



FAMILY **HANDBOOK** **2025 - 2026**

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Welcome to Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy is a vibrant community that is built on the Four Pillars of Faith, Scholarship, Leadership, and Service. Our mission is to prepare the next generation of believers, scholars, leaders, and servants by forming them in virtue and encouraging them to excellence. By acquiring a mastery of classroom concepts and developing a wide range of skills, our students deepen their awareness of God's presence and action in the natural world. They have the opportunity to encounter that God sacramentally during the school day, and to live out the Gospel in their interactions with others.

It is our responsibility to foster an environment that is conducive to each student's encounter with God and with his or her neighbor. This environment requires clear expectations and consistent application of those expectations. It demands that we, the community of Saint Joseph's, recognize the inherent dignity of those around us, and act in a way that is consistent both with their dignity and our own. This environment is one in which the virtues are both practiced and taught.

The Family Handbook is designed to share a clear vision of this environment with students and their parents and guardians. It communicates both our philosophy of education as well as the specific policies and procedures that have been enacted based on that philosophy. It clearly defines what we expect from our families and, in turn, what families can expect from the faculty, staff, and administration. In short, this Handbook seeks to be a comprehensive guide to all facets of life and learning at Saint Joseph's.

The virtues that we hope to inculcate have also been our guide in formulating this Handbook; in particular, the cardinal virtues of prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude. Motivated by the love of God and love for our students, we have done our best to enact policies that are reasonable, fair, and just. This process has involved the careful study of other Catholic high schools whose demographics and mission are similar to ours, to help us identify best practices and effective policies. We owe a debt of gratitude to those schools whose handbooks have influenced this one, providing both precise wording for specific ideas and inspired approaches to difficult questions. At the same time, we have endeavored to tailor each policy to the uniqueness of Saint Joseph's. We know that successful schools are committed to continuous improvement, and so any revisions or additions that are made to this Handbook will be conducted in the same spirit of mission-focused discernment that guided its initial creation.

We entrust our mission, all of our efforts, and every member of our community to Jesus Christ through the intercession of Our Lady and our patron, Saint Joseph. May the Holy Family always be the model and guide for the "family of families" that is Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy.

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Philosophy

Family - School Agreement

The Second Vatican Council taught that parents are the primary educators of their children. The relationship between parents and the school must therefore be a relationship of collaboration and mutual trust in which both parents and the school recognize their respective obligations to the other.

The Function of this Handbook

Catholic schools operate under contract law; this Handbook constitutes the contract between Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy and families (student(s) and parents/guardians). By enrolling at Saint Joseph's, families agree to abide by the policies and regulations set forth herein. School administration has tried to be as explicit as possible in the Handbook's development, but we recognize that new, unusual, and unexpected situations may arise during the course of the school year. School administration reserves the authority to use discretion in circumstances to which Handbook policies do not precisely apply. School administration also reserves the right to amend the Handbook during the school year if necessary, and will provide proper notification of any changes. If any provision of the Handbook is deemed ambiguous, by any person, the interpretation of that provision shall rest with school administration.

What parents can expect from the school:

- Parents can expect that the school will strive to maintain a safe and secure environment for their children, and that teachers and administrators will react swiftly to any threats against the safety of its students, either individually or as a school.
- Parents can expect access to essential information about their students' academic progress, regular communication from the school, and a reasonable promptness from administrators and faculty in responding to emails and phone calls.
- Parents can expect teachers to provide well-structured lessons, a rigorous curriculum, and effective classroom management that includes the consistent application of school policies.
- Parents can expect teachers to provide all students with the opportunity to succeed, and will take reasonable measures to address deficiencies in student performance.
- Parents can expect to be notified promptly of any serious disciplinary infractions involving their children.
- Parents can expect that school personnel will model the Christian virtues that are at the heart of growth in holiness and our program of formation.
- Parents can expect that school personnel will never teach, either by example or in their courses, anything contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church.

What the school can expect from parents:

- The school can expect that parents will support, encourage, and help order the lives of their children toward Christian holiness and virtue.
- The school can expect that parents will model integrity and virtue for their children, and will hold them accountable for inappropriate behavior expressed either in the home or at school. Parents will support their children's success by preventing unnecessary absences.
- The school can expect that parents will address issues in a virtuous way. This means that issues will be addressed with the involved parties directly, that gossip and slander will be avoided, and that the benefit of the doubt will be given by assessing all facts before passing judgment.
- The school can expect that parents will seek solutions to classroom problems by communicating first with teachers, and by involving the teacher in any subsequent discussions with administration.
- The school can expect that parents of Catholic students will provide their children with the opportunity to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation regularly and to fulfill their obligation to attend Mass, including each Sunday.
- The school can expect that parents will fulfill their financial obligations to the school in a timely manner, including the payment of tuition, fees, and other expenses.

School Overview

Located in Boalsburg, Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy delivers a complete education, emphasizing excellence in all areas of life in accordance with Gospel values. Small classes taught by exceptional teachers help students achieve their full potential.

Saint Joseph's offers a classical sequence of courses at the College Preparatory, Honors, and Advanced Placement or Dual Enrollment levels. The curriculum is designed to prepare students to excel at leading colleges and universities. College and Career planning services help students realize their unique abilities and help them to select elective courses in science and mathematics, humanities and social sciences, business, and the arts.

What truly sets Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy apart is an emphasis on faith, scholarship, leadership, and service as the Four Pillars that support our mission. In collaboration with families and the community, Saint Joseph's fosters an academic life grounded in the rich intellectual tradition of the Catholic Church. This education is directed toward enabling students to grow in virtue and answer the Gospel call to servant-leadership. The nature of these goals requires a high standard of behavior that encourages students to recognize their dignity and their capacity for greatness.

Saint Joseph's recognizes that parents are the primary educators of their children, and seeks to assist parents in their effort to share the faith with their children. Saint Joseph's also seeks to bring the Gospel beyond our campus through community outreach and service. Saint Joseph's is open to all families who are willing to support our mission, regardless of personal religious affiliation.

Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy Prayer

Father in Heaven, we ask you to fill us each day with trust in you and faith in your great plan for our lives. Shed your light on the path before us and prepare us to receive every grace and blessing. Enable us to see how you are answering our prayers and help us to become a community of ever-deepening faith.

Come Holy Spirit, grant us the courage and humility to trust in your word and lead others according to your will. Help us to listen to your call and guide us so that we may always be witnesses of love, faith, and purity.

Lord Jesus, we are thankful for our minds with which we discern all of your creation. We give thanks for those who have come before us and on whose shoulders we stand. We are also grateful for all those in our lives from whom we can learn so much. We ask for the gifts of the Spirit that we may use our minds to learn, and our talents to share for your greater glory.

Finally, Lord, we ask that you guide our hearts and hands as we serve each other to build a community that willingly reaches out to others. We pray that, through this, we may serve and grow your Kingdom through the Spirit working in us.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Mission

Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy educates and prepares young women and men for lives of purpose in a global society through:

- A Catholic values-based environment that nurtures each individual's relationship with Jesus Christ
- A compelling and challenging curriculum focused on academic inquiry and critical thinking
- The identification, growth, and development of personal leadership skills combined with the opportunity and courage to practice them
- Engaged and generous community service and philanthropy
- A foundation of inherent caring, integrity and respect.

We Believe

- We believe that Christ is the reason for this school, and the true Teacher of all. Therefore, we are all called to be visible signs of the Gospel message in our daily lives.
- We believe that Catholic education teaches faith, scholarship, leadership, and service.
- We believe that faith formation is a collaboration between school, family, and community, sustained and nourished by the Church.
- We believe in the inherent dignity of each person, recognizing that they are made in God's image.
- We believe that effort creates intelligence and a strong work ethic helps students develop their skills.
- We believe that instruction and assessment must provide for the diverse needs and abilities of all students.
- We believe in continuous improvement through research, ongoing education, and implementation of best practices.

Saint Joseph, Our Patron

This school is named in honor of Saint Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus Christ and the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Though Scripture does not record any of his words, the Gospel tells us that he was "a just man" and a descendent of King David. In an age of confusion, Saint Joseph shows us true masculinity as a model husband and father. He teaches all of us how to grow in discipleship, purity, hard work, and trust in God.

Some of the most common symbols of Saint Joseph are the carpenter's square and the lily or a flowering staff. The square represents his trade as a *tekton* or craftsman, and the lily symbolizes the purity of the Most Chaste Heart of Saint Joseph. The flowering staff refers to an apocryphal story about how Joseph was divinely chosen as the spouse of Mary by means of a flowering staff, just as Aaron's staff had budded as a sign of divine favor in Numbers 17.



As the patron not only of our school but of the Universal Church, we entrust our mission and everything we do to his intercession. Like Saint Joseph, we hope that every member of our community works diligently, always responds to the will of God, and remains close to Jesus and Mary.

House System

Saint Joseph's has implemented a House System for the purpose of deepening fellowship, fostering healthy team competition, encouraging organic mentorship, and enlivening school spirit. In this system, every member of the Saint Joseph's community (student, faculty, staff, and administration) are assigned to one of four Houses, each named in honor of a saint of the Church and aligned primarily with one of our Four Pillars. Each House also has a faculty advisor and a designated meeting room. At the beginning of their tenure at Saint Joseph's, students take a personality inventory that influences their House assignment, while also respecting the necessary balance in the membership of all four Houses. In addition, "legacies" (younger family members of past or present Saint Joseph's students or staff) will often be sorted into the same House as other family members.

House	Pillar	Patron
House Becket	Faith	St. Thomas Becket
House De La Salle	Scholarship	St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle
House Francis	Leadership	St. Francis of Assisi
House More	Service	St. Thomas More

Students meet in their Houses several times each week, and typically sit with their House at all-school assemblies and other functions. Throughout the year, students may earn points for their Houses by participating in various competitions and activities. These points are the basis for deciding the winner of the annual House Cup each spring.

Each House appoints several officers to plan and promote intra-House activities and represent the House by serving on House Council. The officer positions align with the Four Pillars: each House chooses a Captain (Leadership) assisted by a Chaplain (Faith), Dean (Scholarship), and Squire (Service). House Council is governed by its by-laws, which are approved by the administration each year.

Positive Learning Environment

Philosophy of a Positive Learning Environment

The goal of Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy is to transform lives through the teachings of Jesus Christ. Students are expected to behave appropriately and respectfully at all times. Wherever they are, they represent their family, their school, and their Church. Therefore, they are responsible to be good examples in conduct, words, manner, and attire at all times.

Rules and Regulations

In order to achieve its goals in an orderly manner, every school must establish policies related to student conduct. These policies establish expectations for student conduct and provide consequences when those expectations are not met. This Handbook is one of the primary ways that the school communicates its expectations to students, so it is the responsibility of each student to read this Handbook thoroughly and have an understanding of all policies and expectations. Enrollment at Saint Joseph's also indicates an agreement to abide by the school's rules, policies, instructions, and regulations, whether contained in the Handbook or communicated directly by school personnel.

Resolving Conflict

Because of our fallen nature, all human societies will encounter conflict. The mark of a Christian society is how conflict is resolved in a spirit of forgiveness, charity, and honest communication. Respect for others requires that questions and concerns are addressed directly with those involved, and that higher forms of authority are only sought when previous attempts at resolution have failed. When conflict arises between students, they are encouraged to seek the mediation of a teacher, who will help the students achieve a peaceful resolution. Questions or concerns about any class's order, expectations, grading, or discipline should be directed first to the teacher of the class.

Profile of Graduates

By the time of graduation, a Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy senior:

- Is learning to live according to Gospel values. The Saint Joseph's graduate will have attained an intellectual grasp of the teachings of the Catholic faith and will be committed to developing his or her interior life through regular prayer.
- Recognizes that integrity, self-discipline, and service to others are better criteria for success than personal or material gain.
- Is learning what it means to be a contributing member of society and a good citizen of his or her country and of the world community.
- Has begun to learn and use effective communication skills. The Saint Joseph's graduate will have had practice in reading, writing, listening, and speaking effectively for a variety of audiences, in a number of different situations, and through both print and electronic media.
- Is developing an awareness of how to use technology in an efficient and morally responsible way.
- Has begun to recognize and work to develop his or her talents and to appreciate the talents of others.
- Is developing the ability to solve problems effectively. The Saint Joseph's graduate has learned to analyze a problem, examine the options, and work toward a logical, practical, and ethical solution.
- Is prepared to engage in life-long learning and critical thinking. The Saint Joseph's graduate will have learned the skills requisite for acquiring, assessing, and integrating information and will have come to recognize the way in which he or she learns best and to experience the joys of learning.
- Has recognized the importance of a strong work ethic, and regularly puts forth the effort necessary to do well. He or she recognizes the inherent dignity of work as a participation in the work of the Creator.

Core Values

Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy is committed to fulfilling its mission through core values, which include:

Catholic Identity

Saint Joseph's is a private, non-profit, Roman Catholic secondary school in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. As an apostolate and mission of the Catholic Church, faith is at the center of our school and inspires all of our operations. This faith is lived out visibly through classroom prayer, school liturgies, and Theology classes. More fundamentally, our anthropology and pedagogy is grounded in a Catholic and scriptural worldview. Our priority is the formation and well-being of our students not only intellectually, but spiritually as well. Our teachers are essential to providing this formation, and so all of our teachers are considered to hold a ministerial role, regardless of what subject they teach.

Excellence in Education

The faculty are committed to providing a high-quality education that reflects the rich intellectual tradition of the Catholic Church. This excellence will position Saint Joseph's students to seize opportunities available in institutions of higher learning and to pursue their desired careers.

Life of Faith

Saint Joseph's will challenge students to engage with their faith and to incorporate it into daily life. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the truths of Divine Revelation and how those truths apply to us as individuals and as a community. Students will be encouraged to form their consciences in accord with these truths and, in turn, to live out the morality taught by Christ and His Church. This same calling is extended to parents, faculty, and all members of the Saint Joseph's community.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of Saint Joseph's students and personnel are a high priority. The Administration will endeavor to maintain compliance with applicable public, state, and federal safety laws and implement preventive measures to ensure campus safety and security.

Accessibility

We believe that a Catholic education should be accessible to every family who supports our mission, and so it is our ongoing commitment to remove unnecessary obstacles and enable families to pursue a Catholic education at the secondary level. This commitment includes attempting to provide financial assistance to those who qualify for enrollment at Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy, but are unable to pay full tuition. It also means providing reasonable accommodations to students with diverse learning needs or physical limitations.

Community Service

As a Catholic school, helping to address the various needs of the local community and world is a passion. Students will be taught by work and example that a life-long commitment to service is essential.

Respect

Within the school community, it is especially important that students treat one another and all school personnel with respect. This respect is modeled by personnel in their interactions with each other and with students.

