

St Stephen Catholic School

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2023-24

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

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SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

The school office is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The school office is open until 1:00 pm on half days and during most of the summer break. Refer to School calendars/newsletters for official office closings.



VISION STATEMENT

St. Stephen Catholic School is a diverse and inclusive Catholic school community. In partnership with our families, church, and community, we provide excellence in Catholic education, focusing on faith, academics, and service in a caring, spiritual, and safe learning environment. Through personal development and knowledge gained within our school, students will influence a rapidly changing world with integrity and distinction.

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Stephen Catholic School is devoted to inspiring students to achieve their full academic potential while demonstrating a desire to continue Jesus' mission by applying Catholic morals, beliefs, values, and practices in their everyday lives. We are committed to motivating students to sustain a lifelong love of learning.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Stephen Catholic School believes that every child has the ability to succeed in their daily learning experiences. We also believe that our students' successful learning experiences are dependent on the environment where they learn. For these reasons, we provide our students with a faith-filled environment that allows them to feel challenged, valued, respected, and loved so that they can reach their highest academic, spiritual, and moral potentials.

By living a life of virtue founded on prayer, sacrifice, and charity, the administration, faculty, and staff model to our students how to embrace and appreciate their God-given talents. We encourage our students to explore ways to enhance and utilize their talents for the service of God and his people. As an educational institution that promotes holistic education, we graciously accept our responsibility to develop critical thinkers that can look into complex problems, initiate creative solutions, foster mutual respect among students and staff, and motivate students to sustain a life-long love of learning.

CORE VALUES

St. Stephen Catholic School students/graduates:

- Are critical thinkers
- Live with integrity
- Are respectful
- Are lifelong learners
- Are so rooted in their Catholic identity that they apply Catholic beliefs, morals, and values to everyday life

ADMISSION POLICY

St. Stephen Catholic School operates in cooperation with the Diocese of St. Petersburg. St. Stephen Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, scholarship programs, athletics, and other school-administered programs. However, priority will be given to students who are active in their faith. As a student in a Catholic school, there is an expectation that our students attend weekly Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday.

All new students will be accepted on a probationary basis for one full year. The purpose of this policy is to determine a student's ability to adjust to the philosophy and program of our school. Students applying for kindergarten who were not enrolled in our PreK 4 will be required to show mastery of preschool benchmarks from another program and may be required to attend VPK over the summer. **Students who are attending school for the first time in kindergarten will be required to attend VPK over the summer.**

The administrative team has the right to determine whether or not current students may re-register. The team's decision will be determined after a careful review of the student's progress during the course of the academic year. Parents will be kept informed of their child's review.

Education is a partnership. The parent is the primary educator. The responsibility of the school is to support parents in this endeavor. However, if, in the view of the administration, there is a breakdown in this partnership, parents may be asked to remove the child from the school.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A child who will be three years old on or before September 1 and is toilet trained is eligible for admission to our Pre-K 3 program. A student may be admitted to our Pre-K 3 program on a rolling basis once they turn 3 with the understanding that they will repeat Pre-K 3 before entering into our PK 4 program. A child who will be four years old on or before September 1 is eligible for admission to Pre-K 4. A child, who will be five years old on or before September 1, is eligible for admission to kindergarten.

Originals of both the Florida physical examination form and completed immunization record form are required when a student enters school for the

first time in any grade. Also, any child entering Kindergarten or 7th grade must update his/her immunizations and physical before the 1st day of school. All students must have up-to-date immunizations. No exceptions will be made to the above requirements. The Catholic schools in the Diocese of St. Petersburg do not recognize a religious objection to immunization. This policy became effective, beginning in the 2011-2012 school year.

Admission Requirements:

- An official copy of the child's birth certificate
- The baptismal record (if applicable)
- An original record of compliance with local and State of Florida health requirements
- A child's most recent report cards and/or standardized test scores for children with previous school attendance including Preschool VPD reports
- All documents as specified on the registration checklist.
- Placement and/or screening test
- Any psychological or educational exams administered in previous years
- Any current IEPs or 504 plans (if applicable)
- Court orders pertaining to custody of a child when applicable.
- Students entering grades 1-8 may be required to take a diagnostic admissions test.

During open enrollment in February, priority will be given to families in the following order:

- Siblings of family members already in attendance, provided space is available
- Students from registered and actively supporting St. Stephen parish families
- Students from an out-of-parish family
- Students on the waitlist in order of addition.

ANIMALS

For the safety of all and to accommodate those with allergies, animals are not allowed on school property. Exceptions may be granted for educational purposes, i.e., a K9 demonstration.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Parents are required to drop off and pick up their children in the designated areas. All students K-8 should be dropped off along the sidewalk from the front entrance to the Angel's Wing gate. All students should remain in their cars until a staff member is visible outside between 7:25-7:30 am. Students may then exit their vehicles and wait by the art room door or the Angel's Wing gate. When the gate and art room door open at 7:30 a.m., all students will proceed directly to their classrooms. All students K-8 should arrive through carline. Parents are not permitted to park and walk their children across.

Parents of PK students have two options for dropping off their children. PK students may be dropped off along the sidewalk in carline with an older sibling who can walk them to the PK classroom. The second option is to park in the Family Life Center parking lot and walk your child to the PK playground. Parents may not park in the school parking lot and walk across as this will disrupt the flow of carline.

Parents who need to go to the office must drive around and come in through the main entrance. Students arriving before 7:25 a.m. must be dropped off in the Extended Day Program in the Art room from the outside entrance in the front of the school. Any child found outside the school before 7:25 a.m. will be brought to the Extended Day program, or the Office and parents will be charged the extended day rate.

Our school day begins at 7:50 a.m. All children should arrive by 7:40 a.m., so they have ample time to put books and lunches away before Morning Prayer. **Students must be in the classroom by 7:50 a.m. (not the building) to avoid being tardy. Therefore, we will close the art room door and the gate at 7:48 a.m. to ensure students have sufficient time to walk to class.** If a student arrives after 7:48 a.m., they may not have enough time to class and will be asked to go to the front lobby of the main building until after the Morning Show. Students arriving to class after the 7:50 a.m. bell will be asked to go to the front lobby until after the morning show.

Late Arrivals

A student is tardy if they are not present in homeroom before the 7:50 a.m. bell. All tardy students will receive a tardy slip from the front office after the Morning Show, which must be presented to the homeroom teacher. **Students arriving after 7:48 AM MUST be accompanied to the front office by an adult.** If a student arrives after 8:00 and his/her first class is in the FLC, he/she will be required to wait in the front office until the class returns. Students in grades 3-8 arriving after 8:45 will be given a late arrival slip, which must be signed by each teacher whose class was missed and then given to the

homeroom teacher. After 10:00 a.m., a student is considered absent for the morning.

Dismissal for all grades PK to 8 is 3:00 p.m. (See Carline Procedures for more information about dismissal.)

Early Dismissal

At times it is necessary to pick up your child during the school day for an appointment or other obligation. It is important that parents are aware of their child's schedule when planning for early dismissal. Students will not be released if they are at lunch or PE in the Family Life Center. If it is necessary to pick up your child during these times, send a note to the teacher and your child will be sent to the office to wait prior to PE class or lunch. In addition, students may not be picked up between 2:30 and 3:00 pm. After 2:30, parents must pick up their child in carline.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The following attendance policy has been written by the Diocese of St. Petersburg and is consistent with the State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.09512, which states that children must maintain regular attendance during the entire school term of at least 170 actual school days and 540 net instructional hours for students in kindergarten, 720 net instructional hours for students in grades 1-3, and 900 net instructional hours for students in grades 4-12.

Success in any field requires a continuous daily effort. Nowhere is this truer than in education. The quality of learning for any student reflects the regularity with which he/she attends classes. Our attendance regulations have been formulated as a means of helping our students develop habits that will serve them best while in school and in later years.

State of Florida law requires those children between the ages of 5 and 16 to attend school. Regular attendance and punctuality have a marked influence on scholastic achievement. Attendance is an essential element to good progress in school.

