modifications must have the approval of the Bishop of the Diocese of Gary. If modifications are made, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops shall receive a copy of the revised policy within three months after such modifications.

## **II. RESPONSE TEAM**

- A. The Bishop has established a Response Team consisting of two priests, a psychologist, a social worker versed in cases of sexual misconduct and abuse, and six other persons who bring a particular sensitivity to this role. One member of the Response Team is the Bishop's Delegate and chairperson. He will also serve as the Assistance Coordinator on behalf of the alleged victim. The concept of the Response Team is to have a small representative group which can act with promptness, fairness, confidentiality and compassion toward all concerned.
- B. The Team Chairperson's responsibility is to convene the Response Team to ensure that the prescribed process is implemented and that proper procedures are followed. It will also be the Chairperson's responsibility to keep the Bishop informed in a timely fashion of an allegation and the progress of the Response Team concerning the allegation.
- C. The Response Team will oversee all steps of the procedure for dealing with the accusations, and will act as guarantor of the due process for all parties.
- D. Members of the Response Team are appointed by the Bishop who is to ensure that the Team's composition reflects expertise in the areas addressed by the Team. Members are appointed to a five-year term which is renewable.
- E. The Communications Director of the diocese is the spokesperson to the media, and will be appropriately informed in each situation by the Bishop's Delegate.

## **III. INTERVENTION PROCESS**

- A. The Bishop's Assistance Coordinator will ensure that appropriate pastoral care be provided for the alleged victim and family to assist them in healing and reconciliation. If the Response Team considers it necessary, reasonable qualified medical/psychological care support groups and other social services will be offered.
- B. The Response Team will, when reasonably indicated, provide prompt pastoral care to all pastoral institutions

affected by the allegations of sexual misconduct. The scope, type and duration of this service will be determined by the Response Team on a case-by case basis.

- C. The person who made the allegation, the parents of the minor or other at risk, and, if advisable, the victim of sexual misconduct will be interviewed by the Bishop's Delegate or member(s) of the Response Team appointed by him/her.
- D. The victim will be advised of their right to make a report to the public authorities.
- E. The volunteer, employee or cleric against whom the allegation is made will be informed of the allegation and advised of their right to legal counsel.
- F. Every interview will be respectful and courteous. The goal is to determine each person's account of the alleged incident.
- G. If, after careful review, the Response Team judges the complaint to be without merit, the Bishop's Delegate will fully inform all parties in a timely fashion of the results of the investigation. The Team will take all necessary steps to protect the accused from defamation, and to restore the peace of the community.
- H. If, after careful review, the complaint is judged to be credible, the Response Team will recommend that the Bishop take immediate administrative action toward the accused.
- I. The following procedure will then apply:
  - 1. A volunteer will be immediately relieved of all volunteer duties, responsibilities, and activities
  - 2. An employee: the employee will be immediately terminated or placed on administrative leave at the discretion of the Bishop who will determine whether or not the leave will be with or without pay.
- J. Where sexual abuse by a priest or deacon is admitted or is established after an appropriate investigation in accordance with common law, the following will apply:
  - 1. The cleric will be immediately placed on administrative leave, and moved to a supervised residency.
    - a) He is asked to sign a medical and psychological assessment release form prepared by the diocese.
    - b) He is required to undergo, as soon as possible, a complete psychological and medical assessment at a facility designated by the Bishop.
    - c) In the event that cleric refuses to comply with the above, he will immediately incur suspension for all priestly or diaconal duties.
  - 2. When even a single act of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest or deacon is admitted or is established after an appropriate process in accord with canon law, the offending priest or deacon will be removed permanently from ecclesiastical ministry, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state, if the case so warrants. The Bishop of the Diocese of Gary has the executive power of governance, through an administrative act, to remove an offending cleric from office, to remove or restrict his faculties and to limit his exercise of priestly ministry. See paragraph 5 following.
  - 3. In every case the process provided in common law shall be observed, and the various provisions of common law shall be considered.
  - 4. The accused priest or deacon shall be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and/or canonical counsel. If

requested, the diocese will supply canonical counsel to a cleric. See paragraph

5. In case of a minor, where the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state has not been applied for reasons such as advanced age or infirmity, the offender is to lead a life of prayer and penance. Priest-offender will not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly as a priest.
- K. For Clerics accused of sexual misconduct toward others at risk: When allegations of sexual misconduct are brought against a cleric and are substantiated, it might be possible for continued ministry within the diocese. However, it will be the responsibility of the Response Team to make a recommendation to the Bishop about a ministerial assignment for the cleric. This will be based upon the evaluation and advice of qualified experts, and following in-patient residential or out-patient psychological/psychiatric treatment. The Response Team's recommendation may include:
1. the cleric receiving no ministerial assignment within the diocese
  2. support for resignation from priestly or diaconal ministry
  3. canonical process for laicization
  4. a ministerial assignment with various conditions