Honor Code

Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy is committed to providing a complete formation for young people that not only encourages academic excellence, but fosters virtue. The Honor Code is an important facet of this formation because honor is a recognition of dignity. By upholding the Honor Code, students are taught to recognize their own inherent dignity and the dignity of those around them. They are taught to take pride in their school and its community.

The Honor Code is built upon four values: honesty, integrity, respect, and responsibility. It is primarily expressed by showing honor to God, to self, to others, and to the school community.

Four Values of the Honor Code

- **Honesty:** St. Thomas Aquinas defined truth as, "That which corresponds to reality." Further, Christ declares that He not only came to tell us the truth, but that He is the Truth (Jn. 14:6). Therefore, dishonesty not only leads people away from reality, but away from Christ. Honesty is the first and most important value of the Honor Code because it enables the school's mission to communicate truth. Where honesty is lacking, neither virtue nor relationships can survive.
- **Integrity:** When something has integrity, it possesses "togetherness" and interior unity. The virtue of integrity means that one is consistent in his or her actions, and does what is right regardless of who is (or is not) watching. A person of integrity avoids duplicity.
- **Respect:** If honor is the recognition of dignity, respect is our response to that recognition. It is an awareness that permeates and informs all of our actions.
- **Responsibility:** God has given us free will for the purpose of making decisions. With this freedom comes also the responsibility to be accountable for our words and actions. A responsible person fulfills his or her obligations and never tries to shift blame or make excuses.

Honor to God, Self, Others, and the School Community

- **Honor to God:** Students show honor to God by recognizing His gifts and blessings in all things. They pursue a deeper knowledge of God by careful study of His Revelation, and they try to put this knowledge into practice. They seek a deeper relationship with God through prayer and the sacraments. They do not tolerate blasphemy or sacrilege in their own words and actions or those of the people around them.
- **Honor to Self:** Students show honor to themselves by acting in a way that is "worthy of the Gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27) and reflective of their dignity. They are truthful in their word, reliable in their action, and charitable in their intention. They pursue knowledge and work to maintain a level of achievement consistent with their abilities. They use their time well, whether scheduled or unscheduled, and make a sincere effort to develop their God-given gifts and talents.
- **Honor to Others:** Students show honor to others by creating a welcoming environment of mutual care rooted in Christ's command to love our neighbor. They are friendly and polite, and make an effort to reach out to those on the margins. They use their words to build each other up, and are mature in their interactions. They are willing to collaborate and cooperate with others, and reject selfishness and unhealthy competitiveness.
- **Honor to the School Community:** Students show honor to the school community by always living the values of Saint Joseph's. They remember that they represent the school whether in uniform or not, and reflect this in their words and actions. They are good stewards of all that the school has given them, especially the material resources, facility, and grounds that have been designated for their use.

The Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy Creed: A Student Pledge

I am a student at Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy.
I am made in God's image.
I am a person of honor, dignity, and integrity.
I am a valuable part of this faith-based community.
I am part of a proud tradition of scholarship, athletics, and the arts.
I am a representative of this school everywhere I go.

I will continue my walk of faith.
I will live the virtues in everything I do.
I will carry myself with honor and pride each day.
I will look, speak, and act in ways that bring honor to my school, my family, and myself.
I will be a good steward of all that is entrusted to me.

I will respect my classmates, teachers, administrators, staff, and visitors.
I will not permit bullying or disrespect to go unchallenged.

I will develop a good work ethic and recognize the dignity of work in all that I do.
I will give my best effort in every endeavor and support my classmates in theirs.
I will work cooperatively with the school community.
I will not waste my time or the time of others.
I will set high standards for myself.
I will work hard to meet those standards and master the content set before me.
I will continue to grow and get stronger as a student each year.

I will try to make wise decisions and good choices.
I will hold myself accountable for my actions.
I will learn from my mistakes and grow each day.
I will nurture my talents, skills, and passions.
I will carefully consider the vocation to which God has called me.
I will prepare conscientiously for the future so that I can contribute meaningfully as an adult and global citizen.

I will uphold the tradition.
I will contribute to my school's history.
I will do all of these things with God's grace and for God's glory.
I am a proud Saint Joe's student.
I am Saint Joe's!

School Colors and Mascot

The school colors and mascot were selected by the members of the initial classes of Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy, the Class of 2014 and the Class of 2015. The school colors are Navy blue and orange. Navy blue represents loyalty, trust, and confidence, and orange represents energy and enthusiasm. Wolves are native to Pennsylvania, and appear in the myths and legends of many countries, where they are often viewed as wise, resourceful, and intelligent creatures. They are brave, strong, and adaptable, protective of each other, and fiercely loyal. When our mascot appears at athletic events or other school activities, he is referred to as Wolfgang.

Policies and Procedures

Academic Integrity

Students demonstrate mastery of objectives through a wide variety of formative and summative assessments such as examinations, written work, and performance-based assessments. The goal of assessments is to obtain an accurate understanding of what each student has learned in order to properly prepare students for their future. Behaviors that are contrary to academic integrity not only frustrate this purpose, but are also contrary to the values expressed in our Honor Code. These behaviors are incompatible with our mission, with our effectiveness as a school and, ultimately, with continued enrollment at Saint Joseph's.

Because grades often play a factor in college admissions and scholarships, students regularly experience a great deal of stress or pressure to earn the best grades possible. While students are encouraged to do their best academically, stress can provide a strong temptation to utilize dishonest means to achieve the desired grades. All members of the Saint Joseph's community - administrators, faculty, students, and parents - share the responsibility to create a culture of academic integrity. In this culture, academic dishonesty is not only impermissible, but unthinkable.

This culture is built by faculty when they use diverse means to assess student performance, including ungraded assessments. Parents contribute to a culture of academic integrity by prioritizing effort over results, and by fostering a growth mindset in their children. Students exemplify this culture when they demonstrate resourcefulness and resiliency and when they respond to failure (or perceived failure) with determination to learn and improve.

Definitions of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors that give themselves or other students an unfair advantage, misrepresent what they have learned, or take credit for work that is not their own. These behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Copying another's work, or sharing work so that it may be copied*
- Using prohibited resources or devices during an assessment
- Communicating with other students during an assessment by any means
- Intentionally observing another's work during an assessment
- Providing specific information about an assessment to a student in another section, or requesting said information
- Falsifying information before, during, or after an assessment has been given
- Stealing or accepting copies of assessment-related materials, such as answer keys or old tests
- Altering an approved device (e.g. a graphic calculator) to provide an unfair advantage
- Copying another's words and claiming them as your own without proper citation (plagiarism)
- Unauthorized use of AI-generated text. ([See "Artificial Intelligence"](#))
- Falsifying records, documents, or any other work used as the basis of grading
- Accessing or attempting to access a teacher's computer or accounts for the purpose of altering grades

*This includes sharing completed homework, or pictures of the same. While there may be circumstances in which it is appropriate to share notes or pictures of notes, especially with classmates who were absent, the same does not apply to completed homework. Faculty and administrators will assume that any student who shares a picture of completed homework did so for the purpose of facilitating copying, and will treat such actions as academic dishonesty.

Students must take all reasonable steps to avoid any action that gives the impression or appearance of academic dishonesty in order to avoid misunderstandings. This is especially important in light of the serious consequences associated with academic dishonesty.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty

Students who commit academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Small assignments, such as most homework assignments, will receive a 0. Larger assignments, such as major exams, will receive a 50%. The first violation of our academic integrity policies will be considered a Level II disciplinary offense and the consequence is a detention. The second offense during a student's tenure at Saint Joseph's will be considered a Level III disciplinary offense and the consequence is in-school suspension. The consequence for the third offense during a student's tenure at St. Joseph's is a disciplinary hearing, which may result in the student being asked to withdraw from Saint Joseph's. For more information about the consequences associated with different levels of behavior issue, please see ["Disciplinary Policy"](#).

Academic Probation

Any student whose GPA falls below 2.0 in a quarter or who receives an F for a quarter grade will be placed on academic probation for the following quarter. During the period of academic probation, students may not serve as officers of any extracurricular activities. If the student is a House Council representative, they must follow the appropriate by-laws governing their continued membership and responsibilities.

Students on academic probation are ineligible to compete in any athletic event or participate in school-sponsored activities. Their level of participation in a sport, activity, or team during the probationary period will be subject to review and evaluation by administration, faculty, the Athletic Director, and coaches.

If a student's final overall year-end GPA is not 2.0 or above, the student may be asked to continue his or her education in an environment where he or she can be more successful.

Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment Courses

Saint Joseph's provides students with opportunities to explore subject areas more deeply, develop critical thinking skills at a higher level, and earn college credits while still in high school. These opportunities primarily come in the form of Advanced Placement (AP) courses and Dual Enrollment courses.

Students enrolled in an AP course must take the AP test as scheduled by the College Board, and are responsible for any costs associated with the test. If a student fails to take an AP test on its assigned day or an approved makeup date as designated by the College Board, the student will be required to take an AP-style final exam for the course. This final exam will be worth a significant portion of the overall grade. In addition, the course will be recorded on the student's transcript as an Honors-level class instead of an AP class. This modification will also be reflected when calculating the student's GPA.

Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy courses that have been approved by a post-secondary institution for dual enrollment will earn both high school credit and college credit. Specific information pertaining to dual enrollment will be distributed at the beginning of the school year to students enrolled in qualifying courses. It is the student's responsibility to complete admissions and enrollment with the post-secondary institution and to verify with the college they plan to attend on the transfer/acceptance of dual enrollment credits.

Alcohol

[See "Illicit Substances"](#)

APA Style

The proper formatting of research papers and citation of sources is an essential skill for students. Saint Joseph's uses the most recent edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, also called APA style, as its default guidelines for formatting and citation. Most classes will expect students to use this format in their formal writing, but teachers may instruct students to use different styles of formatting or citation that are most appropriate to the content area and the material being cited.

Artificial Intelligence

Recent advances in artificial intelligence have led to the widespread availability of AI-powered productivity tools, such as ChatGPT. These tools, which are being integrated into an ever-greater variety of applications, use sophisticated algorithms and language models to generate text according to prompts supplied by the user. Educators around the country must establish best practices for using this new technology well in the classroom and preventing its abuse.

Saint Joseph's recognizes that AI tools have legitimate uses and benefits, but that students must be taught how to use this powerful technology well. Above all, students must avoid using AI tools as a substitute for their own creative or academic writing. Many writing assignments have a twofold objective: for students to hone their writing skills and to demonstrate their understanding of a particular concept or research area. Using AI-generated text in place of student writing frustrates both of these objectives. It also represents a form of academic dishonesty, because students submit work that is not their own and falsely claim that they wrote it.

Teachers will explicitly tell their classes if and when the use of AI is permitted or expected for an assignment. Unless such permission has been given, students should assume that any AI use is forbidden and will be treated as academically dishonest. Teachers use a variety of tools to detect and prevent the unauthorized use of AI in place of student writing.

Athletics

Saint Joseph's provides a robust program of interscholastic sports and other athletic opportunities that are available to all students. As with any school-sponsored activity, students are expected to adhere to Saint Joseph's code of conduct at all times. Participation in student activities, including athletics, is a privilege and not a right. It is contingent on student cooperation with all directives of coaches and other school personnel.

Good Sportsmanship

Saint Joseph's expects all coaches, players, and fans to demonstrate good sportsmanship. Verbal or physical abuse directed towards any player, coach, official, fan, or school personnel will not be tolerated and may result in ejection from the event. When a student is ejected from an athletic event, administration will be notified and further disciplinary consequences may result.

Participation in Multiple Sports

Students at Saint Joseph's may participate in multiple sports, even within the same season, provided they maintain good academic standards, meet the eligibility requirements, and maintain a positive attitude with their coaches.

Athletic Eligibility

Student-athletes are expected to pass all of their classes in order to participate in their sport. If they start to fail class(es), they will find themselves on the athletic eligibility report, which is run on Thursdays. If a student is failing one (1) class, he or she is still allowed to participate in competitions, but must use the first 30 minutes of practices that week (Sunday to Saturday) as a study hall for the class they are failing. After 30 minutes, they may participate in practice.

If a student is failing two (2) classes, in addition to the rule above, he or she will be ineligible to participate in their sport's competitions from Sunday to Saturday of the following week. Students remain ineligible for the entire duration of the week, *even if* they bring up their grades within that time frame.

Attendance

Consistent daily attendance is a requirement at Saint Joseph's. Parents are expected to support and reinforce this essential school policy with their children and to prohibit unnecessary absences.

On a regular school day, students are expected to arrive between 7:30 AM and 8:00 AM. Students who plan to arrive before 7:30 AM must contact the Main Office to ensure entry. All students must be in their Morning Check-In by 8:00 AM. If students enter Morning Check-In after 8:00 am they are considered late. Students are provided with several minutes between classes to access lockers and proceed to their next class. Students who arrive to class after the end of this window, signaled by the late bell, will be considered late to class. Students are expected to remain in school until the end of the day at 3:05 PM.

Absence

Students are expected to attend school regularly, but various factors may make it necessary for students to miss school on occasion. An absence of up to four periods (or two block periods) is considered a half-day's absence. More than this is considered a full-day's absence. Students must be present for at least four periods (or two block periods) to participate in any school-sponsored activities that day, including athletics.

Anytime a student is absent, a parent or guardian must contact the office by 8:30 AM to verify the legitimacy of the absence and provide a reason. Parents who do not notify the office will be contacted, and the absence will be counted as an unexcused absence. Parents who contact the office via phone call must supplement this with a written excuse (on paper or via email) within 3 days of the absence, or the absence will be considered unexcused. In addition, it is the students' responsibility to contact teachers and make up work any time they are absent.

Excused absences are granted for the following reasons:

- Illness of student or family
- Inclement weather that prohibits safe travel
- College visit or educational trip, if proper form was submitted in advance
- Death in the family
- Other reasons as approved by the administration

(For the consequences of an unexcused absence, see ["Disciplinary Policy"](#))

College Visits and Educational Trips

Families should make every effort to avoid scheduling trips during the academic year, especially when such trips would require students to miss school. Nevertheless, students who will miss school because of a college visit or trip must complete an Educational Trip Form, available in the Main Office. This form must be signed by parents as well as all teachers and the Principal, and should be submitted at least 24 hours before the beginning of the absence. Students are responsible for coordinating with teachers to make up work. Generally, students who miss class for scheduled reasons (such as trips) are not given additional time to complete assignments.

Excessive or Prolonged Absence and Truancy

Students who miss five consecutive school days because of illness must present a doctor's note upon return. Students who are absent for 20 days or more will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities for the remainder of the school year except in cases of documented medical absence.

Truancy is absence from school without the knowledge of parents or guardians, and is a violation of both school policy and state law. Continued truancy will be reported to the authorities as required by law, and may lead to dismissal from Saint Joseph's.