Our school calendar is available on our website and should be used when planning family vacations. Schools strongly encourage families to plan vacations during scheduled school vacations. Any vacation-related absences will be included in the student's total number of absences.

Parents/guardians must notify the school office of a child's absence either digitally through email to kbiase@sscsfl.org or the absence notification form on the school website or by phone at 813-741-9203 before 9:00 a.m. As a safety procedure, if a child is absent and the parents have not called, the school will attempt to contact the parents. When a student is absent, the school must receive communication from parents/guardians explaining the reason for the absence, either voice message or electronic. The communication must include 1) the child's full name, 2) dates of absence, and 3) the nature of illness or reason for absence. **If a student is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19 or has tested positive, parents must inform the school immediately.**

In the case of prolonged medical absence, three or more days, parents should call the office before 9:00 a.m. for missed classwork and homework, so the work can be prepared and be ready for pickup at dismissal time. Due to teaching schedules, it may take up to 24 hours to have materials prepared for pick up in the school office.

Teachers may provide work before a known upcoming absence, but it is not guaranteed. However, students can check Google Classroom and the FACTS Family Portal for ongoing assignments. Once the student returns to school, the teacher will provide the assignments that were missed. Based on the number of days absent and the amount of work missed, a reasonable amount of time will be allowed for its completion. **Also, when a student is absent three or more days, he/she must bring a written, dated doctor's note on the day the student returns to school, stating the reason for the absence and assurances that the student's presence is not a health risk for other students. Children must be fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.**

Excused absences include having, being suspected of having, or being quarantined for a communicable disease or infestation, including, but not limited to Covid-19, head lice, or conjunctivitis. Students out of school for an approved period of time due to a medical concern may be recorded as "Present-Medical" if they successfully cooperate with the school in a distance learning program. Approval for the extended time away from school will only be granted with medical documentation approved by school administration.

Ten (10) tardies in a trimester are considered excessive. A notification will be sent home on the tenth tardy. A conference with the school counselor and/or assistant principal will be mandatory. Students may be required to stay in the office during lunch or after school to make up missed work due to being tardy.

Six (6) absences in a trimester are considered excessive. A notification will be sent home on the sixth absence. A conference with the school counselor and/or assistant principal will be mandatory. On the seventh absence, consequences may be given. If your child will be out for any length of time due to a family commitment, please send a note to the school office at least a week in advance.

Students should not be permitted to return to school unless well enough to participate in school activities. Students must be present for at least four

(4) hours of the school day to be considered present that day. To participate in any after-school activities, including the extended day program, students must be present on that day. **Students who are absent more than 20 school days during the year may be under administrative review for academic retention and may be asked to withdraw from St. Stephen.**

For more information regarding make-up work, see the Grading Practices section.

BIRTHDAYS

Ice cream sundaes provided by the school are the only option for class birthday treats. These may be purchased for the class a week in advance by completing the form in the office. Ice cream will be passed out during your child's lunch break.

Parents may join their child for lunch on their birthday with 2 weeks prior notice. Parents will join PK-K students in their classroom for lunch and Gr. 1-8 students in the Family Life Center. Parents must check in at the front office. If your child is in grades 1-8, you must join the child's class 5 minutes prior to scheduled lunch, so you may walk over to the FLC with the class as FLC front doors are locked.

Party invitations are not to be distributed in the classroom unless all students in the child's class are invited, or ALL girls or ALL boys. **If requests are not made within the specified time requirements, they may be denied.**

BACKPACKS

Elementary students in grades K-2 must have a backpack without wheels to protect books from inclement weather, unnecessary handling, and above all, loss. Students in grades 3-8 may use a backpack with wheels. Please check your child's backpack to ensure that toys and expensive games are not brought to school. Upon arriving in the classroom, the students will put books in their desks and the backpacks in their lockers or classroom closet. No backpacks will be left sitting in the middle of the floor or in front of a locker. **Students may not use their backpacks during the day. Saint Stephen Catholic School is not responsible for the loss of backpacks.**

BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

St. Stephen Catholic School strives to establish a Christian, professional, and supportive educational community for administrators, faculty and staff, parents, and students. The Diocese of St. Petersburg has adopted and promulgated a bullying and harassment policy for its schools that addresses behaviors that interfere with fulfilling the school's mission. St. Stephen Catholic School condemns any form of bullying or harassment and will address all credible allegations in accordance with the diocesan policy.

In order for this type of situation to be dealt with, open and honest communication must occur. Evidence must exist and be collected regarding specific observable behaviors that have contributed to a hostile environment.

Purpose of the Policy

This policy intends

- That each individual is free from physical, psychological, or verbal intimidation and harassment in educational settings, no hitting or kicking is tolerated.
- That each individual involved in the school maintains and further develops attitudes and behaviors which express respect for others and are reflective of each person's God-given dignity.
- To encourage a heightened sensitivity toward behaviors that others may find offensive and intimidating, whether these behaviors refer to race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, familial status, veteran status, or disability.

This policy is not intended to otherwise limit the expectation of staff, children, students, and volunteers to engage fully in traditions of teaching, celebrating, participating in and being formed by the Catholic faith, including but not limited to curriculum, catechesis, the Sacraments, other liturgies, worship services and ministries.

Explanation of Bullying/Harassment

Bullying and harassment can result from a single incident or from a pattern of behavior involving verbal, written, or physical conduct or communication. We follow the diocesan protocol for reporting and investigating all reported incidents of bullying and/or harassment.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school-aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Harassment encompasses a broad range of behaviors, which could include, but are not limited to:

- Physical, mental, or verbal abuse,
- Insults, jokes, or derogatory slurs based on one or more of an individual’s protected status(es),
- Unwelcome sexual advances or touching,
- Implicit or explicit requests for sexual favors,
- Unwanted sexual comments (serious or humorous),
- Unwanted sexually suggestive telephone calls, letters, emails, etc.,
- Comments or jokes based on issues of modesty and developing social awareness,
- Unwanted forced involvement in activities (e.g., physical, religious, etc.)
- Coercion of religious styles or personal beliefs upon a participant,
- Intimidation in front of a group or forced personal sharing in groups,
- Inappropriate media or music use which would violate this policy.

Reporting Bullying or Harassment:

When an individual believes he/she is being harassed or feels uncomfortable with the actions or comments of another, or observes harassment of another person, the individual must report his/ her concerns in writing as follows:

- Individuals involved with Schools/ Centers must report their concerns to the School Principal.
- If any individual is uncomfortable reporting to the above person, the report should then be made to the Pastor.

Once a written report of bullying or harassment has been made, the following procedures will take place:

- An investigation takes place. All parties involved are interviewed. If a complainant refuses to report the incident(s), it makes it impossible for further action to take place.
- If possible, both parties are brought together to allow the complainant to voice concerns and to ask for the inappropriate behaviors to stop.
- The other student then has the opportunity to respond.
- The offender will receive a written notice requesting the bullying-type behaviors to stop immediately. Parents are informed and asked to sign the notification. An appropriate consequence may also accompany the notice depending on the seriousness of the offense. The consequence may range from detention, suspension to expulsion.
- Both parties will have the opportunity to work with the administration and guidance departments in reinforcing skills to help them learn how not to be a victim or bully.
- The offender then meets alone with a teacher and/or administrator who will instruct them on the seriousness of this behavior and further consequences that will take place if it continues to occur.
- The victim is instructed to report any further incidences or retaliatory behavior if it occurs.

Confidentiality

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected to the extent possible but will be consistent with legal obligations and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

CAR LINE PROCEDURES

The St. Stephen Catholic School car line procedure is designed for maximum safety and efficiency in transporting our children to and from school. Enter Saint Stephen Circle from Boyette Rd. Drivers picking up for grades K-5 and their PK or gr. 6-8 siblings/carpoolers should follow the arrows to the parking lot behind the school. **Drivers should announce with PikMyKid** and proceed to pickup along the sidewalk.