#### **IV. FOLLOW-UP**

- A. For the victims of sexual misconduct: The Bishop's Delegate/Assistance Coordinator, in consultation with the Response Team, will continue to monitor the pastoral needs of the victim as well as to confirm that proper medical/psychological care, group, support, or other social services are available for an appropriate period of time. Similar pastoral care and reconciliation will be offered to the affected community.
- B. For clerics accused, but found not guilty of sexual misconduct: If it has become public knowledge, every possible, appropriate step will be taken by the Bishop's Delegate, in collaboration with the Bishop and the falsely accused cleric, to repair any damage to the cleric's reputation.
- C. For volunteers and lay employees accused, but found not guilty of sexual misconduct: Every possible, appropriate step will be taken by the Bishop's Delegate and members of the Response Team to repair any damage to the volunteer's or lay employee's reputation.

## **APPENDIX I**

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS:**

In this policy, regarding allegations of sexual misconduct towards minors and others at risk, the following terms are defined:

**CLERIC:** For the purpose of the Policy, the term "cleric" shall include and be limited to diocesan priests, religious priests, and transitional and permanent deacons.

**EMPLOYEE:** For the purpose of this Policy, the term "employee" means any person employed by the diocese or any subdivision thereof. An employee may be a cleric, a lay person or a member of a religious order.

**REGULAR VOLUNTEER:** For the purpose of this Policy, the term "regular volunteer" shall mean any person who serves as a volunteer in a Church-sponsored activity, or under the auspices of the diocese or a subdivision thereof. This would include, but it is not limited to, student teachers, aides, coaching assistants, special instructions, catechists, scout leaders, server coordination, etc.

MINORS: For the purpose of the Policy, the term “minors” shall be limited to persons under eighteen (18) years of age.

OTHERS AT RISK: For purpose of this Policy, the term “others at risk” shall include, but not be limited to, developmentally disabled persons, and those who place themselves under the trust of a cleric, religious, or employee wherein a power/authority relationship is in place.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT: In this policy, sexual misconduct means any sexual conduct which is either unlawful and/or contrary to the moral teaching of the Church.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **INDIANA CODE 31-35-5-1 DUTY TO MAKE REPORT**

Sec 1. In addition to any other duty to report arising under this article, an individual who has reason to believe that a child is a victim of child abuse or neglect shall make a report as required by this article. As added by P.L.1-1997, Sec. 16.

### **INDIANA CODE 31-33-5-2 NOTIFICATION OF INDIVIDUAL IN CHARGE OF INSTITUTION, SCHOOL, FACILITY OR AGENCY; REPORT**

Sec. 2 (a) If an individual is required to make a report under this article in the individual’s capacity as a member of the staff of a medical or other public or private institution, school, facility, or agency, the individual shall immediately notify the individual in charge of the institution, school, facility, or agency.

(b) An individual notified under subsection (a) shall report or cause a report to be made. As added by P.L. 1-1997, Sec. 16.

### **INDIANA CODE 31-35-5-3 EFFECT OF COMPLIANCE ON INDIVIDUAL’S OWN DUTY TO REPORT**

Sec. 3. This chapter does not relieve an individual of obligation to report on the individual’s own behalf, unless a report has already been made to the best of the individual’s belief. As added by P.L.1-1997, Sec. 16.

### **INDIANA CODE 31-33-5-3 EFFECT OF COMPLIANCE ON INDIVIDUAL’S OWN DUTY TO REPORT**

Sec. 3. This chapter does not relieve an individual of the obligation to report on the individual’s own behalf, unless a report has already been made to the best of the individual’s belief. As added by P.L.1-1997, Sec 16.

### **INDIANA CODE 31-33-5-4 IMMEDIATE ORAL REPORT TO LOCAL CHILD PROTECTION SERVICE OR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY**

Sec 4. A person who has a duty under this chapter to report that a child may be a victim of child abuse or neglect shall immediately make an oral report to:

- 1) the local child protection service; or
- 2) the local law enforcement agency.

As added by P.L.1-1997, Sec. 16.