Early Dismissal

Students are expected to remain in school until the end of the day at 3:05 PM. However, if it is necessary for students to leave early for an appointment, parents must contact the Main Office before 8:30 AM. They should notify the Main Office of the reason for dismissal, the time of dismissal, whether the student will return before the end of the school day and, if so, what time they are expected to return. Students must check out in the Main Office before leaving campus. If students return before the end of the school day, they should check in at the Main Office upon return.

Senior Sign-Out

Senior sign-out is a privilege available to seniors that allows them to leave school early if they have a Period 8 study hall. This privilege is not guaranteed to any senior, and will not be given priority when scheduling. Seniors may not drop a scheduled Period 8 elective for the sake of senior sign-out. Seniors who are enrolled in a Period 8 study hall and wish to exercise this privilege must observe the following procedure:

1. The "8th Period Senior Early Dismissal Permission" must be completed by a parent/guardian on School Admin
2. At the beginning of Period 8, seniors who wish to leave should report to the Main Office to sign out. Seniors who do not plan to leave at the beginning of the period should report to their assigned study period. While it is anticipated that most seniors will sign out promptly at the beginning of the period, seniors may sign out later in the period with the permission of their study hall teacher.
3. Once seniors have signed out, they must depart immediately from school property and may not return to campus until after 3:05 PM. The school ceases to maintain responsibility or liability for seniors after they sign out. Seniors are required to provide their own transportation if they leave early.

This privilege only extends to Period 8 study halls, and cannot be used to depart earlier than the end of Period 7. It is not available to seniors who are enrolled in a Period 8 class, or any student in grades 9-11 (even if they have a Period 8 study hall). Furthermore, this privilege is granted to seniors who are in good academic standing and earn passing grades in all their classes. Seniors are responsible for enrolling in enough credits to be eligible for athletics under PIAA and Saint Joseph's policies. Period 8 study halls count toward a student's maximum number of study halls, even if that student intends to exercise senior sign-out privileges daily. Permission to leave early may be revoked at any time by parents or the administration, especially as a consequence of disciplinary issues or poor academic performance.

Late Arrivals

Students who arrive to Morning Check-In after 8:00 AM will be considered late for the day and will receive a referral.

Excused late arrivals are granted for the following reasons:

- Illness of student or family
- Medical or dental appointments
- Inclement weather
- Death in the family
- Other reasons as approved by the administration

Generally, traffic and oversleeping are not grounds for an excused late arrival. Parents must verify the reason for an excused late arrival by contacting the Main Office promptly. (For the consequences of an unexcused late arrival, [see "Disciplinary Policy"](#))

Students who report to any class after the second bell are considered late to that class. If the lateness was due to a legitimate reason, such as talking with a previous teacher, that teacher will sign a pass for the student. Late arrivals to class without a valid pass are considered unexcused late arrivals.

(For the consequences of an unexcused late arrival to class or to school, see ["Disciplinary Policy"](#). For the purposes of the behavioral policy, late arrival to school and late arrival to class are considered to be separate offenses.)

Late Arrival Violations

Consequences:

First three violations: Per the [Disciplinary Policy](#), late arrivals to Morning Check-In are a Level I infraction. Students will receive a morning detention after three tardies (Level I infractions).

Next three violations: If the student is late an additional three times, their driving privileges may be suspended for a time, if applicable (see Driving→[Parking Lots](#)).

Bell Schedules

Normal Schedule

Monday/Tuesday/Friday	Time
Morning Check-In	8:00-8:05
Period 1	8:05 – 8:48
Period 2	8:51 – 9:34
Homeroom/Chapel/Assembly	9:37 – 9:56
Period 3	9:59 – 10:42
Period 4	10:45 – 11:28
Period 5A	11:31 – 12:14
Lunch 1	11:31 – 12:01
Lunch 2	12:17 – 12:47
Period 5B	12:04 – 12:47
Period 6	12:50 – 1:33
Period 7	1:36 – 2:19
Period 8	2:22 – 3:05

Wednesday/Thursday	Time
Morning Check-In	8:00-8:05
Period 1 (Wed) or Period 2 (Thu)	8:05 – 9:20
Mass (Wed) or Clubs (Thu)	9:23 – 10:05
Period 3 (Wed) or Period 4 (Thu)	10:08 – 11:23
Lunch 1 & Houses	11:26 – 11:56
Lunch 2 & Houses	11:59 – 12:29
Period 5 (Wed) or Period 6 (Thu)	12:32 – 1:47
Period 7 (Wed) or Period 8 (Thu)	1:50 – 3:05

Two-Hour Delay

Monday/Tuesday/Friday	Time
Morning Check-In	10:00-10:05
Period 1	10:05 – 10:35
Period 2	10:38 – 11:08
Period 3	11:11 – 11:41
Period 4	11:44 – 12:14
Period 5A & Lunch 1	12:17 – 12:47
Period 5B & Lunch 2	12:50 – 1:20
Period 6	1:23 – 1:53
Period 7	1:56 – 2:26
Period 8	2:29 – 3:05

Wednesday/Thursday	Time
Morning Check-In	10:00-10:05
Period 1 (Wed) or Period 2 (Thu)	10:05-10:53
Period 3 (Wed) or Period 4 (Thu)	10:56-11:44
Lunch 1 & Houses	11:47-12:17
Lunch 2 & Houses	12:20-12:50
Period 5 (Wed) or Period 6 (Thu)	12:53-1:41
Mass (Wed) or Clubs (Thu)	1:44-2:14
Period 7 (Wed) or Period 8 (Thu)	2:17-3:05

Building Security

The physical security of the building is an essential part of our commitment to the safety of all students, school personnel, and visitors. Everybody contributes to this security by observing the following procedures:

- All students should arrive for the day between 7:30 AM and 8:00 AM and enter the main door. Prior to entering the main school building, athletes must store all athletic bags in the locker rooms of the SLC. Other exterior doors, such as the side doors or the back door, are generally exit-only. The only time students may enter the building via other doors is when accompanied by school personnel, especially following an assembly or outdoor lunch.
- Students should never let others into the building, with the exception of recognized students before 8:00 AM. Students should never hold the door for anybody who is not a student or school personnel. While this may seem rude, especially if the student recognizes the person as a parent, it is an important part of our safety protocols. Visitors will be understanding, and parents will be glad to know that their children's safety is a priority. Exterior doors, including in the SLC, may never be propped except under the direct supervision of school personnel.
- Classroom doors should be kept closed and locked whenever a class is in session. Classroom doors may be propped between classes, when no class is in session, or when a teacher and student are meeting one-on-one.
- Saint Joseph's utilizes a video surveillance system to monitor various locations around campus. This system is primarily used to ensure campus security, but footage may also be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings. For more details about our video surveillance policy, contact the Main Office or an administrator.
- For more information about building security in the event of an emergency, see "[Emergency Preparedness](#)".

Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation

All students should act in a way that is in accordance with Christian charity and the Gospel imperative to love our neighbor. This is opposed to any action that could be called bullying, intimidation, or harassment. Bullying may be physical, verbal, emotional, or sexual in nature, and may take place in person or online. The following actions will be considered bullying, intimidation, or harassment. This list is illustrative, not comprehensive.

- Physical contact intended to annoy or injure: punching, poking, hair pulling, biting, excessive tickling, etc.
- Attempts to deprive another of his/her reputation or compel action: extorting, defaming, blackmailing, ostracizing, gossiping, humiliating, etc.
- Words or actions intended to annoy or cause emotional distress: Hurtful name-calling, teasing, making fun of personal characteristics (race/ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, or sexual orientation)

Actions that are motivated by prejudice on the basis of race/ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or similar grounds are considered hate crimes. Such motivation increases the severity of the offense and the ensuing disciplinary consequences.

Bus Conduct

Proper student conduct on school buses is essential to the health and safety of all students. Students who demonstrate persistent misbehavior may be barred from riding the bus, in which case it becomes the responsibility of the parents or guardians to ensure regular transportation to school. The bus driver has the authority to establish particular norms for behavior while on the bus, to assign seats, and to report misconduct to school officials.

Most daily bus transportation is facilitated by local public school districts, who are responsible for determining the route, stops, and pick-up times. Normally, buses utilize the bus lane in front of the school for most drop-offs and pick-ups. Students should pack their materials promptly at the end of the day and exit via the main doors. Students that suspect that they missed their bus, or that their bus did not arrive, should report to the Main Office. Bus transportation may be provided by the school in certain contexts, such as athletic events or field trips. Students are expected to maintain the code of conduct at all times while on the bus, and should refrain from any action that is unsafe or distracting to the driver. Students should obey all rules laid forth by the driver or chaperones, and should abide by posted occupancy regulations.

Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices

Cell phones may not be utilized in the classroom between 8:00 am and 3:05 pm, nor may they be used in the Student Life Center during Mass, Chapel, or assemblies. Students should keep their cell phones in their bookbags or lockers.

It is critical for student safety that any communication for a student to be picked up originate with the school staff, and not the student. Parents wishing to communicate with the school should dial the Main Office number at 814-808-6118.

Cell Phone Violations

Consequences:

First Violation: Phone will be turned in until the end of the school day and will be returned to the student at the end of the school day. The student receives a referral.

Second Violation: Phone will be turned in for three (3) consecutive school days and will be returned to the student at the end of each day. The student receives a referral and a one-hour detention.

Third Violation: Phone will be turned in for five (5) consecutive school days and will be returned to the student at the end of each day. The student receives a referral and a disciplinary meeting will be held with the student, parent/guardian, and administration.

Chapel

Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament is the center of life at Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy. All members of the school community have a standing invitation to the Chapel for prayer, especially before and after school, between classes, and during lunch and study halls. Students are to enter and leave the chapel in reverent silence, and to always refrain from eating, drinking, or chewing gum in the chapel. The chapel should be preserved as a reflective place for quiet prayer, and any actions not conducive to this environment are to be avoided. Students may not film for video projects in the chapel without permission from Campus Ministry. In addition, the chapel should not be used as a study space or workspace, either individually or in a group.

Closings, Delays, and Early Dismissals

Due to weather or other factors, it may sometimes be necessary to delay the start of the school day or cancel in-person learning altogether. It may also be necessary to cancel after-school activities or dismiss students early on occasion. Anytime such a change will be made, the community will be notified via email and text message. When possible, this information will also be reported to various news outlets for inclusion on their "Closings & Delays" page.

Saint Joseph's is located within the geographical boundaries of State College Area School District. If State College delays or closes, Saint Joseph's will as well. Students who live in the boundaries of other school districts should follow their districts: if a student's home district delays or closes, that student may come to school late (or not at all) even if Saint Joseph's is following a normal schedule.

Delays

A delay postpones the beginning of the school day from 8:05 AM to 10:05 AM. Following a delay, students follow a modified schedule that allows all classes to meet for a shorter duration (see ["Bell Schedules"](#)). All delays are a free out-of-uniform day (see ["Out-of-Uniform Dress Code"](#)). When a delay occurs on a Mass day, students are encouraged to dress sensibly and avoid overly casual outfits, mindful of the reverence due to the Holy Sacrifice.

Early Dismissals

It may sometimes be necessary to dismiss students early, especially due to weather conditions. When an early dismissal is called, a dismissal time will be communicated to the community. We ask all students and families for patience, as an early dismissal often requires coordination between multiple school districts who may send transportation at different times. Student drivers are encouraged to exercise additional caution. In other cases, after-school activities may be canceled without any modification to the school's dismissal time.

Closings

In the event of a school closing, instruction is able to continue without disruption to the academic calendar thanks to our 1:1 technology program. This also means that students have certain academic responsibilities that they must fulfill on these virtual instruction days (or "virtual days").

Pennsylvania law requires students to check in for attendance at the beginning of a virtual day. In order to be counted as "present" for the day, all students must email their first period teachers no later than 8:15 AM. Teachers will report attendance to the Main Office on the basis of these emails, and all in-person policies apply with regard to absences, late arrivals, or early dismissals. (See "[Absence](#)" for more information about attendance policies.)

Each teacher has the option to present instruction synchronously or asynchronously, based on the material being presented and with the objective of offering high-quality lessons both in-person and virtually. Before 8 AM, all teachers will communicate with their classes to indicate whether the day's classwork will be synchronous or asynchronous. Whether instruction is delivered synchronously or asynchronously, teachers will be available throughout the day via email to respond to questions and assist students as needed.

Asynchronous Learning

Asynchronous assignments are completed by each student independently. If classwork is being completed asynchronously, teachers will post all materials by 10 AM. Virtual day assignments are due the same day at 7 PM, unless stated otherwise by the teacher.

Synchronous Learning

Synchronous instruction is delivered to all students simultaneously via video call. If a teacher decides that instruction will be synchronous, they will ensure that a video call link is clearly posted on Google Classroom. Students must join the video call by the beginning of class, according to the normal bell schedule. Study periods, clubs, House periods, Mass, chapel, and homeroom will not meet.

Students must keep their cameras on at all times in class, must be dressed either in uniform or spirit wear, and should be in a public location within their house (i.e. not a bedroom or bathroom) as far as possible. The expectation is that students will participate in a virtual class to the same degree as an in-person class. This means that teachers may require students to participate vocally, through the chat, or both. It also means that students should not be on their phones, playing games, or otherwise distracted during a video class. Violation of these expectations may result in further disciplinary action, as it would during in-person learning. Teachers may require students to remain on the video call for the duration of the class, according to the bell schedule, or may dismiss the class to work on an assignment independently.

Code of Conduct

"Code of Conduct" refers to the guidelines for behavior found throughout this Handbook, especially the [Disciplinary Policy](#).

Confidentiality

Students have the right to the confidentiality of their personal information, including records related to health, academics, discipline, and attendance. Personal information will only be shared with the student, his or her parents, and school personnel (as needed).

Confiscation

In accordance with the principles laid out in the section on "Searches" the school reserves the right to confiscate student belongings when necessary. Devices or objects that cause disruption to the classroom environment (including cell phones) may be confiscated by teachers and either returned at the end of class or taken to the Main Office. Confiscated items that are taken to the Main Office will be available for students or parents to pick up after school. In some cases only parents may

be permitted to pick up a confiscated item, especially after repeated offenses or when the confiscated item may pose a safety hazard. Illegal materials will be turned over to the police.

Contact with Law Enforcement Agencies

Police assistance will be requested when it is needed to maintain the safety and security of students and school personnel. This includes, but is not limited to: when a trespasser fails to respond to a request to leave the premises, when any person is creating a disturbance and fails to respond to requests to cease and desist, when somebody is in possession of a deadly weapon, or when any action threatens the health, safety, or welfare of any person. Police will also be contacted for identification of substances and assistance in the investigation of all violations of the Dangerous Drugs, Device, and Cosmetics Act (Purdon's Pennsylvania Statutes, 35 P.S. sections 780-101 through 780-144).

Depending on the seriousness of the incident, police may be contacted when misconduct is accompanied by the violation of local, state, or federal law. In these cases, the victim(s) may choose to file charges independent of any school disciplinary action. In most incidents, the school itself does not have jurisdiction to file charges, but will provide a report to the police and/or the District Attorney.