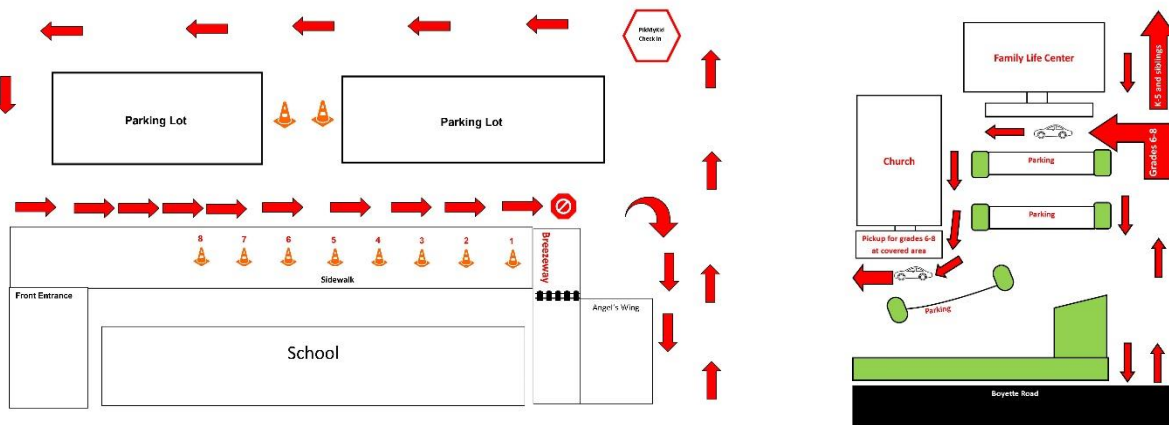
Families and their pick-up delegates must use the PikMyKid parent app to arrange their child’s dismissal mode and calendar. User guides and detailed tutorials are available through the school’s website under the parent tab.

Pickup for grades 6-8 (no siblings or carpoolers from younger grades) should turn left at the entrance to the church parking lot in front of the FLC and follow the arrows on the diagram below. Follow the lead of adults and students on patrol duty. It is crucial that you stay in your car. **Do not park and cross the road to collect your child.**

Pickup for PK students (no siblings or carpoolers) will be the same as morning drop off. Parents should park in the FLC parking lot and walk to the PK playground to pick up their child.

Students are to be collected and dropped off in the carline only. The only exception are PK parents parking in the FLC parking lot and walking child to the PK playground. (See maps below for details)

2021-2022 Elementary and Car Pool Car line Dismissal Map



Carline Operating Times

Carline will be operated Monday through Friday mornings between 7:25 and 7:48 a.m. and Monday through Friday afternoons between 3:00 and 3:15 p.m. On half days, car line will run from noon until 12:15 PM. Parents can change their child’s daily pick-up mode through their PikMyKid parent app up to one hour before car line begins. If children arrive before 7:25 a.m., they must be checked into Extended Day Program for supervision. Grades PK through 8th will be released at 3:00. If you arrive after 3:15 p.m., your child will be sent to Extended Day for supervision until you arrive **(a fee will be incurred).**

General Carline Rules

- Children will be loaded into vehicles on the sidewalk side only. No walking around vehicles!
- No opening or loading of vehicle trunks while in car line lane
- Please respect directions given by carline teachers and assistance given by Safety Patrol Monitors.
- Each family will be given a number identity code tag to hang from their rear-view mirror.
- Please continue out of the parking lot in order to alleviate traffic bottlenecks. There are no stops, opening trunks for backpacks, meetings, etc. as this will cause traffic backup.
- Children should be instructed on how to strap themselves in the car.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER/EMAIL

It is very important, for emergency and administrative reasons, that every enrolled family maintains an up-to-date address/phone number and email address record in FACTS. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school immediately if there is a change in this information during the school year or update their information in FACTS. Parents may update information in the Family Portal but choosing Webforms and clicking on Family Demographics.

CHILD CUSTODY

It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to make the school aware of any court order preventing the other parent visitation rights. If any court-ordered child custody agreement does exist, a copy must be placed in the child's permanent office file. The school will not be held accountable if this policy is neglected.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between the school and home is crucial for understanding and problem-solving. Please check Tidbits, FACTS Family Portal, and the school website for important information. Any concerns or questions about a student should be communicated to the student's teacher immediately. Appointments can be made by calling the school and leaving a voicemail or emailing the appropriate teacher/faculty member. Every parent is expected to be supportive of school rules, discipline, and administrators. In most cases, it is best to contact the teacher first. Since teachers need ample time to get ready for the day, morning appointments are discouraged. We ask that teachers not be interrupted during instructional time. If satisfaction is not gained or the problem remains unresolved after contacting the teacher or faculty member directly, the principal or assistant principal may be contacted.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Two conference days are scheduled during the year to provide for dialogue regarding the student's development in the school program. Parents must attend at least one conference each year. Teachers and parents may request additional conferences during the year as needed.

Our school messenger system is a computerized dialing communication software program that will be used to contact parents during school emergencies via phone call, text, and email. It is imperative that parents keep the office informed of any changes to contact information.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

Continuous enrollment allows all students PK3 – 7th grade to be automatically re-enrolled each school year on February 1. A non-refundable **registration fee of \$300** will be billed through FACTS on February 1 and is due on February 11. All families must pay the registration fee, including those receiving tuition assistance or a state scholarship. The registration fee helps pay our FACTS/SIS fees, student insurance, and curriculum costs. No longer is re-enrollment an opt-in event; it will be an opt-out if your situation has changed and you need to withdraw your child from the school for the next school year. Families must notify the school that their child will not return for the following school year to avoid the registration fee. The deadline to opt out of continuous enrollment will be announced each year at the beginning of January.

CURRICULA

The Curriculum refers to all the guided experiences of the student under the direction of the school. The instructional program is monitored and evaluated by administrators and teachers on an ongoing basis, in keeping with the guidelines of the Diocesan Office.

The required subject areas for grades K-8 (independent or integrated) are:

- Religion
- Art
- Technology
- English Language Arts (speaking, listening, viewing, reading, writing, spelling, grammar)
- Math/Algebra

- Music
- Physical Education
- Science
- Social Studies
- World Language

DAMAGES

Parents/guardians are obliged to pay for damages to school property caused by their child, including lost or damaged books or equipment. If a child loses a book, a parent should contact the student's teacher to complete the book replacement form. The damaged book, if suitable, will be used as a classroom resource.

DELIVERIES

We are unable to deliver flowers/balloons, forgotten lunches, homework, etc., during the school day. This would cause unnecessary disruptions for the teacher and children.

DETENTION

Detention will be served from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the office, or another supervised area, for disciplinary problems and incomplete classwork/homework. Detention must be served prior to attending any extracurricular activities. After detention is served, students will be walked to the front entrance or Angel's Wing gate at 4 pm. If the student is not picked up by 4:05, he/she will be brought to extended day.

DISCIPLINE

In light of St. Stephen Catholic School philosophy, we are committed to:

1. Helping, working with, and caring about each student as an individual person,
2. Providing a wholesome Christian environment that exposes its students to Christian principles, values, and attitudes.

Thus, St. Stephen Catholic School is committed to maintaining a school environment in which students will exert a dominant, positive influence on their peers. By implementing the program, *Project Achieve*, in grades K-8, our daily goal and overall plan will be strengthened by helping each child learn to make the right choices and to develop self-discipline as well as a sense of personal responsibility. In following the guidelines of *Project Achieve and 1-2-3 Magic*, each child must learn that every action or activity, good or bad, will bring about a consequence. The goals of this program are to stop unacceptable behaviors, encourage good behaviors, and establish a peaceful and productive classroom.

When students make a choice, not in keeping with classroom or school rules, he/she will receive a warning as follows: "That's one." The next infraction will result in another warning, "That's two." If the inappropriate behavior continues, the teacher will say, "That's three," and a consequence will be given, and the parent contacted. If the student still continues with the inappropriate behavior, the principal/assistant principal will be notified. Students start fresh with a clean slate with each teacher they see or scheduled block throughout the day. If a student receives a detention, a form will be sent home. This form should be signed and return to school the next day.