## APPENDIX III

### List of Agencies for Report of Sexual Abuse or Neglect

#### Lake County

Child Protection Services	219 886-6152
If closed, contact local police or the Sheriff's Department	219 755-3300

#### Laporte County

Child Protection Services	219 326-5870
If closed, contact local police or the Sheriffs' Department	219 326-7700

#### Porter County

Child Protection Services	219 462-7555
If closed, contact local police or the Sheriff's Department	219 465-3515

#### Starke County

Child Protection Services	574 772-3411
<i>If closed, contact local police or the Sheriff's Department</i>	<i>574 772-3771</i>

# SAFE ENVIRONMENT PLAN

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

6-13-03

## PURPOSE

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

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

## DEFINITIONS

### Background Check

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

### Child Abuse

Consists of any of the following:

- a. Sexual Abuse includes any act or interaction whether it involves genital or physical contact, with or without consent, even if initiated by child, which involves sexual contact, molestation or sexual exploitation of a child by a parent or any other person who has permanent or temporary care or custody or responsibility for supervision of a child, whether physical injuries are sustained or not, to include:
  1. The intentional touching of the genitals or intimate parts including the female breast, the genital area, groin, inner thigh and buttocks of a child or of a perpetrator by a child for purposes of sexual arousal or gratification
  2. Rape, sexual intercourse (vaginal or anal), oral/genital, oral/anal contact
  3. The intentional touching and/or displaying of one's own genitals or intimate parts including the female breast, the genital area, groin, inner thigh and buttocks in the presence and view of a child for purposes of sexual arousal or gratification
  4. Permitting, causing, encouraging or assisting in the depiction of or posing for viewing by any person, either in person or by way of graphic means including digital or photographic image of the partially or fully unclothed body of a child, displaying intimate parts, in motion or not in motion, alone or with other persons, or the depiction of a child in apparent observation of sex acts by others in the child's presence.
  5. Displaying or distributing to a child any picture, photograph, book, pamphlet, digital image, movie or magazine the cover or content of which is principally made of descriptions or depictions of sex acts or contact, or which is principally made up of descriptions or depictions of sexual acts or contact, or which consists of pictures of nude or partially denuded figures posed or presented in a manner which the average person applying contemporary community standards would find, taken as a whole, appeals to the prudent interest.

## **Physical Abuse**

Includes any act which:

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

## **Neglect**

Includes:

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

## **Criminal Background Check**

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

## **Substantial Contact**

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

# **EDUCATION**

## **Purpose and Objective**

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

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

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

## **Personnel**

The following Diocesan personnel shall participate in an annual education program on child abuse:

- a. All priests, deacons and members of religious communities.
- b. All principals, administrative staff, teachers, guidance counselors, librarians, all volunteers and staff at all levels, including aides, janitors, food service workers, school nurses, and office personnel of all Catholic elementary,

middle and high schools.

- c. All directors, catechists, staff, and volunteers of religious education programs and youth ministry programs.
- d. All Diocesan personnel providing child care services.
- e. All youth ministry coordinators, directors/coaches of children's activities (e.g., athletics, scout troops, choir, camp counselors, etc.) and similar Diocesan personnel who provide such services.

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

### **Educational Curriculum**

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

### **Deadlines for Completing Training**

New staff and volunteers who will have substantial contact with children shall receive appropriate preventive education programs at the earliest possible date and no later than **sixty (60) days** following the assumption of their duties.

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

### **Educational Programs for Students**

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

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

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

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

- a. The number of training courses offered
- b. The number of training courses attended by
  1. Priests, permanent deacons and religious
  2. Staff members
  3. Volunteers
  4. Parents
  5. Children and Youth
- c. The number of attendees requesting additional training or assistance
- d. Proportion of new staff and volunteers trained by deadlines
- e. Participant evaluations of training content and learning opportunities
- f. Curriculums of the schools, religious education programs and youth groups

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

### **Requirements**

Each Diocesan entity shall:

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

### **Screening Procedures**

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

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

### **Confidentiality**

Like all personal records, information obtained through the Screening, Application, Reference, Interview and Criminal Background check must be kept confidential. It is recommended that all material be kept in a locked file cabinet and access to it be restricted to administrators. These materials should be destroyed after three years of the employee's employment is terminated or the volunteer ceases his/her volunteer duties. (See Confidentiality Agreement.)

## **SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC SCHOOL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POLICIES**

It is the mission of the Office of Faith Formation of SJB to assist parents in their responsibility as their children's primary and most important religious educator. It is our goal to offer parents and students opportunities to grow in their knowledge of the Catholic faith and develop a personal relationship with God.

Children who are not members of the Roman Catholic faith may be enrolled as students of Saint John the Baptist School. All children, no matter what their faith background is, **are required to participate in religion classes and activities as well as attend school Masses and prayer services.**

### **SACRAMENTAL RECORDS**

Upon registration a copy of each student's Baptismal certificate must be submitted. It is the responsibility of the parents to provide that copy. Verification of the reception of the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation must be included in every student's permanent record. If a student enrolls in SJB after receiving one of the above sacraments it is the responsibility of the parents to provide that verification to the school. The verification may be in the form of a copy of the sacramental certificate or a document from the parish, school or religious education program where the student received the sacrament.