Counseling

Students are encouraged to seek guidance from trusted adults when they are dealing with school-related stresses, social relationships, and adolescent challenges or concerns. In the context of Saint Joseph's, this often takes the form of conversations with teachers, administrators, the Director of College & Career Counseling, or the Chaplain. These conversations are opportunities for school personnel to exercise mentorship roles, to offer advice where appropriate, and to help students navigate stressors and issues.

School personnel are trained to identify warning signs for common adolescent mental health issues, but cannot diagnose or treat any psychological or psychiatric condition. When school personnel become aware of more serious issues, they will refer the student to the Director of College & Career Counseling. In collaboration with the student and his or her parents, the Director of College & Career Counseling and other administrators will make recommendations so that the student can receive necessary care from trained professionals. The school's role with regard to mental health issues is to help parents to identify a need for services and to provide information about available resources.

In addition to the procedures already mentioned, Saint Joseph's has a Student Assistance Program (SAP) to help students and parents experiencing problems related to drugs, alcohol, and mental health issues to interface with agencies in the community which can provide ongoing counseling assistance. Completion of a drug or alcohol assistance program may be a required disciplinary measure following a violation of our illicit substance policy ([see "Illicit Substances"](#)).

A student who seeks advice from school personnel for assistance with a drug or alcohol addiction will not be reported as a violation of our illicit substance policy. Instead, they will be referred to the Director of College & Career Counseling or another administrator. Communication will be held confidential in accordance with Act 63 of 1972, unless immediate treatment appears necessary. If medical treatment appears necessary, the parents will be notified immediately.

Course Syllabus

Teachers will prepare a syllabus for each course that contains policies, procedures, and expectations. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the contents of the syllabus for each of their classes, and for upholding those contents. The syllabus is for each course what this Handbook is for the school. When ambiguities arise, authoritative interpretation is made by the teacher, in conjunction with the administration when appropriate.

Dances

Dances, including semi-formal and formal dances, are offered several times throughout the year. Most dances are held on campus in the Student Union, though Prom is traditionally held off-campus. The policies in this section apply to all school-sponsored dances, whether on campus or otherwise. Students must attend school on the day of the dance in order to attend. (For a Saturday dance, they must have attended school on Friday.) Students should arrive promptly at the scheduled start time, and will not be admitted more than 30 minutes after the start time without prior arrangements with the administration. Once present, students are expected to remain at the dance until the scheduled end time. Students who leave the building will not be readmitted. If students leave the dance early (generally more than 30 minutes before the scheduled end time) parents will be contacted as a safety precaution.

Students are expected to dress modestly according to the formality of the event ([see "Out-of-Uniform Dress Code"](#)) and should display proper behavior at all times. Students who violate these expectations will be asked to leave the dance, and their parents will be contacted. Students may not exhibit styles of dancing that are obscene, unchaste, or not reflective of their dignity. As with any school-sponsored event, students are held to the same code of conduct as they are at school. The administration reserves the right to make the final determination as to the appropriateness of behavior and attire. In most cases, students may be accompanied by guests who attend another high school. Prior to the dance, the Saint Joseph's student must complete an outside guest approval form, which is available in the Main Office. Guests will be held to the same standards of attire and behavior as their accompanying Saint Joseph's student. In addition, the Saint Joseph's student will assume responsibility for his or her guest's conduct.

For dances that are held in the Student Union, students must enter the building via the main doors. Typically, there will be a registration table in the main lobby for students to sign in and pay if necessary. After registration, students must remain in the Student Union or the first-floor science hallway. Stairwells, classrooms, the kitchen, and other hallways are off-limits. Students who wish to exit the building must do so via the main doors. Students should only use the restrooms in the main first-floor hallway, including the ladies' room and the single-occupancy bathrooms. The bathrooms near the back door and faculty room are off-limits.

Disciplinary Policy

Introduction and Scope

Saint Joseph's recognizes that the conduct of students in school promotes growth in virtue, enables academic success, and contributes to a positive social and educational environment. All disciplinary issues are social in nature, and so our approach to behavior management is based on the relationship between the student, his or her peers, and the school community. When disciplinary action becomes necessary, the foremost consideration is the best interest of all students involved.

We recognize that, as a rational creature endowed with agency and free will, each student is held responsible for his or her behavior. Though outside factors may influence a decision, the student must ultimately be accountable for his or her actions. Students are expected to adhere to the general policies of the school as well as the particular policies and instructions of individual teachers and administrators.

Pennsylvania law recognizes that, while students are in school, teachers and other school personnel exercise the same authority as parents and guardians with respect to student behavior and conduct. This authority is exercised by teachers, coaches, administrators, and other school staff. It applies when students are in attendance, as well as the time required for traveling between school and home (this is known as the "Door to Door Provision"). The following policies will establish general expectations for student behavior and the means by which misbehavior will be addressed by school personnel.

Because students are always representatives of Saint Joseph's, the school has a concern with student conduct that may bring discredit or harm to the reputation of the school community or its members. This applies whether students are on- or off-campus, and includes behavior on social media. Students may be subject to disciplinary consequences for any behavior that is manifestly contrary to Christian moral standards, against the law, or detrimental to the common good.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment refers to the use of physical contact intended to cause pain and/or injury for the purposes of behavior modification. Corporal punishment is not compatible with our approach to student misconduct, and is strictly forbidden. Physical restraint, which is distinguished from corporal punishment, may be employed when a student is at risk of self-harm, harm to others, damage to property, or when other behavior deterrents have failed.

Hierarchy of Consequences

Discipline ought to be addressed at the lowest practicable level, based on the severity of the offense, and will typically proceed as follows:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Referral
3. Detention
4. Suspension
5. Disciplinary Probation
6. Expulsion

After a referral or more serious consequence is assigned, the student will meet with a member of the administration and/or the teacher to discuss the incident and create an action plan to prevent further issues. In addition, parents will be informed of any incident that involves anything more severe than a verbal warning, with the expectation that they will address the issue at home. Teachers are encouraged to contact parents even before a referral is issued, to inform them of developing issues and encourage their support and insight.

Disciplinary records, including referrals and the assignment of more severe consequences, are maintained by the administration for the duration of a student's enrollment at Saint Joseph's. For the purposes of this policy, however, "subsequent offenses" are only considered within the same academic year as the original infraction.

Each infraction is classified as a Level I, Level II, Level III, or Level IV offense, depending on the severity of the action and the extent to which it violates our policies and expectations. Because no two situations are identical, the administration reserves the right to address behavior on a case-by-case basis. The administration will exercise judgment in cases of behavior that are manifestly contrary to our expectations, yet not explicitly addressed below.

Level I

Level I infractions are the least severe, though they are still contrary to our expectations for student behavior. For each Level I infraction, a warning will be given after the first offense, and referrals will be submitted after each subsequent offense. If a student receives three referrals for the same Level I infraction, a detention will be assigned. Detentions will then be assigned for each subsequent referral for the same infraction.

Level I infractions include:

- Excessive or prolonged absence from classroom during class
- Littering or not cleaning personal space
- Loitering
- Minor disruption
- Minor violation of building security protocols (See ["Building Security"](#))
- Missing laptop cover (See ["Technology"](#) > ["Physical Safety"](#))
- Out-of-Uniform Dress Code violation (See ["Uniform"](#) > ["Out-of-Uniform Dress Code"](#))
- Possession of a disruptive device, e.g. laser pointer or noise maker
- Public display of affection (see ["Public Display of Affection"](#))
- Unexcused late arrival to class (see ["Attendance"](#) > ["Late Arrival"](#))
- Unexcused late arrival to school (see ["Attendance"](#) > ["Late Arrival"](#))
- Uniform violation (See ["Uniform"](#))

- Unprepared for class

Level II

Level II infractions are moderate violations of our policies and tend to be more disruptive to the school environment. For each Level II infraction, a referral will be issued after each offense, including the first. Depending on the circumstances, a detention may be assigned after the first offense. If a student receives a second referral for the same Level II infraction, a detention will be assigned. Detentions will then be assigned for each subsequent referral for the same infraction. If a student receives four Level II referrals for the same offense, he or she may be placed on disciplinary probation. If a student receives five Level II referrals, even for unrelated infractions, a suspension will be assigned. Any subsequent Level II referrals will result in disciplinary probation.

Level II infractions include:

- Academic dishonesty - first offense (See ["Academic Integrity"](#))
- Bullying, harassment, or intimidation (See ["Bullying, Harassment, and Intimidation"](#))
- Disrespect toward classmates or visitors
- Disrespect toward school personnel (faculty, staff, or administration)
- Hazardous or unauthorized use of non-motorized vehicles (scooters, bikes, skateboards, etc.)
- Insubordination
- Lying to school personnel in a minor way*
- Major disruption
- Minor vandalism (small in scope and/or no permanent damage or alteration)
- Missing detention
- Moderate violation of building security protocols (See ["Building Security"](#))
- Profanity (words, gestures, or actions)
- Taking pictures of somebody without their knowledge or permission
- Unexcused absence from class or other required activity
- Violation of cell phone policy (See ["Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices"](#))
- Violation of technology policy (See ["Technology"](#))

Level III

Level III infractions are serious violations of our policies and are incompatible with each student's right to a safe environment conducive to learning and growing in virtue. For each Level III infraction, a suspension will be assigned, beginning with the first offense. If a student receives two Level III referrals in the same academic year, he or she will be placed on disciplinary probation. If a student receives five Level III referrals throughout his or her time at Saint Joseph's, an administrative hearing will be held to determine whether the student may remain at Saint Joseph's.

Level III infractions include:

- Academic dishonesty - second offense (See ["Academic Integrity"](#))
- Alcohol, tobacco, medication, look-alike drug, or drug paraphernalia - first offense (See ["Illicit Substances"](#))
- Fighting
- Gambling
- Gross insubordination
- Hazardous or unauthorized use of motorized vehicles
- Hazing (See ["Hazing"](#))
- Leaving the school building or school grounds without permission
- Lewdness
- Lying to school personnel in a more serious way*
- Major vandalism (larger in scope, permanent damage, or other aggravating factors)
- Major violation of building security protocols (See ["Building Security"](#))
- Persistent or severe bullying, intimidation, or harassment
- Profanity toward school personnel (words, gestures, or actions directed toward faculty, staff, or administration)

- Tampering with smoke detectors, cameras, or other safety/security equipment
- Theft or stealing (<\$100)
- Unexcused absence from school or from multiple classes in one day (See ["Attendance"](#) > ["Absence"](#))

*The seriousness of a lie is determined by several factors: the subject of the lie, the extent of the deviation from truth, the intent of the lie, and any consequences that follow from the lie. The consequence of lying, even in a minor way, is a detention.

Level IV

Level IV infractions are the most severe violations of our policies and are incompatible with continued enrollment at Saint Joseph's. If a student commits a Level IV offense, an administrative hearing will be held to determine whether the student may remain at Saint Joseph's. The procedure for this hearing is established under "Expulsion" below.

Level IV infractions include:

- Alcohol, tobacco, medication, look-alike drug, or drug paraphernalia - second offense (See ["Illicit Substances"](#))
- Drugs or controlled substance violation of the Illicit Substances policy (See ["Illicit Substances"](#))
- Physical assault of school personnel
- Possession or use of a weapon (See ["Weapons"](#))
- Sexual harassment
- Theft or stealing (>\$100)
- Threat of violence or terroristic threats
- Violation of the Illicit Substances policy that involves distribution (See ["Illicit Substances"](#))

Detention

Detention is a moderate disciplinary consequence that is assigned in response to chronic or elevated behavior issues. Detentions are held before school (from 6:45-7:45 AM) or after school (from 3:15-4:15 PM) at the discretion of the administration. When a detention is assigned, the administration will inform the student and his or her parents of the expectations and procedures for completing the detention. This will also include a collaboration between the student and his or her parents to schedule the detention. We recognize that detentions often place an additional burden on parents, especially parents of students who cannot drive themselves to school.

Detention, along with other disciplinary consequences, must take priority over other extracurricular activities and interests. Therefore, detentions will not be rescheduled to enable participation in such events, whether school-sponsored or otherwise.

Suspension

Suspension is a severe disciplinary consequence that is assigned after significant or repeated behavior issues in which a student is temporarily removed from the classroom environment. A suspension will take one of two forms, in-school suspension (ISS) or out-of-school suspension (OSS).

In-School Suspension: The student is removed from the classroom environment and placed in a more focused educational setting. Students who receive ISS are expected to report to school at the normal time, and will be given assignments from each of their teachers.

Out-of-School Suspension: The student is temporarily removed from the school community altogether, and may not be present on school property for the duration of his or her suspension.

Students are ineligible to attend or participate in any school-sponsored activity on the day of suspension, whether they received an ISS or an OSS. When a suspension is assigned, the administration will inform the student and his or her parents of the expectations and procedures for completing the suspension.

Disciplinary Probation

Disciplinary probation, like academic probation, restricts a student's participation in extracurricular activities for up to nine weeks. Disciplinary probation is assigned when a student receives multiple Level II or Level III referrals, as listed above. Disciplinary probation may also be assigned if it has become clear that behavior issues are the result of participation in extracurricular activities, or that restricting these activities will be the only effective solution to ongoing issues.

When a student is placed on disciplinary probation, he or she will be ineligible to attend or participate in any school-sponsored activity. This includes athletics and extracurricular activities that are held outside of school hours, but does not include participation in Club period, Pillar Days, House Cup events, or other activities held within school hours. When a disciplinary probation is assigned, the administration will determine the duration of the probation period, which may be up to a full nine-week marking period.

Expulsion

When it becomes clear that a student cannot or will not abide by Saint Joseph's behavioral expectations, and other disciplinary measures have proven ineffective, the administration may pursue expulsion. This process begins with a formal disciplinary hearing, presided over by the Principal and attended by the rest of the administration, members of the faculty and Board of Trustees, the student, and his or her parents. During the hearing, the student's disciplinary record for the entirety of his or her enrollment at Saint Joseph's will be reviewed. The student and his or her parents will be permitted to hear this review, to ask questions, and to provide information they find pertinent. Following the hearing, the members of the faculty, administration, and Board of Trustees who were in attendance will adjourn to discuss the matter further. They will conduct a consultative vote whether to expel the student or, if not, what disciplinary measures will be suitable. The final decision will be made by the Principal and communicated to the family in writing within 48 hours of the hearing. Once a hearing has been called, the student is suspended (out-of-school) until the conclusion of the hearing process.

The administration may pursue expulsion when a student has demonstrated consistent behavioral issues of a serious nature that are not remedied by other means, or following a single Level IV offense. The administration also reserves the right to withhold an invitation to re-enroll if it has become clear that Saint Joseph's is not a suitable learning environment for a particular student. This is distinct from expulsion.

Summary

The following is intended only as a summary of the policies listed above.