Consequences for students in grades K-2 are different and calculating conduct for specials classes is also different as they only meet once each week. Teachers will provide specific information for all classes at the start of the school year.

When a student in grades K-2 receives a "3", they will be asked to leave the group or have a time out and may return when they are ready to make better choices.

Continued misbehavior in grades K-2 will result in one of the following consequences:

- Work in another classroom

- Note or email home
- Phone call home
- Inform administration
- Loss of privileges
- These same consequences will be used in the Encore classes for grades K-2. In addition, the student's citizenship grade for that week will be reduced to a 2.

Consequences in grades 3-5 will include:

- Note or email home
- Lunch detention
- Morning detention
- Afternoon detention
- Administration notified
- Loss of privileges including electives (Gr. 5 only)
- Lowered citizenship grade for the week
- Loss of privileges (field trips, class parties, socials, Club Day, etc.)

Consequences in grades 3-5 for Encore classes will include:

- Citizenship grade reduced to a 2 for that week after two warnings
- Citizenship grade reduced to a 1 for that week when a student receives a "3" and the student may receive a detention

Students in grades 6-8 will use a House reward and demerit system as a motivation for appropriate behavior. We will follow the principles of 1, 2, 3 *Magic*, giving students two warnings before giving a demerit. A demerit results in a consequence and if a student earns three demerits in a trimester, he/she will have a lowered citizenship grade. Each trimester, demerits reset to zero.

The following are considered serious and will result in a demerit without warning:

- Disrespect toward adults or other students
- Inappropriate behavior at lunch (leaving the lunch area without permission, throwing food, water bottles, not following directions of lunch assistants, etc.)
- Inappropriate behavior at Mass
- Fighting or any unwanted physical interaction with another student
- Harassment
- Violation of technology policy

The administration reserves the right to impose different or more severe consequences pending an investigation and type of infraction. The following are subject to strict review and definite action, including continued detention, suspension, or expulsion:

1. Fighting
2. Harassment
3. Continued disrespect shown to faculty members, other adults, or fellow students
4. Use of obscene language and/or gestures
5. Continued disruptive behavior, insubordination, or disregard for school rules
6. Possession of dangerous and/or harmful materials or weapons on school property
7. Smoking anywhere on school property
8. Possession or use of controlled substances or weapons
9. Dishonest behavior
10. Possession of immoral or pornographic material
11. Truancy (absence without permission)
12. Consistent nonconformity to school rules regarding proper dress or good grooming
13. Threatening behavior of any kind
14. Continued violation of the Technology Policy
15. Excessive uniform violations
16. **Any infraction** of any other rule set down by the administration when such infraction is serious.

Suspension for fighting: Students who are involved in a physical confrontation on the playground, in the classroom, during extra-curricular activities, or in school building may be suspended. Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) will result in an absence on the student's attendance record. Students will receive credit for work completed during (OSS) and in-school suspension.

Physical confrontation is defined as follows: Hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking, or bullying another child. If the other child hits, pushes or shoves back, both students may be suspended. The second time a child is involved with physical confrontation, an extended suspension may apply. If this behavior continues, the offending student may be asked to leave the school permanently. Suspensions may be in or out-of-school suspensions.

Action will be taken for students who partake in any threatening behavior. Consequences will be considered based upon the student's age

and level of understanding. **Our goal** will be to help students resolve their differences by using "I care" language, taking personal responsibility, learning from the experience, and reflecting on how Jesus would want us to treat another person. Students are accountable to school rules at any time that they are on school premises or involved in a school-related activity off-premises. The discipline policy also applies to off-campus behavior (i.e., harassment through or inappropriate use of social media) that affects students when at school. The school has the legal right to search lockers, backpacks, cell phones, computers, personal belongings, or anything brought on school property.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA, DEVICES, AND SYSTEMS ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

St. Stephen Catholic School uses computers, iPads, Chromebooks, and other devices to support learning and to enhance instruction. Internet access is available to our students. This resource offers vast resources to students that will allow them to visit electronic libraries, perform research on a variety of subjects, and participate in special projects with students from across the globe. The goal is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. This technology will benefit all students as they prepare for work in a global marketplace. The student is expected to follow all guidelines stated below, as well as those given orally by the staff, and to demonstrate ethical behavior in using the network facilities at the school. To help ensure a safe online environment for students, St. Stephen Catholic School utilizes GoGuardian, a digital classroom management tool, to monitor in-school student use of technology. This tool may also be utilized in the event of a synchronous learning environment when students must learn from home.

1. **Acceptable Use:**

The purpose of the Internet is to enhance instruction and support learning in a manner consistent with the mission of Catholic schools. The Internet offers unique resources to students that allow them to access electronic libraries and search topics in almost any field.

2. **Privileges:**

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation or suspension of those privileges. The principal will appoint a staff member to act as the school's network system administrator. Students may not allow others to use their account name or their password. Violation of this rule may result in the loss of all network and computer access. The school's network system administrator may close or restrict an account any time it becomes necessary. The administration and staff of the school may also request the school's system administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific user access.

3. **Headphones and Earbuds:**

Students must provide their own headphones/earbuds for use in their classes. Earphones should be brought to school on the first day in a zip lock bag marked with the student's name and homeroom. If a student's headphones/earbuds break, they will need to be replaced within one week. If the headphones/earbuds have not been replaced within one week, the school will provide a replacement headphone, and the parent/guardian will be charged a \$10 replacement fee. Grades K-2 should purchase regular headphones with a standard 3.5 mm jack that fit the child's head comfortably. Grades 3-8 may use either headphones or earbuds with a standard 3.5 mm jack.

4. **Network Etiquette:**

Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Do not reveal personal addresses, phone numbers, or other personal information about yourself or your classmates.
- B. Be polite. Do not get abusive in messages to others.
- C. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
- D. Do not engage in activities that are prohibited under state or federal law.
- E. Do not assume that electronic mail is private. The school's network administrator has access to all emails. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.

- F. Do not use the network in such a way that would disrupt the use of the network by other users.
- G. All communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.
5. **Services:**
- A. St. Stephen Catholic School will not be responsible for any charges related to fee-for-service access to online resource services incurred by account holders without prior written approval from the network system administrator.
- B. St. Stephen Catholic School makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. St. Stephen Catholic School will not be responsible for any damages suffered. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or errors or omissions, including any and all viruses. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the student's own risk. St. Stephen Catholic School specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.
6. **Security:**
- Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. If the student identifies a security problem, the student **must** notify the school's network administrator and should not demonstrate the problem to other users. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.
7. **Vandalism:**
- Vandalism will result in the cancellation of Internet privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the Internet, or other networks that are connected to St. Stephen Catholic School. This includes but is not limited to the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

All material on Internet-connected devices must comply with the spirit and policies of St. Stephen Catholic School. Middle School students should also refer to the separate Chromebook Usage Policy, which is included in the electronic version of this handbook.