### **SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION**

Preparation for reception of a sacrament is developmental; therefore, a child must be enrolled in Saint John School (or another Catholic School or Catholic religious education program) for two (2) consecutive years before beginning the preparation for a sacrament. Verification of attendance in another Catholic School or Catholic religious education program

must be provided upon registration.

### **The Sacrament of Baptism**

Children under the age of seven (7) are baptized under the guidelines of the Catholic Church's Rite of Infant Baptism. In order to request baptism for their child, at least one parent must be a practicing Catholic. Through the Whiting-Robertsdale Faith Community's Infant Baptism Ministry, parents of children under the age of seven (7) are required to attend sessions to prepare them to have their child baptized in the Catholic Church. The Office of Faith Formation coordinates the Infant Baptism Ministry.

Children over the age of seven (7) who have not been baptized must attend SJB (or another Catholic School or Catholic religious education program) for two (2) consecutive years before their sacramental preparation begins. In order to request baptism for their child, at least one parent must be a practicing Catholic. Upon completion of their preparation, these children will receive the sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) on Holy Saturday at the Easter Vigil Liturgy.

Children over the age of seven (7) who have been validly baptized in another Christian denomination will be prepared to make a Profession of Faith in the Catholic Church. The requirements and preparation process is the same for children over the age of 7 who are unbaptized.

### **The Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Children are prepared to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) in the 2nd Grade. In addition to classroom preparation, the candidates for the sacrament and their parents must also attend Mass each Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation including the Rite of Enrollment for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Parents are also required to attend sessions which are designed to assist them in the preparation of their children to receive the sacrament. It is the responsibility of the parents to submit all required forms and fees on or before the dates due.

A Sacrament Fee of **\$15.00** is assessed to each student to help defray the cost of materials and additional texts used in sacrament preparation classes.

The Pastor will defer the reception of the sacrament of Reconciliation if a child does not exhibit sufficient understanding of the sacrament, does not attend Sunday Mass, or if the parents have not abided by the above policies.

### **The Sacrament of Eucharist (Holy Communion)**

Children are prepared to receive the sacrament of Eucharist (Holy Communion) in the 3rd Grade. In addition to classroom preparation, the candidates for the sacrament and their parents must also attend Mass each Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation including the Rite of Enrollment for the Sacrament of Eucharist.

Parents are also required to attend sessions which are designed to assist them in the preparation of their children to receive the sacrament. It is the responsibility of the parents to submit all required forms and fees on or before the dates due.

A Sacrament Fee of **\$15.00** is assessed to each student to help defray the cost of materials and additional texts used in sacrament preparation classes.

The Pastor will defer the reception of the sacrament of Eucharist if a child does not exhibit sufficient understanding of the sacrament, does not attend Sunday Mass, or if the parents have not abided by the above policies.

## **The Sacrament of Confirmation**

Children are prepared to receive the sacrament of Confirmation in the 8th Grade. In addition to classroom preparation, the candidates for the sacrament and their parents must also attend Mass each Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation including the Rite of Enrollment for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Confirmation Candidates must complete all additional assignments and requirements (Stewardship Journal, Service Projects and participation in the Spirit Day Retreat). Parents and Sponsors are also required to attend sessions which are designed to assist them in the preparation of their children to receive the sacrament. It is the responsibility of the parents to submit all required forms and fees on or before the dates due.

A Sacrament Fee of **\$15.00** is assessed to each student to help defray the cost of materials and additional texts used in sacrament preparation classes.

The reception of the sacrament of Confirmation will be deferred by the Pastor if a child does not exhibit sufficient understanding of the sacrament, does not attend Sunday Mass, or if the parents have not abided by the above policies.

## **The Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist for Older Children**

Children generally prepare to receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist in the 2nd and 3rd Grade.

Children who transfer to SJB and have not received the sacraments of Reconciliation and/or Eucharist must be enrolled in SJB (or another Catholic School or Catholic religious education program) for two (2) consecutive years before beginning the preparation for a sacrament.

## **MASS ATTENDANCE**

### **Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation**

All students of SJB are strongly encouraged to attend Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation. Any student who consistently misses Mass on Sundays or Holy Days is not adhering to the policies of Saint John School and their continued enrollment in the school may be terminated.

Please note that if a child is a baptized Catholic, or is preparing for baptism through the Rite of Christian Initiation, that child must attend Mass in a Catholic Church each Sunday. If a child is not a baptized Catholic, that child must attend a Sunday service in their own church.