	Level I	Level II	Level III	Level IV
First Offense	Verbal Warning	Referral and/or Detention	Suspension	Possibility of Expulsion
Second Offense	Referral	Detention	Suspension and Probation	
Third Offense	Referral	Detention		
Fourth Offense	Detention	Detention or Probation		
Fifth Offense, etc.	Detention	Suspension and Probation		

Dress Code

See ["Uniform"](#)

Driving

See ["Parking Lots"](#)

Drugs

See ["Illicit Substances"](#)

Eating and Drinking

See ["Lunch"](#)

Emergency Preparedness

The most thought-out security procedures are useless if they are not known and observed. It is important that students are prepared in the event of an emergency, and that they are deeply familiar with our emergency protocols. Students will be provided with instructions for various emergency situations, especially fire, inclement weather, and violent intruders. Throughout the year, safety drills will be held to provide opportunities to practice the security protocols for each of the situations above. For any drill to be effective, students must maintain silence, good order, and attentiveness throughout.

In addition to the verbal instruction provided throughout the year, written emergency procedures are posted in each classroom along with a map showing the most effective evacuation route. Students should familiarize themselves with these routes, especially because visibility may be limited in situations requiring evacuation.

On occasion, it may become necessary to restrict movement into or within the building. This is known as a "lockdown" and can be carried out at various levels, depending on the circumstances. The least severe type of lockdown allows normal classroom instruction and class rotation to continue, but restricts entering or leaving the building. The most severe type of lockdown, which would be deployed in situations of grave danger, includes the barricading of classrooms and other precautions. For security reasons, the exact procedures followed by school personnel are not published.

Extracurricular Activities

Participating in extracurricular activities is an important part of the high school experience and provides students with many opportunities to build an impressive resume while developing skills and interests. Nevertheless, participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege that is contingent on students upholding a high standard of behavior. Students are expected to uphold the code of conduct found in this Handbook while participating in any school-sponsored activity, whether curricular or extracurricular. Removal from extracurricular activities is among the consequences that may be assigned for violations of these expectations (see ["Disciplinary Probation"](#)).

Failure in Required Courses

Students cannot receive credit for any course that they fail, i.e. receive a final grade below 65%. If a student fails a course that is required for graduation, he or she will repeat the course to earn credit. Two options are provided for students to make up a failed core class:

- The student may make up the course over the summer, either at an off-site summer school or through an approved online provider. The school will provide the student with information about acceptable online programs, but it is the student's responsibility to complete the required coursework and submit proof of completion to the main office. Students will assume any costs associated with summer school or online coursework. The student will receive credit for successfully completing coursework over the summer, but the failed course grade will not be replaced and the make-up grade is not factored into the student's GPA.
- If the student's schedule allows, he or she may retake the course during the regular school year, the following semester or year. In this case, the student will receive the full value of the grade, and it will be factored into his or her GPA.

Field Trips

Throughout the year, students have the opportunity to enrich their education off-campus by taking school-sponsored trips to various locations in State College and beyond. These trips extend what is done in the classroom and enliven our Four Pillars. Saint Joseph's maintains its commitment to student safety whether on- or off-campus, so it is paramount that students follow all instructions and hold themselves to a high standard of behavior. Before attending any off-campus trip, each student must submit a permission form signed by his or her parent or guardian. Under no circumstances may a student sign his or her own permission form, even if that student is 18 years old.

Misconduct that occurs on field trips will be addressed using the same procedures that are followed in school (see ["Disciplinary Policy"](#)), with necessary adjustments being made according to the circumstances. Where applicable, consequences will be determined based on the closest approximation of the school policy that was violated. (E.g. If a student leaves the area permitted by the field trip chaperones, it will be considered either a "skipped class" or "leaving campus without permission" depending on the severity of the offense. This approximation would be made because, in both cases, the student was not where he or she was supposed to be.)

Depending on the context and location of the field trip, students will be instructed as to the appropriate dress code for the day. In many cases, the school will provide transportation in the form of buses or vans. In other cases, especially for short trips, students may be asked to provide their own transportation or carpool. Some trips may require additional fees, or may require students to bring money to purchase lunch. For additional policies related to multi-day trips, see ["Overnight Trips"](#)

Final Exams

The final week of the school year follows a modified schedule to accommodate final exams. Typically, this schedule consists of half-days with two tests each day. Students are required to attend all class periods during finals week, even if they are not taking a final exam in a particular period (e.g. if they have a study period). The full schedule for finals week, along with associated policies and expectations, is communicated to students in the fourth marking period.

Financial Policies

Overview

It is the goal of Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy to work with each family to provide an affordable Catholic education. Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy contracts with faculty and staff and incurs financial obligations for the entire school year. In order for Saint Joseph's to provide for these financial obligations, when a student is enrolled, the parent or guardian assumes the obligation to pay the contract in full.

Use of School Equipment and Property

The student is responsible for any damage to school property incurred during its use. All school property such as laptops, laptops chargers, cameras, books, and supplies should be handled with care. If school property is lost or damaged, its replacement cost will be charged to the student tuition account if the damage is determined to have been caused by negligence or intentional acts on the part of the student. This cost will include necessary shipping and handling.

Tuition Assistance

Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy has partnered with Simple Tuition Solutions (STS) to determine eligibility for tuition assistance. To be considered for tuition assistance, parents/guardians of new and current students must complete the online STS financial assistance application and submit all required, supportive documentation by May 5. Further, STS requires payment of a nonrefundable \$25 application fee in order to process your application.

If the family needs tuition assistance in addition to the amount indicated by STS, they may contact the Principal or Business Manager.

Formal Enrollment, Deposit Payment, and Tuition Plan Selection

Parents/guardians of accepted students will be directed to log into the SchoolAdmin system to complete additional online tuition contract and enrollment checklist forms. Parents/guardians will also be asked to create a STS tuition management account, make a non-refundable \$500 tuition deposit, and set up a tuition payment plan. Parents will receive an email from STS with instructions as to how to do this.

The tuition deposit is due July 1st and will be applied to the student's overall tuition balance. The tuition payment plan begins August 1st. If you have any questions about making the deposit payment, please, contact the Business Manager.

If at any time during the year, a family is unable to meet a tuition payment, they should promptly contact the Business Manager in order to make alternative arrangements.

Tuition and fees must be current. If at the end of a grading period a tuition account is not current, a student's grade report, transcripts, and diploma will be withheld until the tuition account is current. Students will not be permitted to participate in school-related education trips. All tuition accounts and fees must be paid in full in order for students' grade reports and/or transcripts to be released. The school reserves the right to refuse re-enrollment for the following academic year until financial obligations have been met.

Tuition Refund Policy

Any student who voluntarily withdraws or is expelled during an academic year will be responsible for payment of tuition.

If applicable, refunds will be processed according to the following schedule:

- July 1 to First Day of Classes: Full refund will be given if the tuition is paid in full, less the \$500 deposit and a \$250 administrative fee.
- First Day of Classes to January 1: One half of tuition plus technology, athletic, and activity fees will be charged.
- January 2 to June 15: Full tuition plus technology, athletic, and activity fees will be charged.

If a student has received a tuition grant or scholarship award and the student withdraws or is expelled before December 31st, no grant/scholarship amount will be applied to their tuition account. A prorated amount will be applied to the tuition account depending on the date of withdrawal after December 31st. If a student is expelled all prepaid tuition and fees are forfeited. Any student who has any type of suspension may not be eligible for tuition assistance from Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy. Scholarships given to the school in the name of a student are returned back to the donor for redistribution.

Fire Drills

See ["Emergency Preparedness"](#)

Grade Reports

Reports of academic progress are created and sent home at the end of each marking period, four times per year. Parents and students can also access up-to-date progress reports at any time by logging in to PowerSchool, our learning management system. PowerSchool displays grades for individual assignments as teachers post them as well as current averages for the marking period, semester, and year. Each student is given login information, including a student ID number and a password, and instructed to share that information with parents for their access. Teachers make every effort to post grades promptly, with most assignment grades being posted within seven days of the assignment's due date. An exception is made for large assignments, such as projects, essays, or major exams, as these assignments often require more time to grade effectively.

Any student who has below a 70% average in any class is encouraged to meet with the counselor to seek measures to correct the academic difficulties. Teachers are also encouraged to reach out to students and parents when they have

concerns about a student's performance. When parents have questions about their children's academic performance in a particular class, they are encouraged to contact the teacher first. If further clarification is needed, they should contact the counselor.

Grading System

The following scale indicates the equivalent values of grade percentage, letter grade, and quality points:

%	Letter Grade	Quality Points		
		CP	H	AP
95-100	A	4.00	4.33	4.67
90-94	A-	3.67	4.00	4.33
87-89	B+	3.33	3.67	4.00
83-86	B	3.00	3.33	3.67
80-82	B-	2.67	3.00	3.33
77-79	C+	2.33	2.67	3.00
73-76	C	2.00	2.33	2.67
70-72	C-	1.67	2.00	2.33
67-69	D+	1.33	1.67	2.00
65-66	D	1.00	1.33	1.67
<65	F	0.00	0.00	0.00

Students who possess a 3.75 or higher at the end of the third marking period, with no quarter grades below a C- and no "Incompletes" in any core class, will be recognized on the Dean's List at the annual academic awards ceremony. Class rank is not included on grade reports or transcripts.

Graduation Requirements

Required Credits

Saint Joseph's is a Catholic college preparatory school that is accredited by the Middle States Association Commission on Elementary and Secondary Schools. To graduate, students must meet all course and attendance requirements. These requirements include eight semesters of attendance in high school and the completion of 26.50 credits distributed as follows. The academic year is divided into four marking periods or quarters, each of which earns 0.25 credits for each class taken. For scheduling purposes, the year is also divided into a fall semester and a spring semester, comprising the first two and last two marking periods, respectively.

Curriculum Area	Required Credits
English	4
Mathematics	4
Social Studies	4

Science	4
Theology*	4
World Languages†	2
Fine Arts	1
Electives‡	2
Physical Education	0.5
Health	0.5
College & Career Readiness	0.50

*All students are required to take a Theology class each semester that they are enrolled at Saint Joseph's. Students who transfer to Saint Joseph's from a public school will have their Theology graduation requirement prorated to 0.5 credits for each semester that they are enrolled.

†Students must acquire at least 2 credits of an approved high school course in a language other than English, but additional credits may be advisable for the purpose of college admissions.

‡Students must earn at least 1 credit of their elective requirement from Fine Arts courses. Core classes may also be taken for elective credit, as long as they have not already been taken for core class credits.

If schedules allow, students may be enrolled in one or two study halls (or "study periods") for a semester or the entire year. Students may not be enrolled in more than two study halls simultaneously at any point. When creating schedules, the administration will not give priority to study halls in most circumstances.

Christian Service Program

Christian Service is at the heart of our call to bring Christ to the world. By encouraging dedication to service, students are empowered to fulfill the Gospel command to love God and neighbor.

As one of our Four Pillars, service to our community and world features prominently in the life of Saint Joseph's. In addition to participating in annual Service Pillar Days, students must complete required hours of independent service. Students are not permitted to log hours when those hours are school-planned and occur within the school day. The completion of the Christian Service Program is a requirement for graduation.

Over their four years, students will complete at least 75 hours of service to assist their church, community, and school. Specifically, they must complete at least 20 hours of service to their church and at least 55 hours for their community and the school. All hours must be logged, verified, and approved using the x2VOL platform.

In order to stay on track for graduation, students must submit the following number of hours (at a minimum) each year until the 75 hours is met:

- Freshman Year: 12 Hours (5 Church / 7 Community/School)
- Sophomore Year: 21 Hours (5 Church / 16 Community/School)
- Junior Year: 21 Hours (5 Church / 16 Community/School)
- Senior Year: 21 Hours (5 Church / 16 Community/School)

The deadline for twelfth graders to complete the Christian Service Program is May 1st. Students may only submit service hours that were completed during the current academic year, so the deadline for ninth, tenth, and eleventh graders to submit service hours is the last day of the academic year. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their hours are properly submitted before the last day of school. However, ideally students would submit their hours the same day they completed the

service so their reflection is thoughtful and timely. Any service hours completed over the summer will count toward the following academic year. Students may complete service hours during the summer before their freshman year. The full requirements of the Christian Service Program are found on the [Theology & Campus Ministry department website](#), and are also posted in every Theology class's Google Classroom. They are also available in the Main Office on request.

Senior Speech

All seniors are required to complete a senior speech. For this assignment, each senior will craft a speech that is a cumulative reflection on their four years of high school, lessons learned, and advice to the underclassmen. This speech is then delivered to the entire student body, the faculty, and invited family and guests. The formation of this speech, along with precise instructions, will be included in one of the seniors' core classes. This class will also provide a substantial grade for the speech.

Seniors are asked to dress in professional business attire to reflect the formality and decorum of the senior speech. Following their speech, seniors may either remain in business attire or change into their uniform. (If a senior speech is delivered on an out-of-uniform day, seniors should still wear business attire for their speech, but may change into more casual clothing after.)

Following their speeches, seniors may leave school to go to breakfast with their invited family and guests. Other Saint Joseph's students may not go to breakfast, with the exception of the senior's siblings. Students are expected to return to class no later than 11:30 AM.

Hallways

Because the halls are one of the first things that is seen by visitors, it is important that everybody does their part to ensure that the halls are clean and ordered. Students will not leave any possessions (including backpacks and blazers) on the hallway floors, in the Student Union, or on public furniture (e.g. the chairs in front of the Main Office). Students will store all possessions in their lockers or carry them throughout the day. Student-athletes should store their athletic bags and equipment in the locker rooms, which may be accessed before school. Alternatively, student-athletes may request a second locker if one is available. During class periods, the hallways should be clear of students. Students should avoid leaving class when possible, and may not leave a classroom without teacher permission. Students should return promptly, without unnecessary detours. When the frequency or duration of time spent out of the classroom becomes an issue, further consequences may result (see "[Disciplinary Policy](#)").

Hazing

Students are prohibited from conducting any activities that involve hazing. For purposes of this policy, hazing is defined as any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a student or which causes willful destruction or removal of public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into, or as a condition for continued membership in, or participation in any student organization or on an athletic team. The term shall include, but not be limited to, any brutality of physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of food, liquor, drug or other substance, or any other forced physical activity which adversely affects physical health and safety of the individual, and shall include any activity which would subject the individual to mental stress, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual, or cause any willful destruction or removal of public or private property. All hazing is considered to be a forced activity regardless of the individual's willingness to participate.

Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

The centerpiece of the week at Saint Joseph's is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, offered weekly during the school day and attended by all students and faculty. Students are required to attend school liturgies. They are encouraged to participate inwardly through a prayerful attitude and reverent attention, and outwardly through their responses and singing. Students are provided with opportunities to take on additional roles fulfilling various liturgical ministries, such as altar servers or

lectors. All students, whether they are Catholic or not, are expected to show respect for the sacredness of the liturgy and for the Holy Eucharist, which we profess to be the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. Students may not eat, drink, or chew gum during Mass.