In the case of an online learning environment, including students who must learn from home for health reasons, the following rules apply:

1. Virtual Classroom (Synchronous online classes)
 - A. Students should be polite using respectful language just as they would in person. This applies to words spoken aloud as well as typed messages in the chat.
 - B. Students should only access their class meetings at times scheduled through their teachers. Students should enter the meeting no more than 5 minutes early and should not remain in a meeting after the teacher has left.
 - C. Only teachers may record school-authorized online classes, and students may not share any portion of online classes or recordings of them.
 - D. St. Stephen Catholic School recognizes the importance of giving students the opportunity to see their classmates face to face. However, for safety and liability reasons, private or social Google Meets may not be scheduled by students without a teacher through school accounts.
 - E. Students should use the chat feature in online classrooms to ask and answer questions related to the lesson as directed by the teacher or assistant. Students who use the chat feature inappropriately will be given a warning, then asked to leave the lesson and watch the recording later.
 - F. Distractions: Please mute microphones during meetings unless called on by the teacher. Most teachers allow students a few minutes at the beginning or end of class to socialize or connect with each other. Young children should put toys away that may become a distraction during a meeting.
2. Communication
 - A. All electronic communication between students and teachers must take place through school-issued email accounts, Google Meet, or through a parent or guardian's phone number or email account. Students may not contact teachers through personal email accounts or personal cell phone numbers.
 - B. Teachers may be contacted by phone through the school phone number and teacher's regular extension, even during school closures.
3. Behavior Management
 - A. Students will be warned about inappropriate behavior during live class meetings and then asked to leave the meeting if the

- behavior continues. Teachers may remove a student from the meeting if necessary. This will be followed up by contact with the parent regarding the behavior.
- B. Continued inappropriate behavior during live meetings may necessitate removing a student's access to live Google Meet events. In this case, students would be expected to watch the recorded videos of the meetings to complete assignments.
4. Plagiarism and Academic Integrity
 - A. Students should complete all coursework and participate in the classes online with honesty.
 - B. Students should never share their login credentials with other students.
 - C. Students should always submit their own original work for assignments.
 - D. Students should give appropriate credit to others when using someone else's ideas, words, or images.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Each family provides emergency information during enrollment. Updates to the family's emergency contact information in FACTS should be done as needed throughout the school year. In case of an emergency, we must be able to contact a parent. *Please notify the office immediately when information changes.*

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire drills, lockdowns, and weather-related drills are conducted monthly.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

In the event of an Emergency Evacuation of the premises other than for weather conditions, classes will be notified via the Public Address System. Teachers will guide their students through an exterior door closest to their class. If there is an exterior door in the room, students will be led through that door to the basketball court. In rooms with no immediate access to an exterior door, students will be led through the door leading to the main hall and then to the closest exterior exit and proceed to their assigned location. If the need arose for a process different from what is stated here, special directions would be given via the P.A. System.

School Alert System

In the event of any emergency, parents will be contacted via a school messenger system or homeroom parents. Parents should keep the office updated in order to be reached more quickly in the event of an emergency.

School Closings

St. Stephen Catholic School will usually, but not always, follow Hillsborough County's public school closings. Listen to radio and TV broadcasts for information on school closings. Hurricane days will be determined on a day-to-day basis.

EXTENDED DAY: Club Mustang

St. Stephen Catholic School offers both before (6:30 – 7:30 am) and after school care (3:15 – 6:00 pm) for students in grades Pre-K through 8 in Club Mustang. Details on the policies and procedures for Club Mustang can be found at the end of this document.

There are three payment options for extended day: an annual fee of \$2700 per child, a pre-paid monthly fee of \$300 per child, or an hourly rate of \$7 (\$5 for a 2nd child in the same family). The annual fee is due by the 1st Friday of the school year. Pre-paid monthly fees are due by the 1st of each month. Monthly bills are sent for hourly charges and are due by the 15th of the month. A \$15 late fee will be charged for billed payments received after the 15th of the month. Rates are charged in half-hour increments, and there is no grace period. If your child is not picked up in car line, they will be taken to extended day, and the family account will be charged accordingly. Once a child has been picked up from school, they may not be brought back to extended day. Parents picking up any child after 6:00 pm will be charged \$15 for every 15 minutes they are late.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

St. Stephen Catholic School offers a variety of extracurricular activities in which students are encouraged to participate. These are excellent opportunities for students to develop talents and skills and learn how to work as a group or team. Some activities may have age, grade, or academic requirements or fees. Students involved in extracurricular school-sponsored activities represent our school and its philosophy. Extracurricular activities are provided as a service to our students, and this privilege may be taken away. As a courtesy to the personnel who run these extracurricular programs, parents/guardians have the responsibility to pick up their children on time.

Parents who volunteer to lead extra-curricular activities are responsible for the supervision of all other children involved in the activity. Unattended students/siblings will be taken to the Extended Day Program, and parents will be charged accordingly.

ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Participation in a school-sponsored extracurricular, i.e., sports, student council, etc. is a privilege that requires a student to balance participation times and their academic responsibilities. Students must maintain a 70 percent or above in all subject areas. Students with a Student Support Plan may have alternative criteria and will be assessed by teachers for consistent academic effort. Grades will be checked on Monday for the week Tuesday through the following Monday of extracurricular eligibility. It is the responsibility of the student to let the athletic director or advisor know that they brought the grade up to eligibility. If a student does not meet these requirements, they will be ineligible to participate in any games, practices, activities, or meetings that week.

The student must have a 3 or above in both Conduct and Approaches To Learning (ATL) for all subject areas. If a student is serving detention the day of an extracurricular activity, he/she will not be able to participate in the event until after the detention is served. Students may not participate in an extra-curricular activity on the day he/she serves an in/out of school suspension.

Students must be present for a minimum of 4 hours of the school day in order to be considered eligible for an extracurricular activity. If a student is absent from school or leaves school early due to illness (even if they meet the 4 hour minimum), the student cannot participate. If the activity is on a Saturday, the student must be at school on the Friday before.

The athletic director, adviser, coach, or classroom teacher, in consultation with the principal, reserves the right to suspend or remove any student from the school-sponsored activity. The principal does have the discretion to adjust the consequences as needed.

FIELD TRIPS

According to the Office of Catholic Schools of the Diocese of St. Petersburg field trips, *"Shall have specific, stated goals related to the curriculum of the grade and provide learning activities related to the objectives of the program. Appropriate instruction shall precede and follow each field trip. The trip shall be planned with systematic procedures, such as but not limited to permission forms, transportation, adequate adult supervision, and compliance with diocesan requirements (Driver's Insurance Verification) for transportation of students."*

At St. Stephen Catholic School, field trips are an integral part of the school curriculum, and students should participate. Students will be permitted to go on school-sponsored trips only after parents have signed the written permission slip supplied by the school.

A student who does not have the necessary forms signed will be retained in school and forfeit any money paid for the trip. Telephone permission is not acceptable, nor are parent notes. Younger siblings will not be allowed to attend field trips even if the parent is a chaperone. We need the parents to supervise the students at that time. Field trip transportation is by bus or parent drivers. Pre-K students are to be transported by their own parents utilizing car seats regulated and approved by Florida Criminal and Highway Safety Law 316.613 (1)(a). In other cases, where the parent provides transportation, the parent is responsible for arrangements. When bus transportation is provided by the school, all students and all chaperones are expected to ride the bus.

Field Trip Driver Policy

Parent/Guardians may, at times, serve as drivers for our field trips. Driver/chaperones must be in compliance with diocesan regulations, which include: submitting a valid driver's license, proof of current insurance, showing coverage for bodily injury and property damage, in advance of the field trip, certificate of completion of the Diocesan safe environment, and safe driver classes through CMG, and completion of a Level II background check. The safe environment certificate must be updated every five years and can be renewed online at <https://stpetersburg.cmgconnect.org/>. After completing the online renewal, print out both certificates, and bring a copy to the school office. The Level II background check must be updated every five years as well. Go to <https://dospsep.org> to register. Volunteer hours will be given for your time driving and while chaperoning the field trip **only if you are a teacher assigned chaperone**. Please let the front office know the details of the hours volunteered.

FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

Since food allergies can be life-threatening, St. Stephen Catholic School will work with the students, parents, and physicians to minimize the risks and provide a safe environment for allergic students. Below is a list of responsibilities we expect of the family, student, and physician. It will be the parent's responsibility to:

- Notify the school of the student's allergy.
- Provide labeled emergency medication with a physician's order form signed by the physician.
- Educate the student in self-management of his/her food allergy.
- Train another adult of their choice (other than the teacher) to go on field trips with the student to administer an Epi-pen (emergency medication) as required,
- Ensure that all faculty members who teach the student are aware of the student's allergy and the symptoms that are associated with it as well as the appropriate follow-up care.

All emergency medication will be kept in the nurse's office with the physician's order form unless otherwise directed by the physician. The teacher who has a student with an allergy will leave information in the Substitute Folder concerning any necessary precautions.