### **School Masses and Prayer Services**

The entire student body attends Mass each week on Thursdays at 8:30 am and on Holy Days of Obligation. Occasionally, School Masses will be scheduled for a different day to accommodate different schedules, holidays, or celebrations. Students prepare, participate, and lead each School Mass. Grades are assigned in conjunction with the teachers and the DRE. Primary grades may be paired with “prayer buddies” to help promote participation. All members of our Catholic community are invited to attend.

Special prayer services are celebrated throughout the year in conjunction with the church’s liturgical calendar. All students and teachers must attend the scheduled Masses and Prayer Services.

## **THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

The opportunity to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation will be given to students in Grades 3 to 8 during the seasons of Advent and Lent. Parents are strongly encouraged to give their children the opportunity to receive the sacrament on a regular basis throughout the year.

## STEWARDSHIP

As stewards of the gifts that God has given us, and in the spirit of responsibility to our parish community, St. John the Baptist sponsors several Outreach Service Projects each year. Some of these projects are an Advent Adopt-A-Baby project, Lenten collections for the Catholic Relief Services and food drives for the local food pantry. Additional projects are added if a need arises during the year. All students are expected to participate in these projects.

# St. John the Baptist Catholic School

## Acceptable Use Policy & Technology Guidelines

### Educational Purpose

St. John the Baptist Catholic School's technology & infrastructure – internet accessibility, computers, emails, Chromebooks, and network – enables students to access a wide array of resources for educational purposes.

Students must exercise caution when utilizing internet sources. SJB assists students by utilizing filters to protect students from objectionable sources and materials that may contradict our core values. The school also monitors student use of personal and school-owned technology to prevent the production or spreading of objectionable material.

### Expectations

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior when using SJB computers and Chromebooks, all personal electronic devices and network resources including the internet. Technology is provided for students to further educational objectives and is a privilege. Thus, any violation of this policy can result in curtailment or loss of the privilege, or more severe sanctions, including possible suspension and/or dismissal from SJB.

### Student Acceptable Use Policy

1. Personal financial transactions are never permitted over the internet at school.
2. Network storage and school email accounts are reserved for educational purposes only and are the domain of the school. Files and emails may be reviewed to ensure responsible use.
3. Do not access illegal, defamatory, offensive, or pornographic information. If you encounter such material by accident, report it to your teacher immediately.
4. Do not create, send, or display offensive messages or pictures. SJB uses software to identify inappropriate comments or postings, which will be dealt with by the Principal or his designee.
5. Avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, copying another's work or downloading material dishonestly. Copyright laws prohibiting inappropriate reproduction of published material must be respected.
6. Never download program or executable software files on school-owned devices.
7. Students are responsible for:
  - a. their network account and password.
  - b. the contents of the network & *Google Drive* folders.
  - c. maintaining the security of their account.
    - i. **Never** allow another student to use your personal account and/or password to gain access to your accounts or school network.
8. Students should print only what they need for class and save the rest on their own devices, such as a flash drive **AND** their personal Drive account.
9. School-owned devices are primarily intended for class assignments.
10. Any attempt by a student to circumvent SJB security systems and content filters will result in necessary discipline action to be determined by the Principal or his designee.
11. Students must use their “@stjohnbap.org” email accounts only on school-owned devices, for emailed or electronic assignments, and for communication with teachers and other school personnel. School email accounts may not be used to set up social media accounts and blog accounts, such as *Tumblr*; *Twitter*; *Facebook*, *Snap Chat*, etc.
12. Students may not use any communication tool to gain unauthorized access (or attempted access) to any

other computer, *Chromebook*, iPad, tablet, phone, or email.

13. The school reserves the right to review all activities involving any technology. SJB students should not have any expectation of privacy.
14. Note: Students are responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to the policies described in sections of the *Student and Parent Handbook* on “Social Networking and Student Email.”

## Expectations and Procedures: Student Chromebooks

1. *Chromebooks* and *Google* accounts cannot be shared between students.
2. Use of the *Chromebook* in class will be directed by the teacher.
3. Only photos and/or videos that are part of an assignment can be taken, and the student must have the expressed permission of those being photographed or filmed.
4. Pictures that are copied, downloaded, or scanned must be for classroom use only.
5. School texts and work have the highest priority for memory space in the *Drive*.
6. Social media is prohibited during class without the expressed permission of the teacher.
7. Cyber-bullying will be punished appropriately, including possible expulsion from SJB.
8. *Chromebooks* will not be allowed in common areas (i.e.: the Gym, Panel Room, etc.) without expressed permission from the classroom teacher.
9. Cyber-bullying will be punished appropriately, including possible expulsion from SJB.
10. *Chromebooks* are never to leave school grounds.