Reception of Holy Communion is open to baptized Catholics who have received their First Communion, who are not aware of any mortal sin since their last confession, and who have fasted from food for one hour. While we cannot extend to non-Catholics an invitation to receive Communion, we invite all students to unite with us in prayer to whatever degree is appropriate. To those students who are not Catholic, yet share our Christian faith, we especially extend an invitation to join us in the worship of the Triune God and in praise of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Homework

Homework, or work that is assigned for completion outside of class time, is an essential part of a student's education. It provides opportunities for students to practice, apply, integrate, or prepare for learning done in the classroom. It can reinforce independent study skills, build work habits, develop self-discipline, and encourage time management. Homework exposes students to a wider variety of texts and resources, and provides teachers with essential feedback about student understanding and performance.

Teachers recognize that homework requires an investment of time and effort from their students. It requires a similar investment from teachers, who must spend time preparing and grading assignments. We believe that this investment is valuable, and so students should do their homework well and on time. Teachers reserve the right to grade homework based on accuracy, and may reject submissions that are poorly completed. Because homework represents a valuable form of practice, students who do not understand an assignment should reach out to their teachers promptly to ask for assistance. Students should likewise communicate with teachers when there is a concern about finishing an assignment before the due date.

Late work

As a college-preparatory school, Saint Joseph's expects that students will complete and submit work on time when they are present. If a student has an excused, but unplanned absence (e.g. illness) they will be given as many days as they were absent upon return to complete missing work for full credit. Students who are absent because of a college visit, educational trip, or other planned absence will be expected to submit all work early or on time as though they were present. Students who miss work because of unexcused absences may not receive credit for missing work regardless of when it is submitted.

Teachers and departments will establish specific policies regarding work that is submitted past the due date in other situations. Teachers are under no obligation to accept late work for credit (full or partial) regardless of how far past the due date work was submitted. In most cases, late work will not receive credit. This policy encourages students to develop essential skills in time management, organization, and communication. Teachers are generally willing to give extensions to students who reach out before the due date, though this is never a guarantee.

The above policy applies to any work that is assigned for completion outside of class and given a due date. It refers not only to homework, but projects and other assignments as well. Students who receive learning accommodations should refer to their documented plans and direct any questions to the Director of College & Career Counseling (see ["Learning Accommodations"](#)).

Illicit Substances

The possession, use, transmission, or manufacture of illicit substances on campus or at school-sponsored activities is strictly forbidden. This includes being under the influence of any illicit substance or possessing drug-related paraphernalia.

"Illicit substances" include the following:

- Drugs and Controlled Substances: Substances that are regulated by the Controlled Substance, Drug, Device and Cosmetic Act of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Act of April 14, 1972, found in Purdon's Pennsylvania Statutes, 35 P.S. sections 780-101 through 780-144. This category also includes anabolic steroids.
- "Look-alike" Drugs: Non-controlled substances that have a stimulant, depressant, or psychoactive effect on human beings and/or substantially resemble a controlled substance in appearance.
- Alcohol: Intoxicating liquor, wine, or brewed or malt beverage regulated under the Liquor Code of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Act of April 12, 1951, P.L. 90, Art. 1, Section 101, Et Seq., as amended.
- Tobacco: See ["Smoking and Vaping"](#)
- Prescription Medication: Any medication that is prescribed by a doctor, except medication that is properly stored and administered according to school policy (see ["Medication"](#)).

"Distributing" refers to delivering, selling, passing, giving, or sharing an illicit substance from one person to another, or to aid therein. "Drug paraphernalia" refers to any utensil or item that, in the judgment of an administrator, can be associated with the use of an illicit substance.

Consequences of Illicit Substance Violations

If a student is found in violation of this policy with a legitimately prescribed medication, look-alike drug, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia, the first offense during a student's tenure will be considered a Level III offense. The second offense during a student's tenure will be considered a Level IV offense, even if it is not in the same academic year as the first offense. If a student is found in violation of this policy with a drug or controlled substance, or the violation includes distribution, the first offense will be considered a Level IV offense. (See ["Disciplinary Policy"](#))

Illness in School

If students become ill in the course of the school day, they should inform their teacher and request a pass to the Main Office. Depending on the circumstances, students may be permitted to lay down for a time in a quiet place before returning to class. If it becomes necessary for a student to leave school, parents must be contacted. Any accidents or injuries that occur on school property or at any school-sponsored event must be reported immediately to the teacher or event supervisor and to the Main Office.

Incomplete Grades

If, due to a school-negotiated absence (e.g. hospitalization), students are missing work at the end of the quarter, an "Incomplete" will be indicated on their report cards as a placeholder. This allows additional time for students to catch up and earn a letter grade for that marking period. The student must meet with the school counselor and, with input from classroom teachers, devise a schedule to complete missing assignments in a timely manner. Generally, students must complete missing work within one week of the end of the quarter. Students who fail to meet with the school counselor or submit missing work may receive failing grades for those assignments.

This provision only applies to students with school-negotiated absences, typically of a serious nature beyond student control. Students will not receive additional time beyond the end of the marking period to complete assignments that are missing because of poor time management or study skills.

Information Literacy and Instructional Technology

In addition to the unique skills that each subject area develops, our curriculum as a whole builds information literacy and the skills necessary to use instructional technology effectively. Students acquire information literacy through research activities, formal expository writing, electronic communications, and presentations.

Technology is integrated into the curriculum at Saint Joseph's, and students are expected to use these powerful tools responsibly to deepen their appreciation of each content area. We expect that students will be computer literate and possess

the ability to communicate with faculty via email, to utilize word processing and presentation software, and to submit assignments electronically. For specific policies related to proper technology use, see ["Technology"](#)

Insurance

Every student should be covered by insurance and verification of coverage must be on file in the Main Office. Students who participate in athletics must be covered as required by state law.

Learning Accommodations

Saint Joseph's may provide reasonable accommodations for those students who have a documented disability that affects their abilities in the classroom. Reasonable accommodations often include extended time on tests, alternate formats for tests and assignments, or the ability to take tests in an alternate environment. Because Saint Joseph's does not possess a full-time special education faculty, we are not able to offer all accommodations.

Accommodations do not change what is expected of a student at Saint Joseph's, only the manner in which that student gains access to learning. Accommodations do not lower the difficulty of coursework, but may modify teaching materials, the instructional environment, or instructional strategies. To initiate a conversation about learning accommodations at Saint Joe's, please contact the Director of College & Career Counseling.

Lockdown Drills

See ["Emergency Preparedness"](#)

Lockers

All student lockers are considered school property and are jointly accessible to the students and school officials at any time (see ["Searches"](#)). Students should keep their lockers locked at all times when not in use, and should not interfere with the operation of the lock. Students should keep their lockers neat and free from trash, especially food or drinks. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

Lunch

Each student is assigned a 30-minute lunch period each day. On Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays, students eat either first or second lunch depending on their course schedule. Students with a 5B elective will generally eat first lunch, and students with a 5A elective will generally eat second lunch. On block days, students will eat first or second lunch based on their House, and will attend their House meeting during the opposite period.

Buying Lunch

Students who purchase lunch utilize a self-serve buffet line. Often, Food Services staff will indicate the maximum quantities that students may take of certain food items. It is the responsibility of all students to exercise the virtue of temperance and only take what is reasonable. By doing this, they ensure that there is enough food for everybody who wishes to buy lunch. Once everybody has gone through the lunch line once, students who purchased lunch may return for second portions of whatever remains. Students should be moderate here as well, to allow second helpings for any student who desires it.

The Food Services staff shows great generosity by allowing students to portion their own meals and to take second helpings. This generosity must never be exploited or abused. Among other things, this means that the food prepared by the school is only intended for students who purchase lunch. Students may not take food or milk unless they have paid for lunch, and students who have purchased lunch should not take food for other students. Students who are caught stealing food for themselves or others will be required to pay for the food in addition to other disciplinary consequences. Students who cannot afford lunch are encouraged to contact the Main Office.

Conduct at Lunch

During their assigned lunch period, students are expected to remain in the Student Union. If a student would like to leave the Student Union briefly (e.g. to use the restroom or visit the Main Office) he or she must first ask permission from one of the teachers who is monitoring lunch and is expected to return promptly. Students may not eat lunch in the hallways or stairwells, and may not eat in any office or classroom unless they have permission. During their lunch period, students should not be found roaming or loitering, as such actions are disruptive to classes in progress.

Students are responsible for the cleanliness of their lunch table and the surrounding area. This means that it is unacceptable to throw food, trash, papers, or other items. After students are finished eating, trash should be thrown away and trays and silverware should be brought to the kitchen window. Cleaning materials are also provided so that students may spray and wipe their tables at the end of the period. This is done out of respect both for the person who will use the table next as well as our Food Services staff. Students should take pride in the cleanliness of the school; this should prompt students to clean up any mess they see, whether they caused it or not.

In the warmer seasons of the year, students may choose to eat outside if weather permits. Students may only eat outside if a teacher is outside to supervise, and are expected to remain at the picnic tables on the patio or in the field behind the school (soccer field). Students may not go to the Student Life Center or the parking lots without permission. Students who eat lunch outside are responsible for keeping track of time, returning their trays in a timely manner, and proceeding to their next class on time.

Students may not order food to be delivered to the school at any point during school hours unless a documented medical condition necessitates it. They may pack or "brown bag" a lunch to bring, or may purchase meals from the school lunch program. Students may pay for their lunches online through their MySchoolBucks account, or by bringing cash or checks to the Main Office.

Eating and Drinking Outside of Lunch

It is assumed that most eating and drinking happens in the Student Union, during lunch. Students may not eat or drink in class (with the exception of water bottles) unless they receive permission from the classroom teacher. When students are permitted to eat or drink in class, they must take extra care to maintain the cleanliness of their desks and the surrounding area. Students are encouraged to bring reusable water bottles to remain hydrated throughout the day. Water bottles may be filled by using a water fountain or the water machine in the Student Union. Plastic cups are provided in the Student Union for use during lunch periods, but should not be removed from the Student Union or accessed at other times.

Medication

Saint Joseph's is not responsible for diagnosing or treating any student illness or medical condition. The following procedure is required in order for any medication to be dispensed or administered on campus during school hours. For the purposes of this policy, "medication" includes both over-the-counter medications and those prescribed by a medical professional.

Permission

Before students may take any medication on campus, they must have written permission from a parent or guardian on file in the Main Office. A permission form for over-the-counter medication is provided on School Admin, our admissions and enrollment platform. If a student needs to take a prescribed medication on campus, a parent or guardian should convey written permission to the Main Office. This written permission is distinct from the general over-the-counter permission form. If a prescribed medication must be taken daily for a prolonged period, a doctor's order must also be on file in the Main Office. If there is a change or discontinuation in dosage during the year, a new order is required. Because of inadequate identification of ingredients, homeopathic medicine must be accompanied by a doctor's order before it may be administered on campus. Certain over-the-counter medication, such as cough drops or pain relievers, may be dispensed by the Main Office to students with written permission on file.

Transport and Storage

Medication should always be brought to the school in its original container and clearly labeled with the student's name, dosage information, administration instructions, and parent or guardian signature. In addition, medication should be brought to the school by a parent/guardian or in a sealed envelope.

Administration

All medication is to be dispensed and administered in the Main Office. Typically, medication is dispensed by the school administration or designee. Students may self-administer medication only if all of the following conditions are met: the student is responsive and able to visually recognize his/her name; identify his/her medication; properly measure, dispense, and administer the medication; and sign any required paperwork acknowledging the administration of medication.

Morning Prayer and Announcements

The school day begins each morning with a schoolwide prayer, the Pledge of Allegiance, and important announcements delivered via the public address system. Students are expected to stand in an orderly and respectful manner for the prayer and pledge, and should remain silent throughout the morning announcements. Following the announcements, teachers will take attendance, lunch count, and report any absences to the Main Office. During this process, students should remain in or near their seats to facilitate an accurate headcount. First period will begin at 8:05 after Morning Check-In.

National Honor Society

Students who enter junior or senior year with a cumulative grade point average of 3.75 or higher are eligible to apply for membership in the National Honor Society, provided that they do not have a quarter grade of D or F in any subject. Selection for membership is based on scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Students who meet the academic requirement will be invited to complete an application detailing their leadership and service roles in the school and community. Applications will be reviewed by a council of five faculty members, who decide membership on the basis of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Students are inducted into NHS in the fall of each year.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy is an equal opportunity educational institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, national origin, or ethnic origin in its activities, programs or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and the American Disabilities Act.

Our nondiscrimination policy is rooted in the Gospel mandate to recognize the dignity of the human person. We recognize that modern society often presents a vision of the human person that is at odds with the anthropology revealed in Scripture. While we cannot affirm many of the ideological and moral conclusions of this modern worldview, we stand by our commitment to uphold the dignity of every member of our community.

Consistent with this dignity is the recognition that God has created us male and female (Gen. 1:27) and that biological sex is inextricably linked to gender. When students are distinguished by gender, such as in the uniform policy, in locker rooms, or through the use of pronouns, school personnel must always refer to each student's biological sex at birth. We have deep compassion for any student who experiences discomfort with his or her gender, or a dissonance between their inward experience and outward appearance. We are committed to accompanying our students in their unique journeys with our love and understanding, even when we cannot affirm anything that is contrary to our principles.

Out-of-Uniform Days

See ["Uniform"](#) > ["Out-of-Uniform Days"](#)

Overnight Trips

Some field trips, especially those that involve participation in conferences or competitions, may span several days. In accordance with safeguarding best practices and our commitment to student safety, overnight trips must adhere to additional policies beyond those regulations which govern all field trips (see "[Field Trips](#)"). The full overnight travel policy is contained in the "Overnight Travel Policies for Sponsors and Chaperones" which will be provided to all students and chaperones prior to any overnight trip. It is also available for reference by contacting the Main Office or the administration.

Parking Lots

Several parking lots are available on campus for use by students, school personnel, and visitors. All vehicles are expected to follow our policies regarding safe operation while on campus, and to park in designated areas only. Vehicles that violate our parking policy may be towed at the owner's expense. Visitors' spaces are provided in the Faculty Lot, and Handicap spaces are in the Senior Lot. The Faculty Lot and the Kitchen Lot are reserved for school personnel during school hours.

Before students may park on campus, they must: possess a valid state-issued driver's license, submit a Student Driver Form completed by a parent or guardian to School Admin, and request a parking pass from the Main Office using the Parking Pass Application form. Upon approval, students will be issued numbered parking passes that correspond to particular spaces in one of the lots listed below. Students must park in the spaces indicated by their parking passes during school hours. Passes are not transferable. Parking passes are not required for school-sponsored events outside of school hours.