BEST GRADING PRACTICES (K-8)

The following policy was adopted by the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

A. Philosophy

We believe:

- Students should have a clear understanding of the learning objectives.
- Our system of grading should be timely, specific, fair, and accurate.
- Grades should be based on a well-defined set of standards.
- Grades should be an accurate measure of a student's ability to demonstrate understanding.
- Criteria that are not a direct measure of student learning, such as work habits and behavior, should be reported separately from the academic grade.
- Assessments are critical to the teaching and learning process.

B. Purpose of Assessment

An assessment is defined as any instrument that is able to indicate or provide feedback on student achievement or performance. The purpose of an assessment may be summarized as follows:

1. To provide information to students in regard to their progress towards mastery of a learning standard(s). In addition, it provides information for self-evaluation and the incentives to learn.
2. To provide information to teachers on the individual student's level of mastery of the content/skill.
3. To allow teachers to use assessment data to plan instruction that will meet the needs of students.
4. To communicate information to parents about student achievement and performance in school.

C. Types of Assessments

While assessments will take many forms and types, they will be grouped under two broad categories.

Formative

Whenever a student learns new material, he or she needs time to practice and gain familiarity with the material. It is expected that the student will make mistakes during this learning process. Any work

done during this learning period is considered *formative*. The purpose of a *formative* assessment is to evaluate where a student is in the learning process, diagnose any problems, and motivate and help the student learn the material. Formative assessments also inform the teacher of learning areas that may need reinforcement or re-teaching.

Summative

After a student has had instruction and practice on a topic, including assessments of a formative nature, it is then necessary to evaluate mastery of understanding, content, or skills. The purpose of a summative assessment is to evaluate how well a student knows and understands the material.

D. Purpose of Grades

A grade is a recorded score derived from an assessment or assessments. The purpose of grades may be summarized as follows:

1. To provide information to students with regard to their performance relative to the learning standard(s).
2. To provide information to teachers on the individual student’s level of mastery of the content/skill.
3. To communicate information to parents about student achievement and performance in school.
4. To document student performance for transcripts.

E. The Grade Composition

In order to represent an accurate measure of student performance, the academic trimester grade needs to be based on work that is evaluated for an appropriate level of mastery of the standards. Summative assessments will, therefore, be the primary constituent of the trimester grade. They will account for no less than 70% of the trimester grade. Formative assessments will account for no more than 30% of the trimester grade.

1. All grading is done using the 100-point scale or a 4 point rubric
2. The lowest “earned” grade is 50.
 - a. An “earned” grade is derived from any assessment that is attempted and handed in.
 - b. An attempted assessment is one where the student has made a diligent attempt to follow the instructions and complete the assessment.
3. Formative assessments not attempted or not handed in will receive zero points. Summative assessments not attempted will receive a 50.

Completed student work will be assessed and is a direct measure of student learning. Non-academic attributes will be reported separately. All core classes will use the ATL grading scale for grade reporting. Please see *Section G: Reporting Conduct and Approaches to Learning*.

F. Grading Scales

Core Classes 3rd-8th

Letter Grade	% Score
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	50-59

Core Classes PK-2nd

4 Advanced	Exceeds Grade Level Standards: Demonstrates understanding beyond grade level standards consistently and independently.
3 Proficient	Meets Grade Level Standards: Demonstrates understanding of grade level standards consistently and independently.
2 Basic	Partially Meets Grade Level Standards: Demonstrates partial understanding of grade level standards with or without support.
1 Below Basic	Does Not Meet Grade Level Standards: Demonstrates minimum (or no) understanding and does not meet grade-level standards even with support.
NA=Not Assessed	Not assessed during this grading period.

G. Reporting Conduct and Approaches to Learning

Our Catholic schools recognize that the cultivation of good learning habits and behaviors support learning in the long run.

Approaches to Learning (ATL)

While schools may create their own rubric for ATL, the principles of Organization, Communication / Collaboration and Reflective Thinking should be the focus for all ATL behaviors. The following are the indicators of Organization, Communication/ Collaboration, and Reflective Thinking.

Organization

- Prepared for class
- Punctual with homework and in-class assignments
- Completed homework and in-class assignments

Collaboration & Communication

- Participates in class
- Attentive and engaged during instruction
- Demonstrates helpfulness and teamwork

Reflection & Personal Initiative

- Open to teacher help and correction
- Makes an effort to improve behavior/performance by seeking help when needed
- Makes time for personal study and improvement

The following is the rubric used for determining student ATLs.

	Organization	Collaboration & Communication	Reflective Thinking
4 Exceeds	Consistently displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality, and task completion.	Consistently attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Consistently open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
3 Meets	Frequently displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality, and task completion.	Frequently attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Frequently open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
2 Developing	Occasionally displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality, and task completion.	Occasionally attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Occasionally open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.
1 Rarely	Rarely displays readiness to learn through preparedness, punctuality, and task completion.	Rarely attentive and engaged; participates well in class; works well in groups; seeks help when needed.	Rarely open to teacher feedback; reflects on how to keep improving; produces quality work; makes time for personal study and improvement.

Conduct

The following are the indicators of Respect and Responsibility.

Respect

- Demonstrates a good attitude
- Is respectful to adults and peers in speech and action
- Maintains positive peer relationships
- Respectful of personal, peer, and school property

Responsibility

- Exhibits self-control
- Follows directions and does not need constant reminders
- Socializes only at appropriate times
- Takes ownership for behavior

The following is the rubric for the reporting of *Conduct*.

Conduct Code	Respect	Responsibility
4 Exceeds	Consistently respectful, kind, and cooperative.	Consistently follows school/classroom rules and directions.
3 Meets	Frequently respectful, kind, and cooperative.	Frequently follows school/classroom rules and directions.
2 Developing	Occasionally respectful, kind, and cooperative.	Occasionally follows school/classroom rules and directions.
1 Rarely	Rarely respectful, kind, and cooperative.	Rarely follows school/classroom rules and directions.

The following is the rubric for Reading in Grades 3-5.

A Exemplary	Above Level	The student's reading comprehension and fluency is at least one grade above level.
B Proficient	On Level	The student's reading comprehension and fluency is on grade level.
C Basic	Below Level	The student's reading comprehension and fluency is one grade below level.
D Below Basic	Significantly Below Level	The student's reading comprehension and fluency is two or more grades below level.
F No Evidence		

H. Other Matters on Assessment and Grades

1. Honor Roll

Honor Roll is awarded to students in grades 6-8 who encompass merit and integrity that results in academic and behavioral success.

Honor Roll eligibility is determined by:

1. Grades in all subject areas
2. Approaches to Learning (ATL's) in all classes
3. Conduct in all classes

Students can earn Principal's Honors or Honors. Eligibility requirements follow:

Principal's Honors: All As, 3 or 4 in ATL and Conduct

Honors: All As and Bs, 3 or 4 in ATL and Conduct

2. Make-Up of Academic Work during Absence

Absent students are required to make up work missed in each class. If a student is out for only one or two days, upon return to school, the student should meet with the teacher about the work missed. The student will be given a deadline by the teacher to complete and turn in these assignments. It is the responsibility of the student to see that the work is completed. The student may log on to the family portal to check the homework missed. If work is not made up by the deadline specified by the teacher, the grade for work missed will be recorded as a zero for formative assessments and 50 for summative assessments.

In the case of prolonged absence, three or more days, parents should call the office before 9:00 a.m. for missed classwork and homework so that the work can be prepared and be ready for pickup at dismissal time or sent via e-mail. Based on the number of days absent and the amount of work missed, a reasonable amount of time will be allowed for its completion.

Homework assignments for extended absences should be arranged with the teacher. Teachers may provide students with their work ahead of time, but this is not guaranteed. In most cases, students can keep up with classwork and homework using Google Classroom and the FACTS Family Portal. Parents may pick up textbooks, if necessary, at the end of the school day but should email the teacher by 8:00 am to arrange this. Requests for homework should be made by contacting the classroom/subject teacher. Due to teaching schedules, requests may take up to twenty-four hours to be completed.