## Student Email Acceptable use

- The student email system is a privilege that can be revoked if a student does not follow email policies.
- The use of email during class is prohibited unless authorized by faculty or administration.
- Students should always use appropriate language in their emails, chats, etc.
- Email services provided by the school are to be used only for the exchange of appropriate school related and educational information.
- No inappropriate or offensive email, including messages that contain derogatory, obscene, bullying, racist, or harassing messages may be sent. Email messages of this nature will be regarded as a major violation and will be subject to a disciplinary response.
- Chain letters of any kind and spam messages are prohibited. Chain letters are defined as any message asking you to pass along any information or messages onto another group via your email.
- Students are prohibited from accessing another student’s email account.
- Email etiquette should always be observed:
  - Use a proper subject title.
  - Use professional, educational, and relevant vocabulary at all times.
  - Clearly identify your target audience and send messages to this group **only**.
- School email addresses should not be given to **any** websites, companies, or other third parties without the explicit permission of a teacher or administrator.
- Only school and instruction related attachments may be sent/shared on the school email system.

## Monitoring and Filtering of Email

Email that is sent and received by the student accounts is monitored and filtered based upon content.

- All student email passes through a message security system.
- Rules/filters are setup to monitor student email for profanity, harassment, and other inappropriate content.

- Student email that is identified as inappropriate will be blocked from delivery, and instead, will be sent to the school administration for review. Those emails that are found to be in violation of the acceptable use policy, or those that violate guidelines established above, will be subject to a disciplinary response.

**Note: If a student is concerned about email they sent or received through the SJB email system, they should contact the Principal's Office immediately.**

## St. John the Baptist Catholic School

### Social Media Policy 2021-2022

SJB recognizes that access to technology in school gives students, parents and teachers greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop 21st-century technology and communication skills.

To that end, this **Social Media Policy** outlines expectations we have of our students, faculty, staff, and parents when posting on social media accounts or when using personally-owned devices in regards to any posts related to SJB in any manner, explicit or implicit.

- Students, parents and teachers are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of social media can result in disciplinary action.
- SJB makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from misuse of social media technologies.

We encourage teachers, students, staff, and other school community members to use social networking/media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) as a way to connect with others, share educational resources, create and curate educational content, and enhance the classroom experience. While social networking is fun and valuable, there are some risks you should keep in mind when using these tools. In the social media world, the lines are blurred between what is public or private, personal or professional.

We've created these social networking/media guidelines for you to follow when representing the school in the virtual world.

Please do the following:

Use good judgment

- We expect you to use good judgment in all situations.
- You must know and follow the school's Code of Conduct and Privacy Policy.
- Regardless of your privacy settings, assume that all of the information you have shared on your social network is public information.

Be respectful

- Always treat others in a respectful, positive and considerate manner.

#### Be responsible and ethical

- If you are approved to represent the school, unless you are specifically authorized to speak on behalf of the school as a spokesperson, you should state that the views expressed in your postings, etc. are your own. You should not allude to, disclose, share, or refer to anything defamatory related to any SJB student, faculty, staff, or family.
- Be open about your affiliation with the school and the role/position you hold.

#### Be a good listener

- Keep in mind that one of the biggest benefits of social media is that it gives others another way to talk to you, ask questions directly and to share feedback.
- Be responsive others when conversing online. Provide answers, thank people for their comments, and ask for further feedback, etc.
- Always be doing at least as much listening and responding as you do “talking.”

#### Don't share the following:

##### Confidential information

- Do not publish, post or release information that is considered confidential or not public. If it seems confidential, it probably is. Online “conversations” are never private. Refer back to your volunteer guidelines for further information.

##### Private and personal information

- To ensure your safety, be careful about the type and amount of personal information you provide. Avoid talking about personal schedules or situations.
- NEVER give out or transmit personal information of students, parents, or co-workers
- Don't take information you may receive through social networking (such as email addresses, customer names or telephone numbers) and assume it's the most up-to-date or correct.
- Always respect the privacy of the SJB stakeholders.

#### Please be cautious with respect to:

##### Images

- Respect brand, trademark, copyright information and/or images of the school (if applicable).
- You may use/share photos and video (products, etc.) that are available on the school's website.
- It is **not acceptable** to post pictures of students without the expressed written consent of their parents. This includes field trips, class trips, etc.
- Do not post pictures of others (co-workers, etc.) without their permission.

#### And if you don't get it right...

- Be sure to correct any mistakes you make immediately, and make it clear what you've done to fix it.
- Apologize for the mistake if the situation warrants it.
- If it's a MAJOR mistake (e.g., exposing private information or reporting confidential information), please let someone know immediately so SJB can take the proper steps to help minimize the impact it may have.

## **Personal Safety**

If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're using the device at home) *immediately*.

- Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission.
- Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others.

## **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else.

Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained by others.