Students are assigned parking passes for either the Senior Lot or the Junior Lot on a first-come, first-serve basis. While seniors are given priority in receiving Senior Lot parking passes, extra spaces in the Senior Lot may be given to underclassmen. Similarly, some seniors may receive passes in the Junior Lot if necessary. Please reference the diagram below for the precise locations of the various lots on campus.



Operators of motor vehicles on the school parking lots and roadways must observe all safety rules and operate vehicles in a safe and reasonable manner. Unsafe or hazardous use of motor vehicles will result in suspension of driving privileges and/or disciplinary action. Driving privileges may also be suspended for outstanding financial obligations or for disciplinary reasons, including as a consequence for repeated tardiness to school. Students are not permitted to congregate, sit in parked cars, or loiter in the student parking lots. Students may not access their vehicles during the school day, but may request permission from the Main Office for serious reasons. Seniors that sign-out early must leave school grounds immediately upon signing out and may not loiter in the parking lots. The use of skateboards, roller skates/blades, hoverboards, or similar means of conveyance is prohibited on school property. Saint Joseph's is not responsible for the security of vehicles on school property or the contents therein.

Pillar Days

Throughout the year, Pillar Days are scheduled so that the Saint Joseph's community can engage more deeply with one of our Four Pillars. Pillar Days are instructional days that students must attend, but various enrichment opportunities are offered in place of ordinary classes. For example, the Faith Pillar Day provides the setting for our annual all-school retreat. Typically, Pillar Days are organized either by class level or by House, and often extend beyond campus. Students who do not attend a Pillar Day may be given an alternate assignment to complete.

Plagiarism

See ["Academic Integrity"](#)

Police

See ["Contact with Law Enforcement Agencies"](#)

Public Display of Affection

Chastity is an essential virtue that must be cultivated by adolescents both in themselves and in their relationships. For this reason, Saint Joseph's does not permit public displays of affection (PDA) in school, on school transportation, or at school-sponsored events. PDA is defined as any consensual, intimate physical expression of affection, particularly of a romantic nature. It includes, but is not limited to holding hands, kissing, embracing or excessive hugging, lying down in close proximity, groping, and sitting on the other's lap. It also encompasses any situation in which students are found in a secluded or off-limits area for affective purposes (in the judgment of the administration). More egregious examples, including exhibitionism and voyeurism, are a more serious infraction known as lewdness. Actions similar to those described above that are not consensual are a different matter entirely (see ["Sexual Harassment"](#)). For the consequences of PDA, see ["Disciplinary Policy."](#)

Quality Point System

Saint Joseph's uses a Quality Point System of course selection, which takes into consideration the individual abilities of students in reference to particular areas of learning. Since students vary in their abilities and areas of interest, a program of studies has been established in which each course is rated College Preparatory (CP), Honors (H), Advanced Placement (AP), or Dual Enrollment. The level of challenge in a course is dependent upon the depth of the material and the requirements of that course as determined by the teacher and department. The QP rating for a particular course determines the grade point equivalent for a letter grade earned in the course. The quarterly grade point average (GPA) will appear on each report card. The year-end report card will reflect the cumulative grade point average.

Students are encouraged to match their abilities with the challenges of a course in a realistic manner. Serious consideration must be given to selecting courses, since the quality point of a course is the basis for computing the student's scholastic average. Students are responsible for registering for appropriate courses after consulting with their teachers.

Report Cards

See ["Grade Reports"](#)

Safe2Say Something

Saint Joseph's has implemented the [Safe2Say Something](#) youth violence prevention program, run by the PA Attorney General's office. Safe2Say teaches users to recognize the warning signs, both in person and on social media, from somebody who may be a threat to themselves or others. Safe2Say allows users to submit anonymous tips, which are then reviewed and assessed by the Safe2Say crisis center before being passed on to school administration. Safe2Say is an important tool that

students can use when they are concerned about themselves or a peer, even peers who attend other schools. Students can [submit anonymous tips](#) for both life-threatening and non-life-threatening concerns at safe2saypa.org or by using the [app](#).

Schedule Changes

Students may request modifications to their course schedules during the first two weeks of the school year (for 1-credit courses) or the first two weeks of the semester (for 0.5-credit courses) using a schedule change request form, available in the Main Office. Schedule change requests should be discussed with the counselor and/or administration, and approval must be given by the principal or assistant principal. Students may request a schedule change only for appropriate reasons, e.g. the difficulty of the course or a desire to pursue different elective course options. Except in special circumstances, schedule change requests will not be approved for reasons such as a desire to be in a different section of the same course or the same course with a different teacher. Due to limitations on class size, not all schedule change requests can be accommodated. If a schedule change request is granted, students will be notified and a new schedule provided. Students are then responsible for making up missing assignments, tests, quizzes, and projects in their newly-enrolled class(es).

Searches

Because of our commitment to safety, the school has a duty to prevent weapons, illicit substances, and other unauthorized materials from being brought on campus. To further this objective, school personnel have the authority to conduct searches of students and their belongings when necessary. Students should have no expectation of privacy with regard to belongings brought on campus, whether during school hours or at other school-sponsored activities.

Student lockers are subject to random, periodic, and/or sweeping inspections which may include the use of certified scent dogs. Prior to any individual locker search, the administration will attempt to notify the student and allow him or her to be present. However, if the administration has a reasonable suspicion that a locker contains any material which poses a threat to the health or safety of students in the school, lockers may be searched at any time without warning.

If there is reasonable suspicion that students are in possession of unauthorized materials, they will be referred to the office, privately presented with the suspicion or accusation, and asked by an administrator to consent to a search. "Possession" refers to any of a student's belongings on campus, whether they are located in a locker, backpack, car, on the student's person, or other locations. If a student refuses to give consent to the search, his or her parents will be called. If a student resists or uses force, police may be called for assistance.

When students consent to a search, they are asked to empty and turn out their pockets in the presence of two or more school personnel, at least one of whom is an administrator. Students will be asked to turn over any backpacks and bags to the administrator(s) so that they may be searched. This search will include opening and inspecting all zippers and pockets, as well as any bags or containers within. Following this, student lockers and cars (if applicable) will be searched. In addition to other disciplinary consequences, the presence of unauthorized materials in a car will result in the loss of parking privileges. Unauthorized materials, or items suspected of being such, will be confiscated by school personnel. (See also "[Confiscation](#)")

In the course of any disciplinary investigation, administrators may search the contents of a student's cell phone if there is reasonable suspicion that the cell phone was involved or contains information pertinent to the investigation. During a cell phone search, students will be asked to unlock their phones and to access apps, messages, pictures, or other information. Wherever possible, cell phone searches will be conducted in the presence of the student.

Transparency is essential when a student is suspected of wrongdoing, especially when this suspicion requires a search of the student and his or her belongings. As much as circumstances allow, students will be present for the duration of all searches. Regardless of the outcome of the search, parents will be notified of the following: that the search occurred, the suspicion on which it was based, what the search entailed, any significant findings (or lack thereof), and further disciplinary actions if applicable. Administrators will attempt to make contact with parents before the search is conducted if circumstances allow, and will always notify parents as soon as possible following the search.

Service Hours

See ["Graduation Requirements"](#) > ["Christian Service Program"](#)

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as behavior characterized by unwelcome or inappropriate sexual remarks or physical advances, and is a serious transgression of our code of conduct. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to unwelcome touching, hugging, kissing, or groping. It also includes remarks and statements of a sexual nature directed toward or about another person. This policy applies to all students, school personnel, and visitors. Any suspicion or instance of sexual harassment should be reported directly to the administration immediately.

Skateboarding

See ["Parking Lots"](#)

Smoking and Vaping

The use and/or possession of tobacco by students on school property is prohibited by Pennsylvania law. In addition, Saint Joseph's is committed to providing a smoke-free environment for all students, personnel, and visitors. Students may not use or possess any tobacco product on school property, including cigarettes, chewable tobacco, nicotine pouches, or vaporizers ("vapes" or e-cigarettes, etc.). Such possession or use is a violation of our Illicit Substances policy (see ["Illicit Substances"](#)).

Across the nation, the use of vaporizers has become an acute threat to the health and wellbeing of young people. Saint Joseph's will use all reasonable means to prevent their possession or use on campus. Students who are suspected of possessing a vaporizer or associated accessories will be referred to the Main Office (see ["Searches"](#)). When a vaporizer is found to contain drug-related compounds, such as THC, more serious disciplinary consequences will result (see ["Disciplinary Policy"](#)).

Tardiness

See ["Attendance"](#) > ["Late Arrivals"](#)

Technology

Familiarity with technology is a part of each student's formation as future leaders in society. This formation includes the expertise necessary to use technology in a way that is both effective and responsible. Students are issued laptops for use throughout the academic year. These laptops are leased (not owned) by the school, so students are responsible to the leasing company for the cost of any damages that occur. The following policies enable students to be good stewards of the technology that they encounter, especially their school laptops and school-provided Internet. In addition to the policies listed below, students should refer to the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy agreement, which was submitted via School Admin and is available for reference in the Main Office or by contacting an administrator.

Physical Safety

Students must purchase a hardcover case for their laptops, which must be used at all times. When students are provided with their laptops, they will also receive the information necessary to purchase a case (i.e. size). Affordable cases can be purchased from a wide variety of online and brick-and-mortar retailers. Students may decorate their laptop cases as desired, so long as all decorations remain school-appropriate as determined by the administration. Students may not adhere stickers or other decorations directly onto their laptops. To avoid damaging laptops, students should avoid picking up their laptops by the screen, closing papers or other materials in their laptops, or placing food/drinks near their laptops. Laptops should never be left unattended in public areas, but should be safely stored in backpacks or lockers. Students may not touch another student's laptop without permission.

Digital Safety

Even the most advanced technology is imperfect, and various factors can cause a laptop to malfunction. Students should take preventative measures to avoid data loss in the event of a catastrophic malfunction. These measures include making backups of any work that is stored locally, or using cloud services to store work online. Each student is provided with a Google Workspace account that includes Google Drive, which can be used to store files safely online. Because backing up data is part of responsible computer use, data loss is not typically a recognized excuse for late or missing work. Students also have a responsibility to avoid visiting websites that may contain malware. If they discover questionable content, they should close the window and inform a teacher immediately. Students should never give out their passwords either in person or online, and should be wary of scams and other fraudulent claims and requests online. Students should be judicious and limit personal information that is shared online, either on social media or other means.

Laptop Charging

Students are responsible for making sure that their laptop battery remains sufficient throughout the day, and are provided with chargers for this purpose. It is recommended that students keep their chargers in their backpacks or lockers so that they are accessible in case it becomes necessary to charge their laptops at school. Outlets are available in many classrooms, so long as students follow each teacher's procedure for charging a laptop during class. It is also recommended that students charge their laptops at night to ensure a full battery at the start of the day. Students will be held responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen chargers.

Laptop Issues

If students experience issues or problems with their laptops or chargers, they should first inform a teacher, who may be able to help them solve the issue. If the teacher is unable to find a solution, students should bring their laptops to the Main Office. When available, students will receive a loaner laptop to use until their laptop has been repaired. Students assume all the same responsibilities toward a loaner laptop that they have toward their regularly-issued laptop. Using a combination of in-house and contracted IT services, as well as manufacturer support when needed, the school will address technology issues as promptly as possible. However, due to the number of students who have laptops, some repairs may not be completed for several days.

Expectations for Use

Students are expected to bring their laptops to class as required by each teacher so that they may be used for in-class activities. Each student is assigned a Saint Joseph's email address, and is expected to check their email regularly (at least once per day). Students are permitted to access their school email from other devices to ensure that messages are read promptly. Email is the default method of communication for many school-related matters, including academic progress and disciplinary issues.

School-issued laptops are instructional tools, so they should be limited to school-related uses. Students may not use their laptop for entertainment, including playing games or streaming video content, unless a particular use is assigned as part of a class activity. Students may not use their laptops for financial transactions, online gambling, or online shopping. It is absolutely forbidden to use school laptops to access obscene, inappropriate, or prurient material at any time.

Many assignments are submitted electronically, but some courses may require work to be printed. By default, student laptops do not have access to any printers on-campus. Students may print materials at home using a personal device, or may ask a teacher to print work on their behalf. Students should not ask the Main Office to print materials on their behalf.

Students may not use personal laptops or other devices in class, and no personal device may be connected to the school network at any time (see also "[Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices](#)"). In addition, students should not use personal accounts, such as a personal email, on school laptops. Students may not connect to alternate networks (such as cellular hotspots) during school hours. Generally, only school-provided accounts, networks, and devices should be used while on campus.

All of our expectations regarding the treatment of others and the recognition of their dignity apply online as well as in-person. This means that students may not post or send anything derogatory, hurtful, mean-spirited, or offensive about others. They should also avoid using language that is tasteless or vulgar.

Consequences

In addition to other disciplinary consequences (See "[Disciplinary Policy](#)"), violations of our code of conduct that involve laptops may result in the forfeiture of laptop privileges. Depending on the severity of the misconduct, this forfeiture may last anywhere from several days to the remainder of the school year. During this time, students must complete all work on paper and will not be permitted to use any laptop on school property. These consequences may be implemented whenever school technology is used to facilitate other violations of our expectations (such as our Academic Integrity policy) even if the offense is not a direct violation of the Technology policy.

Textbooks

In most cases, the school provides students with access to required texts. This may take the form of "classroom copies" that students may access when in the classroom or sign out as needed. In many other cases, students will be assigned a particular numbered copy of a textbook to use throughout the course. Students must be good stewards of their textbooks, which means that they should be treated well and returned in the same condition in which they were received. Teachers may require students to provide or create a protective cover for their books. Students should not mark or highlight textbooks unless instructed to do so, and should take care when storing textbooks in lockers or backpacks to ensure that they are not damaged. Students will be held responsible for paying to replace any book that is lost, destroyed, stolen, or mutilated. Unpaid balances, including those balances accrued because of lost or missing textbooks, may result in report cards, transcripts, records, and diplomas being held until resolved. (See "[Financial Policies](#)")

Tobacco Products

See "[Smoking and Vaping](#)"

Tuition

See "[Financial Policies](#)"

Uniform

Saint Joseph's students wear a uniform to foster unity and to prepare for eventual employment in the professional world. Unless otherwise noted, the uniform requirements are in effect daily from 8:00 AM to 3:05 PM.

On occasion, students may be permitted to deviate from the typical uniform (see "[Out of Uniform Days](#)" below). In other cases, such as field trips, certain types of clothes may be excluded or required. Whether in uniform or not, all Saint Joseph's students are expected to dress modestly. Modesty is necessary for both men and women, and is a virtue that must be cultivated and understood in the context of our culture. Immodesty is characterized by dressing in a way that draws undue attention to oneself. At all times, students are expected to maintain a neat appearance that neither disrupts the educational environment nor creates a hazard to health and safety. Students should keep themselves, their hair, and their clothing clean.