3. Make-Up of a Scheduled Summative Assessment during Absence

Any student who is absent on the day of a scheduled summative assessment will be expected to make it up upon his/her return to school. For every day a student is absent, he/she has that number of days to make up the summative assessment (Ex. 1 day missed = 1 day for summative assessment.) It is the student's responsibility to speak with his/her teacher regarding missed assessments. In the event of multiple-day absences, the teacher will determine when all assessments will be taken.

4. Retakes

The focus of the Office of Catholic Schools and Centers of the Diocese of St. Petersburg is always to encourage and support the learning process that leads to mastery. This retake policy supports this emphasis on learning and relearning. Teachers have the discretion to refuse retakes to students who do not fully engage in the learning process prior to the summative.*

The following retake policy is designed to encourage relearning on the part of the student.

Criteria for Retakes

Grades K-5

1. The teacher will initiate the retake process and will communicate with the parent when a retake is necessary.
2. Students who score under 70% on a summative will be required to retake the summative assessment.
3. A student may retake a summative once.
4. Students will be required to participate in additional practice in order to qualify for a retake, which may include work to complete outside of class time.

Grades 6-8

1. The retake process **must** be initiated by the student. Students **may** request a retake if their score on a summative is less than 85% and **must** request a retake if their score is less than 70%.
2. A student may retake a summative once.
3. The Application for a Retake should be completed by the student (with a parent, if needed), signed by student and parent, and returned to the examining teacher no more than two (2) school days after the grade has been posted.
4. On the Application for a Retake, the student will identify the deficient standards/topics and include a clear learning plan and timeline to close the learning gap.
5. Students may be required to participate in additional practice in order to qualify for a retake.

Limitations and Deadlines (K-8)

1. Only one retake will be allowed per summative.
2. All graded formative assessments must be completed prior to the original summative.
3. Semester/Trimester exams and summatives that are extended projects with ongoing feedback and clear completion deadlines do not qualify for retakes.
4. The student will forfeit the retake opportunity if either the scheduled retake date or a scheduled teacher-required additional practice is missed unless excused or rescheduled by the teacher.

Teacher Facilitation (K-8)

1. Teachers will group summative assessments around specific learning standards to help the student identify deficiencies and plan a successful retake. Teachers will post retake dates when the summative assessments are returned.
2. The retake will only assess the deficient standards, allowing the student to focus on closing the learning gap and improving the assessment score. The higher grade (out of the retake or the original grade) will be recorded for credit in the grade book.
3. Teachers have discretion and may require a student to complete missing ungraded assignments correlated to the

deficiencies before the retake is administered.

4. Teachers have discretion over the format of the retake assessment.
 *Teachers reserve the right to deny a student from a retake before, during, or after the retake form is completed if the teacher can show due cause as to why there should not be a retake. This may include, but is not limited to, situations that involve academic dishonesty.

5. Plagiarism/Cheating

If a student is found to have plagiarized his or her work or is found cheating, the student will receive a 2 in ATL for the Trimester. This will keep them off the honor roll in middle school for that Trimester. Students will have the opportunity to complete the assignment for a grade, but the assignment/assessment will be treated as a retake and only worth a maximum of 85%. Students will also receive a detention.

GRADUATION

Participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege, not a right. Supplies needed are ordered in advance. In order to participate in the Graduation Ceremony, end-of-year field trip, graduation activities, and to receive the final report card, all academic and financial obligations (including Extended Day, Lunch, Volunteer Hours, Lost/Damaged Books) to the school must be fulfilled prior to the last day of school for the 8th grade.

GUM CHEWING

Gum is NOT allowed on the property at any time.

HEALTH RECORDS

The Diocese of St. Petersburg requires that enrollment and acceptance of students into their schools are contingent on the submission of a Florida Department of Health Certificate of Immunization as provided for in Florida Statute 1003.22. Catholic Schools in the Diocese of St. Petersburg do not recognize a religious objection to this immunization. This policy became effective as of the 2011-2012 school year. Health/Immunization records are filed in the school office.

Any child without proper immunization records, according to Florida State Guidelines, will not be permitted to begin classes until proper immunizations and original health report forms are submitted to the school. Sports Physicals, a separate form, should be noted on the specified sports school forms.

HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

Algebra I builds on prior knowledge and provides a rigorous foundation for more advanced mathematical thinking.

New math skills covered are polynomials, nonlinear functions, radical and rational functions, and data analysis. Students will be introduced to the scientific calculator. This is an entry-level course for a college preparation course of study and fulfills the high school graduation benchmark in public schools. The course follows the Algebra I curriculum set forth by the Hillsborough County School District and meets the standards and benchmarks provided by the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

Course Requirements: Placement in the Algebra I Class is based on criteria which may include: 7th grade math final grade, TerraNova and i-Ready scores, exams, placement test, and teacher recommendation. In addition, the student must show mastery of the following skills: computation with integers, solving 2-step equations, multiply and divide powers, negative exponents, using the distributive property, prime factorization, greatest common factor of monomials, least common multiple of monomials, computation with rational numbers, convert among fractions, decimals, and percent, solve equations with rational numbers, solve inequalities, measures of Central Tendency and percent proportion.

Students whose grades fall below a B will be removed from the class for the next trimester. Students entering St. Stephen in the 8th grade will be considered for placement in this class based on report card grades, standardized testing, and placement testing. Students who earn a minimum of a B will earn one high school credit if attending a public high school or Tampa Catholic. This will be included in their high school GPA.

HOMEROOM PARENTS

Homeroom parents are a vital part of the Parent Teacher Community Organization (See PTCO By-laws). The objectives and goals of this committee are to assist the homeroom teachers with parties, field trips, and a variety of other projects. Homeroom parents develop resource lists of parents who can assist with projects during the daytime and/or evening hours and may set up volunteers.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an essential part of a good school program. Teachers will post homework assignments on the FACTS Family Portal weekly. Students in grades K-5 must use the school-issued planner to record homework. Teachers will have planner time available each day for students to write assignments, and parents must sign the planner daily. Middle school students have the choice of using a planner, Google Classroom, or other electronic planners/organizers to keep track of homework and assignments.

Homework is given:

1. To reinforce the skills taught in the classroom.
2. To encourage the growth of student responsibility and initiative for their own progress.
3. To provide parents an opportunity to participate in the child's academic growth.
4. To develop an awareness that studying (review for a test, reading assignment) is as valid an assignment as written homework.

Rule of Thumb for Homework

Below are approximate homework expectations by grade. This does not include up to 20 minutes of independent reading each day and studying for assessments:

K – 1	10-15 minutes
2 – 3	15-20 minutes
4 – 5	20-30 minutes
6 – 8	30-45 minutes

Generally, weekends and long vacations are homework-free. However, children should be encouraged to read! At times, students may need to work on projects, research papers, or reports over the weekend.

INSURANCE

Student accident insurance is provided to all students. This secondary insurance is a backup to parents' primary insurance. In case of an accident, request a form from the office and return it within one week.

LATE PICKUPS

Unless engaged in a school-sponsored activity, no students are permitted on the grounds after car pickup time. For the safety of the students, those who are not picked up or are remaining on the school grounds will be taken to the Extended Day Program. A fee will be charged by the Extended Day Program for this service.

LOCKERS

Students are expected to use their time wisely and prepare themselves for each class. To promote planning, responsibility, and time management, students will be given designated times to use their lockers. Locker visits are not permitted during instructional time. Students may not disrupt another class to return to their locker. Locks are required in middle school to protect iPads and Chromebooks when not in use. Lockers are subject to search at any time.

LUNCH

Children will bring a snack and a bag lunch daily. Please do not send lunches that need to be heated in a microwave. Lunches should be healthy. *Fast food and soda are not permitted.* We discourage parents from bringing in their child's lunch during the day; however, in case of emergencies, when this must occur, the lunch should be in a lunch box with the child's name and grade on it and left at the front office. If a student forgets their lunch, parents will be called to bring one in. The school will not be able to provide one for the student.