## **Limitation of Liability**

SJB will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

## **Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy**

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension of volunteer privileges
  - Removal from positions of leadership within SJB.
  - Removal of student(s) from SJB.
  - Additional consequences determined by Administration and/or authorities.
-

**St. John the Baptist Catholic School** will be welcoming students and staff back to campus this fall while putting students and staff safety first. Students and staff will return with in-school classes with near-normal operations using health measures. The information contained in this document is subject to change at any given time pending COVID-19 and the most appropriate information provided. Any changes made to this document will be communicated to our staff, students, families, and community.

### **Diocesan Statement for all Catholic Schools**

“Coronavirus and COVID-19 Warning: The risk of exposure to coronavirus exists anywhere that people (and even pets) are present, especially in larger groups. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the virus spreads easily between people and can cause severe illness and even death. The risk is higher for certain people. Risk factors include being 65 years of age or older or having serious underlying medical conditions.

By attending a Diocese of Gary School, you voluntarily assume all risk related to exposure to viruses, including the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

Enhanced health and safety measures have been recommended to protect each of us. You must follow all posted instructions while attending a Diocese of Gary School.”

#### **1. General Building Maintenance and Sanitation**

- A thorough cleaning of the school facilities will be completed prior to the start of the school year.
- School facilities will be cleaned at the end of each school day or before the next school day begins.
- High-touch or high contact surfaces such as bathroom facilities, desks, entryways, doorknobs and door handles will be sanitized regularly throughout the day.
- Procedures and visual aids for hand hygiene will be placed in visible areas around the school.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be placed in entrances and exits around the school including classrooms.
- Everyone will be required to sanitize their hands upon entering and exiting a room or area.
- Equipment considered to be high-touch and high contact surfaces such as water fountains will be discontinued for use. Thus, students will be required to bring their own water bottles from home, alternative refill stations will be provided in the school.

#### **2. Prevention**

- The priority for preventing the spread of disease in the school setting is to insist that sick employees and students stay home.
- Students and employees should remain home if someone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms or is being tested for COVID-19. Please inform the school principal, Jessica Gonzalez, [jgonzalez@stjohnbap.org](mailto:jgonzalez@stjohnbap.org), and Assistant Principal, Michelle Wacnik, [mwacnik@stjohnbap.org](mailto:mwacnik@stjohnbap.org) immediately if this is the case:
- The three most important mitigation strategies include reasonable social distancing, handwashing and sanitizing, and face covering.
- Hand washing/sanitizing and avoid touching your face, eyes, nose, or mouth are also important steps a person can take to avoid becoming sick or spreading germs to others.
- Additionally, students and employees should remain home if someone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms or is being tested for COVID-19.

#### **3. Screening**

- Each day, parents will screen their student(s) for the symptoms of COVID-19 prior to arrival at school. Students exhibiting symptoms are prohibited from coming to school.
- Each day, St. John the Baptist staff will self-screen for the symptoms of COVID-19 prior to arrival at school. Staff exhibiting symptoms are prohibited from coming to school.
- When unsure as to whether or not to keep a child at home, please err on the side of caution - **Do not come to school for the safety of all.**
- Contact tracing by the Lake County Health Department and St. John the Baptist School will take place when a COVID-19 case occurs.
- Ask yourself these questions:
  - Within the past 14 days, have you had contact with anyone that you know had COVID-19 or COVID-like symptoms? Contact is being 6 feet or closer for more than 15 minutes with a person, or having direct contact with fluids from a person with COVID-19 (for example, being coughed or sneezed on).
  - Have you had a positive COVID-19 test for the active virus in the past 14 days?
  - Within the past 14 days, has a public health or medical professional told you to self-monitor, self-isolate, or self-quarantine because of concerns about COVID-19 infection?
  - If any of these symptoms are present or you answered **yes** to any of the questions, **DO NOT COME** to school! Contact your healthcare provider, and please email [jgonzalez@stjohnbap.org](mailto:jgonzalez@stjohnbap.org) and [mwacnik@stjohnbap.org](mailto:mwacnik@stjohnbap.org).
- Travel:
  - As a school we will not have any mandatory quarantine for families who are choosing to travel. It is impossible for us to determine who has traveled or is traveling. We will however ask that families always follow best practices in wearing a mask, social distancing, and washing your hands. If you feel that this was not possible during your travel we ask that you quarantine your children for 14 days. Thank you for doing the right thing, being careful, and respecting the greater good of the community.

#### 4. Symptoms Impacting Consideration for Exclusion from School

The following are COVID-19 related symptoms:

- A fever of 100.4°F or greater
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Fatigue
- Congestion
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Students and employees will be excluded from school if they test positive for COVID-19 or exhibit one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 based on the CDC guidance that is not otherwise explained.