The administration will make the final determination of the appropriateness of a student's clothing or appearance. If a student has a question about the acceptability of any particular item, it would be advisable to bring rather than wear it to school to have it checked with the office first.

It is the sincere hope of the school community that a student's dress will always be within reasonable limits of decency, morality, and propriety, and will reflect pride in the individual student, his or her family, and Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy.

Part of the school's educational process is to prepare students for eventual employment and to teach that expectations in attire differ between school or work and recreation.

Students have three uniform vendors to choose from – FlynnO'Hara, Lands' End, and Tommy Hilfiger.

Guidelines for all students:

1. Students may choose to wear a navy or white Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy polo with the SJCA logo from FlynnO'Hara on any day except Mass days in place of the uniform shirt from the start of school until October 31st and then after Spring Break until the end of school. **On Mass days, the button-up shirt (and tie for boys) must be worn with a blazer.**
2. All students must have a dark navy blue blazer, preferably one with gold buttons. The blazer must be worn at all-school gatherings, such as assemblies or Mass.
3. Pants must be worn above the hips with a black or brown (or similar) belt.
4. Forms of outerwear other than those listed below, including hooded sweatshirts, may not be worn even if they are WolfPack apparel. Students may wear other jackets and coats to school, but should store them in their lockers before 8:00 AM.
5. No lettered or pictured T-shirts may be worn as undershirts and sleeves may not protrude beyond the sleeves of the uniform shirt. If the white uniform shirt is worn, a plain white shirt is the only undershirt permitted (e.g., no colored shirts under the white uniform shirt and no logos).
6. No tearing or cutting of any part of the uniform is permitted.
7. No slippers, open-toed, or backless type shoes are permitted. Examples of unacceptable shoes include: Any type of boot, Converse, Vans, and shoes with fur, including Uggs.
8. Hair should be neatly cut, not cover the eyes (eyes must be visible), and may only be dyed natural colors. Shaven configurations, mohawks, or haircuts that may be viewed as bizarre or attention-getting are not acceptable. For girls, makeup of an extreme nature is not permitted.
 - a. Boys' hair must be above the collar and eyebrows at all times and their hair may not be worn in ponytails or buns. Makeup may not be worn.
 - b. Final determination of hair-style appropriateness will be made by the administration. Students who are in violation will be sent home. Refusal to make the directed changes will result in suspension from school.
9. All boys must be completely clean-shaven at all times. Eyebrows may not have designs, patterns, or lines in them. Sideburns may not extend below the bottom of the ears. If necessary, students will be required to shave immediately using a personal, one-time use razor provided to them.
10. Students may wear a reasonable number of tasteful accessories. Bracelets and wristbands should not be excessive in number. Visible piercings are not permitted with the exception of earrings. Rings or ornaments in any other body piercing are not acceptable. Nose piercings are not permitted. No exceptions will be made for newly-pierced healing during the school year, which includes bandages. Students **are** permitted to use small, clear plastic spacers to hold piercings open. Hats and bandanas may not be worn.
 - a. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.
11. Visible temporary or permanent tattoos must be covered at all times during the school day by school uniform clothing. Outside of school hours, they must be covered while on school grounds or while representing the school.
12. Writing or drawing on clothing or on the body is inappropriate.
13. Any clothing, ornamentation, or grooming which appears to represent an expression of any philosophy in conflict with the philosophy of Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy are forbidden.

Girls:

1. A white or light blue, short- or long-sleeved shirt. Only the top button may be unbuttoned and shirts must be worn tucked in at the waist, not folded under. Shirrtails should not be seen.
2. Beige, dark navy blue, or gray skirt purchased from an approved vendor (FlynnO'Hara, Lands' End, or Tommy Hilfiger). If the skirt is worn, the skirt must be no higher than two inches above the knees. Skirts may not be rolled.
3. Girls may also choose to wear navy or tan pants.
4. Black, white, gray, brown, or navy non-athletic shoes may be purchased in the following styles: oxfords, loafers, flats, boat shoes (e.g., Sperry's), canvas (e.g., Keds) or suede sneakers. All shoes should be monochromatic.

- a. Administration will have the final decision on what constitutes "non-athletic."
- 5. Girls may wear a navy blue quarter-zip fleece from Lands' End, a long-sleeved v-neck navy blue sweater, sweater vest, or cardigan embroidered with the SJCA logo. Outerwear must be worn over the school uniform.
 - a. Students are no longer allowed to wear plain navy crewneck sweaters.
- 6. Socks are not required, but acceptable socks are plain navy or white socks, or navy, white, or gray tights.

Boys:

- 1. A white or light blue, short- or long-sleeved shirt. All buttons should be buttoned, though the collar button may be left open if preferred. It must be worn with a tie and knotted to the top. Bow ties are also acceptable (FlynnO'Hara and Lands' End). Shirts must be worn tucked in at the waist and buttoned at the cuffs. Shirt-tails must not be folded under, and should not be seen.
 - a. Boys must wear the button-up shirt with a tie on Mass days (not the polo).
- 2. Tan, navy, or gray dress pants. Pants must be worn above the hips with a black or brown (or similar) belt. Pants with a waistband are not permitted.
- 3. Black, white, gray, brown, or navy non-athletic dress shoes may be purchased in the following styles: oxfords, loafers, boat shoes (e.g., Sperry's), canvas (e.g., Keds) or suede sneakers. All shoes should be monochromatic.
 - a. Administration will have the final decision on what constitutes "non-athletic."
- 4. Plain socks (tan, navy, gray, or white) must be worn and rise above the bottom of the pant leg when standing.
- 5. Students may wear a navy blue quarter-zip fleece from Lands' End, or a long-sleeved v-neck navy blue sweater, sweater vest, or cardigan embroidered with the SJCA logo. Outerwear must be worn over the school uniform.
 - a. Students are no longer allowed to wear plain navy crewneck sweaters.

Uniform Violations:

Consequences: If students are not in compliance with the uniform policy, they will receive a referral, in addition to immediately correcting the problem. Neckties, belts, shaving equipment, and a few other clothing items may be available to students so that they miss as little class as possible. They must be used when offered and they will receive a referral for the uniform infraction. If students refuse an available uniform item, they will receive a referral for insubordination and a parent may be called to bring an appropriate uniform item. Students who do not return borrowed items will have to pay to replace them.

If a student receives two referrals for a uniform or dress code violation, he or she may not participate in any out-of-uniform day for a period of one month from the date of the second referral. Subsequent violations of the uniform policy will extend this period at the discretion of the administration. The loss of out-of-uniform privileges supplements (but does not replace) the consequences described in the Disciplinary Policy above (See "[Disciplinary Policy](#)").

Uniform Vendor Information

Students have multiple vendors to choose from for their uniforms. Not all items are guaranteed to be in stock. Please allow several weeks for processing and shipping.

Vendor	Website	School Code
FlynnO'Hara	www.flynnohara.com	PA091 School Tie: Blue, Navy & White Plaid
Lands' End	www.landsend.com	900147562 School Tie: Item #426728AK2 in "Clear Blue Plaid"
Tommy Hilfiger	www.globalschoolwear.com	STJO15

Male students will be provided with a school tie free of charge on their first day of school. Students are responsible for purchasing a replacement if their tie is lost, stolen, or damaged. See above.

Physical Education Dress Code

Students enrolled in Physical Education should bring a change of clothes and shoes to school, and will be given time to change at the beginning of the period. Because PE is always held Period 8, students do not need to change back into their uniforms at the end of the class. Students are expected to be dressed appropriately for PE even on out-of-uniform days.

Shirt

Short-sleeved athletic shirt or t-shirt. Shirts may have graphics or logos so long as all designs are school-appropriate. WolfPack apparel is preferred and is available throughout the school year; sale information is announced via email by the Athletic Director.

Pants

Athletic pants or shorts, with solid colors preferred. Pants must be worn above the hips and should not be tight-fitting. Ladies may wear athletic leggings if paired with shirts that descend below the hips. Shorts must have at least a 5" inseam. Shirts may not entirely cover shorts.

Shoes

Athletic shoes, neutral tones preferred. Shoes must be worn with socks.

Out-of-Uniform Dress Code

On various occasions, students are not required to wear their uniforms for school or school-sponsored activity. The following dress code applies any time students attend school or school-sponsored activities, but are not required to be in uniform. This includes out-of-uniform school days as well as school-sponsored dances, games, or other student activities. Students are expected to dress modestly at all times, whether in uniform or not. Students should always dress in a way that is reflective of their dignity as children of God and temples of the Holy Spirit. Modesty is especially important when choosing attire for semi-formal or formal dances.

The following are not permitted at any school-sponsored event:

- Clothing with inappropriate, vulgar, or obscene writings or graphics
- Clothing that is see-through
- Tank tops, halter tops, and bare midriffs
- Spandex or leggings
- Clothing that is immodest or revealing, in the judgment of the administration

In addition, the hem of any skirts or dresses may not be more than 2" above the knee, and shorts must have at least a 5" inseam. Men may not wear skirts, dresses, or leggings.

Out-of-Uniform Days

Out-of-uniform school days (or "dress down days") are designated throughout the year, and are opportunities for students to exercise more freedom in their clothing and appearance. They do not include a relaxation of any of our behavioral or academic expectations. Students are expected to abide by the out-of-uniform dress code above. Often, students will be required to pay an established amount in order to participate in an out-of-uniform day. This money is typically donated to a charitable cause, such as the Saint Joseph Fund or a student-sponsored charity. In other cases, out-of-uniform days are offered free of charge. Students may always opt to wear their uniforms, even on an out-of-uniform day.

In addition to full out-of-uniform days, there will occasionally be opportunities to deviate from the uniform in some specific way. Examples include:

- Athletic Game "Team Days": On the day* of "home" athletic competitions, students on the competing team may wear their team's Team Day shirt. Students should wear uniform pants/skirts and shoes. **Teams are not permitted to wear their Team Day shirt on Mass Days.*

- Running sports and Golf may have a Team Day on *every* day they have a competition, except Mass Days.
- Half Dress Down: Students wear uniform pants/skirts and shoes with their choice of shirt or top. In some cases, certain groups of students may receive a half dress down to wear a specific shirt. (E.g. the musical cast is typically permitted to wear their show t-shirts on opening night)
- Spirit wear: Students wear WolfPack, blue, or orange shirts. Spirit days may be half or full dress down.
- House colors: Students wear shirts representing one or both of their House colors, either half or full dress down.
- Themed Dress Down: Students should dress according to a particular theme. Students who do not wish to dress according to the theme should wear their uniforms. Themed dress down days are a traditional part of Catholic Schools Week and Homecoming week.

Visitors

A student may request permission from the administration at least one day in advance to have a visitor attend classes. Visitors must check in at the Main Office upon arrival and will receive a visitor's badge. If an unidentified person is seen in the building without a visitor's badge, this should be reported immediately to the Main Office. For additional information about our Visitor Policy, please contact the Main Office or an administrator.

Weapons

Students are not permitted to have weapons or other hazardous instruments or materials in their possession in school, on school property, at any school-sponsored activity, or on school transportation. Violations of the weapons policy are a serious matter, and always result in an administrative hearing with the possibility of expulsion or dismissal.

In accordance with Act 26 of 1995 of the Pennsylvania Legislature, the school has developed a Memorandum of Understanding with local police department(s) with jurisdiction. This Memorandum includes the following guidelines for notification: The term "weapon" shall include, but not be limited to knives of all types, cutting instruments, cutting tools, firearms, shotguns, rifles, guns (including BB and pellet guns), lead pipes, chains, nunchaku sticks, throwing stars, darts, metal knuckles, black jacks, fireworks, explosives (including bullets, firecrackers and M-80s), and any other tools or instruments capable of inflicting serious bodily harm and replicas of the foregoing.

The administration shall report all acts of violence and incidents that involve the possession or use of a weapon. Verbal notification should occur as soon as possible after the event, followed by a written report within 24 hours. Every reasonable effort will be made to contact the parent and invite them to be present for the investigation. Criminal charges may be filed. The administration shall file the appropriate reports to the Diocesan Education Office and the Chief of Police of the appropriate police department in all incidents of possession of weapons or violent behavior. These reports should be filed as soon as possible, but not longer than thirty days after adjudication and disposition.

World Language Courses

Students may fulfill their World Language graduation requirement through in-person classes provided by the school, or through approved online programs that are facilitated by the school. This provides students with a wider variety of language options while exposing students to the format of online courses that many will encounter in college. At the same time, we recognize that many students may prefer traditional, in-person instruction. Based on the presence of qualified faculty, we will offer as many language options in-person as possible, with online courses remaining a possibility for interested students. Families are responsible for any costs associated with online language courses.

2025-2026 Academic Calendar

Saint Joseph's Catholic Academy 2025-2026 Academic Calendar

- 13-15 - Teacher In-Service
- 15 - New Student Orientation/In-Service
- 18 - First Day of School (All Students)
- 22 - Leadership Pillar Day

AUGUST 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

FEBRUARY 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

- 16 - Virtual Day for Students - Parent-Teacher Conferences + Teacher In-Service
- 17 - Spring Open House
- 24 - Christian Leadership Summit

- 1 - No School - Labor Day
- 4 - Back to School Night
- 26 - Saint Joseph's College Fair

SEPTEMBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

MARCH 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- 7-15 - Spring Break
- 30 - End of Q3

- 9 - Service Pillar Day
- 17 - End of Q1
- 20 - Fall Break
- 27 - Q1 Grades Due
- 28 - Q1 Grades Distributed

OCTOBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

APRIL 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

- 1 - ½ Day
- 2-6 - Easter Break
- 10 - Q3 Grades Due
- 13 - Q3 Grades Distributed

- 7 - In-Service Day/Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 16-22 - Discover Catholic Schools Week
- 18 - Open House
- 20 - Giving Together: Donor Appreciation Dinner
- 26-30 - Thanksgiving Break

NOVEMBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

MAY 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

- 5 - Accepted Student Night
- 8 - Scholarship Pillar Day
- 21 - Academic & Athletic Awards
- 22 - Senior Grades Due
- 23 - Senior Commencement
- 25 - Memorial Day - No School
- 26-29 - Underclassmen Finals, Summer Service Hours
- 29 - End of Q4

- 20-31 - Winter Break

DECEMBER 2025						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

JUNE 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

- 1 - In-Service
- 5 - Final Day for Teachers; Q4 Grades Due
- 8 - Report Cards Distributed

- 1-4 - Winter Break
- 12 - End of Q2
- 13-16 - Mid-Terms
- 20 - Q2 Grades Due
- 23 - Q2 Grades Distributed
- 19 - MLK Day - Virtual Day - Teacher In-Service
- 25-31 - Celebrating Catholic Schools Week

JANUARY 2026						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Key:
Breaks/No School
Teacher Inservice/Virtual Day
Event
Deadline