

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The relationship between school representatives (teachers, administrators, school organization leader, coaches, etc.) and parents at St. Joseph School is one of the strongest and the most important elements in the effective rearing and successful education of our youth. This policy statement provides structure to several phases of the relationship. Please read this set of expectations and feel free to contact the administration with any questions.

The expectations for parents and teachers are divided into three areas: **academic, behavioral, and spiritual.**

ACADEMIC:

Parents are entitled to high realistic expectations for their children at St. Joseph School. Those expectations include academic standards and classroom practices. Oftentimes those expectations elicit questions from parents. These “must ask” questions are suggested in the document by Cindy Bond entitled “The Parent-Teacher Conference: Five Must-Ask Questions.” These expectations will clarify the direction for both the child and the teacher in the area of goals and expectations for your child(ren) at St. Joseph School.

1. What skills and knowledge will my child be expected to master this year?
2. How will my child be evaluated?
3. What can I do to stay more involved in my child’s academic progress?
- 4 How do you accommodate differences in learning?
5. How are older students prepared for further learning after elementary school?

BEHAVIOR

A student’s behavior is closely linked with her/his academics, therefore we at St. Joseph School have a system whereby student behavioral problems can be identified, and if necessary, will be remediated.

Should a parent wish to question/challenge a school representative report of misbehavior, or wish to question/discuss a specific action, the following procedure must be followed:

Step One:

Please contact the school representative by phone to discuss the issue. The telephone conversation between the parent and the school representative is expected to be courteous, collegial, and cooperative. A plan should be worked out with follow up calls or face-to-face meetings as needed. Anonymous letters will not be addressed.

Step Two:

If the behavior is repeated or is beyond the realm of a telephone conversation, a school representative-parent conference may be scheduled by either the school representative or the parent. These conferences will typically take place after school. This personal, private and two-way dialog will be calm and will be collaborative. The content of this meeting is confidential on the part of both parties (i.e. parent(s) and school representative(s)). On any occasion involving a school representative-parent dialog, especially involving a difference of opinion, the principal may participate at the request of either party. All of these interactions are part of the confidential relationship regarding all student behaviors which include academic and behavioral elements.

Step Three

In the event that a disagreement between parent and school representative cannot be resolved via this procedure or in those instances when the parent's behavior is intrusive, inflammatory, or overbearing, this procedure has been developed:

*The principal will be involved in every conference between the parent and school representative on no more than two occasions. He/she will attempt to resolve the differences.

*The second step will be to involve the pastor, the principal, and the parent in confidential conference.

*If an additional parent, principal, pastor meeting is required due to elements involving the parent's behavior, a decision may be made by the pastor and by the principal to deny the continuation of the family's presence in the parish school population.

SPIRITUAL:

Our school representatives recognize that Jesus has called them to the ministry of teaching. In following Jesus, they provide an excellent and caring education for all students. Parents have the primary obligation of teaching religion (a way of life) to their child(ren). This commitment was made at the Baptism of your child when you made the promise, as a parent, that you would share the story of God. There is a need for parents to continue to search for God in their lives. In order to continue this search for God in their lives parents are encouraged:

-to walk in the footsteps of Jesus by being an active member of the Parish Community;

-to attend weekend Mass with their child(ren);

-to participate in small Christian communities in sharing scripture in order to better know God, self and others;

-to be good stewards in sharing of time, gift, and talents.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY FOR PROBLEMS WITH SCHOOL PARENTS

St. Joseph School already has a disciplinary policy for students. It is necessary for this disciplinary policy to be extended to parents whose behavior is intrusive, inflammatory, or overbearing – even after verbal and/or written instructions to cease such behaviors have been given by the principal. A decision to apply this policy to a particular parent behavior would be made by the principal, in consultation with the pastor, only after careful forethought and for significant behavioral issues. This disciplinary policy also extends beyond the school to activities where you are representing St. Joseph School in any capacity (i.e. YMCA basketball, Park District Soccer).

Examples of such disruptive behavior on the part of the parents include, but are not limited to:

- Defamatory comments made about the school, faculty, staff, students, other parents, or the parish.
- Verbal community or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of others.
- Negative gossip spread in person, by phone, by letters, by the internet or by any other form of media.
- Harassing multiple messages or repeated complaints about matters that are already settled by the principal.
- Disrespect toward faculty or staff members that would not be tolerated from any school student.

When parents engage in disruptive behavior, the principal, in consultation with the pastor, shall follow these steps:

Step 1: warning to the parent that this disciplinary policy is being engaged in regard to his/her behavior, with a mediation meeting with parents, principal, and other staff as needed.

Step 2: removal of parent from opportunities to volunteer in school activities and organizations.

Step 3: restriction of parental access to the school building and grounds without prior authorization by the principal.

Step 4: final meeting, removing the parents and their child(ren) from enrollment in the St. Joseph community.

The principal, in consultation with the pastor, has the discretion, in his/her sole judgment, to skip steps in this policy due to the nature or severity of the parental behavior.

When any disciplinary action of this nature is being administered to a school parent, it is always within the discretion of the principal to notify other involved parents of the fact that such disciplinary action is being taken. However, the principal may choose not to disclose the exact nature of the parental infractions for privacy reasons. At the discretion of the principal, a more complete report concerning the disciplinary actions and the factors that gave rise to them may be shared with the school board in executive session.

If any school board member is aware of any situation where other school parents are engaged in behaviors that are disruptive of the harmony within the school community, they are asked to bring these issues to the attention of the principal. Their concerns will be taken into consideration, and appropriate action, as determined by the principal, in consultation with the pastor, may be taken.

It is the sincere hope of both the pastor and the principal that disciplinary action under this policy would seldom be necessary. It is also hoped that the mere enactment of such a policy would be a formidable deterrent to any disruptive parental behaviors. However, the greater good of the school community requires that such a disciplinary policy for disruptive school parents be enacted and enforced.

RECONCILIATION OF SCHOOL PARENTS

Reconciliation of School Parents: Finally, any restoration of parents to full participation in school volunteer activities is predicated on two key matters that are certified by the principal:

- The parent understands and accepts the reasons why this process had to be applied to their behaviors.
- The parent is committed to reconciliation among those who were adversely affected by their behaviors.

This policy statement shall be reviewed by the School Advisory Board and principal at least on an annual basis, and it shall be published in the St. Joseph School Directory and on the school website.