## 5. COVID-19 Exposure

Students and staff should be excluded from school if someone in the household has COVID-19 symptoms, is being tested for COVID-19, if the student or staff has otherwise been exposed to COVID-19, or if they test positive for COVID-19. Please inform the principal, [jgonzalez@stjohnbap.org](mailto:jgonzalez@stjohnbap.org) and assistant principal, [mwacnik@stjohnbap.org](mailto:mwacnik@stjohnbap.org) immediately if this is the case via email.

Any exposure would require a 14 day quarantine from the day of exposure including close contacts. The Lake County Health Department will contact those who need to be tested. Please know that we would never release the names of anyone who is COVID-19 positive or has been exposed as it would be a HIPPA violation.

- **Entire classrooms will NOT be sent home. We will contact trace and inform those individuals considered close contacts to quarantine and E-Learning assignments will be made available for those students. Quarantine is not necessary for those providing proof of being fully vaccinated and free of COVID-19 symptoms.**

## 6. Return to School after Exclusion

Once a student or employee is excluded from the school environment, they may return if they satisfy the recommendations of the CDC. Currently those guidelines are:

### Untested

Persons who have not received a test proving or disproving the presence of COVID-19 but experience symptoms may return if the following conditions are met:

- They have not had a fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); AND
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); AND
- At least 14 calendar days have passed since your symptoms first appeared; AND
- Physician's release will be necessary stating actual different diagnoses.
- The state website has a list of over 200 testing facilities, their location, and hours of operation. This list is updated frequently.

### Test Positive - Symptomatic

Persons who experienced symptoms and have been tested for COVID-19 may return to school if the following conditions are met:

- The individual no longer has a fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers); AND
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved); AND
- At least 14 calendar days have passed since symptoms first appeared and they have not had a fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers); OR
- The individual has received two negative tests at least 24 hours apart AND they have not had a fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers).

### **Tested Positive - Asymptomatic**

Persons who have not had symptoms but test positive for COVID-19 may return when they have gone 14 calendar days past their test without symptoms and have been released by a healthcare provider. Students may also return if they are approved to do so in writing by the student's health care provider.

#### **7. Face Masks**

- Everyone entering and exiting the building must wear a face mask at all times.
- St. John the Baptist face masks can be purchased or homemade and must be school appropriate.
- A spare mask for school in a ziploc bag is encouraged for all students and staff.
- Face masks should be washed daily.

#### **8. Lunch**

- **Lunch will take place in the cafeteria. Students will remove their masks when eating and drinking.**
- Parents are encouraged to practice with younger students at home to prepare them for eating independently. Lunch and drink options should be chosen so that a student can easily open containers and packaging on their own.

#### **9. In The Classroom and School**

- School begins daily at 8am.
- Every Wednesday there is an early dismissal at 2pm.
- Students will stay with the same group of staff members as much as possible.
- Students will be allowed to wear their school gym uniform everyday through September 30th due to the heat. Beginning October 1st we will go back to regular school uniforms and gym uniforms on gym days.
- Students will have assigned seats in every class.
- Students' desks will be reasonably socially distant.
- Masks will be worn by all staff and students in the building.
- Outdoor instruction will be utilized (when possible).
- Windows will be open (when possible).
- Teachers will oversee daily wipe downs of student desks and other hard surfaces in their classrooms during the school day.
- No birthday treats or other treats will be distributed.
- Physical education classes will be held outside weather permitting. If we cannot have classes outdoors we will move P.E. classes to the gymnasium.

#### **10. E-Learning Days**

- E-Learning days may be utilized to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 as directed by official authorities of Indiana, the Diocese of Gary and/or St. John the Baptist Catholic School.

#### **11. Access to Campus**

- **Students will report to their homeroom class immediately upon arrival to school beginning at 7:45am. Students will be allowed to enter the building as early as 7:45am and go straight to their classroom. There will be no gatherings in the halls, outside, or cafeteria.**

- Updated drop-off/pick-up procedures will be determined prior to the start of school to support physical distancing.
- There will be NO visitors during the school day.
- Email and phone calls can be used for communication needs.
- Families who are dropping-off or picking up students outside of normal school hours will need to report to the main school door for visibility check and remain outside until their student is ready.



Your path. Your connection. Our journey.

## PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK AGREEMENT 2021-2022

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

I/We have received and reviewed the Handbook for St. John the Baptist Catholic School posted on St. John the Baptist Website. I/We agree, as a condition for my/our child's enrollment at SJB, to abide by these rules and regulations and assist the Faculty & Staff, if required, in the application of these rules to my child.

### **Coronavirus and COVID-19 Warning:**

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**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_