Ice Cream

Ice cream is offered every Friday after lunch or the last day of the week that lunches are served for a fee. Ice Cream must be pre-paid for each semester. An order form will be sent out at the beginning of each semester for orders, and families can be billed through their

FACTS account. The cost for ice cream will be determined each semester.

You may purchase ice cream sundaes (in advance) (\$1.50 per child) for the entire class on your student's birthday as a special treat. The order form for the birthday ice cream sundaes can be found in the office.

MARVELOUS MUSTANG

All enrolled students of St. Stephen Catholic School are eligible for the school's special award, "Marvelous Mustang." This monthly recognition is given to students who exhibit characteristics or actions pertaining to the annual school theme.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In case of a medical emergency:

- First aid will be administered on-site.
- After further evaluation, 911 may be called.
- The parent/guardian will be notified.

MEDICATION

Prescription Medication

If a child is required by a medical doctor to take prescription medication during the school day, school personnel will administer the medication under the following conditions:

1. The school receives a copy of the doctor's order which includes:
 - name of medication
 - condition for which it is being given
 - dosage and time of administration
 - duration of the request
 - doctor's signature and telephone number
2. Medication must be in the original pharmacy bottle, with written information clearly visible.
3. "Medication at School Permission" Form signed & dated by a parent or guardian must be on file. Medication will be disposed of if not picked up by the last day of school.
4. No medicine shall be administered to a child in preschool. Rare exceptions may only be approved by the administrator. Medication must either be accompanied by a Doctor's order or prescription, and the appropriate forms must be filled out in the office.
5. Students are NOT to administer their own medications. Do not send medicine in lunch boxes. See front office for possible exceptions with epi-pens or inhalers.
6. Students are not to distribute medication of ANY kind to one another. **BREAKING THESE RULES COULD RESULT IN EXPULSION.**
7. Please see the front office for specific forms for EpiPen and inhalers.

Non-Prescription Medications

1. Must be in the original container (Tylenol bottle, cough syrup bottle, etc.).
2. Must be clearly identified as to the name and type of medication and dosage instructions.
3. "Medication at School Permission" Form signed & dated by a parent must be on file giving the child's name, medication name, dosage instructions, specific dosage times, and any other necessary instructions must accompany the medication.

Example: "Please give Jimmy one teaspoonful of 'brand name' cough medicine at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m." Parents must sign and date the form. Forms for administering medication can be obtained in the school office.

NOTE: All medications, prescriptions, or over-the-counter types, must be turned in to the front office for lock-up in the nurse's station. No child is to keep any medication on his/her person or in desk or locker, backpack, etc. Even cough drops and throat lozenges must be kept in the office. **Parents must list all medications their child is taking. If there is a medication change, please contact the school to update the medication form.**

Miscellaneous Medical and Health Issues

The office staff attends to any child that becomes ill or hurt during school hours. The parent/guardian will be notified by telephone if the situation warrants it. In general, any child in attendance should be able to participate in school activities. The school should be informed of any illness, emotional upset, loss of sleep, medication administered, or other situations that may affect your child.

- If your child is ill or experiencing any symptoms of illnesses such as

COVID-19 (fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, constant sneezing or runny nose, or has an unexplained rash, head lice, or nits), they must be kept home, and the office notified of his/her absence. Children should be fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours before returning to school.

- Anytime your child becomes ill during the school day, we will call you to pick up your child. If you cannot be reached, we will call one of the friends or relatives you have listed to contact in case of emergencies.
- Serious accidents and injuries will be reported to the parent.
- Parents will be notified if a communicable disease has been detected at the school.

In case of emergency, the following steps will be taken:

- Parents or emergency contact will be notified.
- If the above persons cannot be reached, then the child's doctor will be contacted.
- 911 will be called in cases with serious injuries.

PARENT/TEACHER ORGANIZATION

All parents with children attending St. Stephen Catholic School are members of the Parent/Teacher Community Organization (PTCO). The objective of the PTCO is to help promote the welfare and finances of the school, and to provide educational and social opportunities for school families. Please refer to PTCO guidelines for further information. PTCO sponsors general meetings each year. The purpose of the general meetings is to communicate PTCO business.

PARENT/ADMINISTRATION MEETINGS

The administrators' offices are open daily for parents who would like to present concerns, ideas, or questions in an informal atmosphere. Administration will do its best to answer all questions while respecting individual rights and confidences. To meet with an administrator, please call the school and make an appointment with the school's receptionist.

PERSONAL ELECTRONICS/CELL PHONES

Cell phones, digital cameras, and video equipment are not to be used during the school day unless it is for an administrative/school approved project. Cell phones are to be turned off and stowed away during school hours unless otherwise directed by the teacher. Violators of this rule will have the item confiscated until a parent can claim the item in the Principal's office. **Repeated violations will be handled within the school disciplinary code. Where appropriate, infractions will be handled within established code of conduct.**

PORTFOLIOS

Portfolios are a collection of work samples that demonstrate individual student growth in a particular subject area. The collection of documentation may include student work samples; written records/anecdotal notes from teachers, assistants or the student; photographs; products of performance assessment, progress reports; checklists; rating scales, and rubrics.

Portfolios will be used during student-led conferences to demonstrate the student's learning in the classroom. Parents, teachers, and students will collectively review and discuss selected work samples and plan for future growth as a team.

REMEDIATION/RETENTION GUIDELINES (Grades PK-2)

Students in Grade Levels (e.g., Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, first grade, second grade) using skill development terms and identifiers must meet the academic requirements for his/her grade level in order to be promoted to the next grade level. If the teachers and administration feel that it is not in the best interest of the student to advance to the next grade based upon the criteria listed below, retention may be considered. In such cases, a great deal of communication will take place between parents and the school staff. Parents will be given ample opportunity to express their concerns regarding the academic needs of the student. The final decision will rest with the principal, as advised by the student's teacher.

Some questions that would influence the staff's decision regarding promotion are:

- 1) Has the student mastered basic concepts and skills in the core

subjects, especially reading, language arts, and math?

- 2) Has the student met Florida Core Standards, NGSS, and Benchmarks?
- 3) Is the student consistently able to complete classwork at grade level expectations?
- 4) Does the student assume responsibility for work assignments?
- 5) Has the student received multiple 1s and 2s on the report card for grades or ATIs?

Refer to the remediation options listed below in Grades 3-8

REMEDIATION/RETENTION GUIDELINES (Grades 3-8)

Failure to meet remediation guidelines will result in retention.

The core subjects in the Catholic schools of the Diocese of St. Petersburg are Religion, Math, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies. A student enrolled in a Catholic school who fails one core subject must participate in a remedial program. Failure of two core subjects will result in remediation or retention at the discretion of the principal. Failure of three or more core subjects will result in retention. Occasionally, a student may also be retained for maturity or social development reasons.

The following criterion applies to the remediation process:

1. Remediation must adhere to one of the following conditions:
 - Remediation is conducted by a teacher certified in the subject area, contracted by the parent, and approved by the principal (a minimum of 20 hours per subject).
 - Remediation is conducted in a remediation program approved by the principal (a minimum of 20 hours per subject).
 - Student completes the appropriate equivalent of the core subject or subjects through Florida Virtual School with a passing grade (Grades earned through Florida Virtual School will not replace a report card grade.)
2. Teacher(s) or programs providing remediation must meet the following requirements:
 - Hold current certification in the subject area in which the student needs remediation
 - Be contracted by the parent
 - Meet the school principal's approval
 - May not be the student's current teacher or have the possibility of being the student's teacher in the future
 - Neither the student's current teacher nor any teacher who presumably will be the subject area teacher in the future may tutor/provide remediation for a student.
3. Prior to the beginning of the next school year, the principal must receive:
 - Verification of attendance from the tutor,
 - Proof of proficiency in the subject area(s), including work samples and test scores.
 - Passing grade for a FLVS course.
4. The following documentation guidelines will be followed after meeting remediation guidelines:
 - The original failing grade is recorded on the permanent record and may not be altered.
 - Proof of proficiency is added to the student's cum folder.
 - Transfer Rule: Any student who fails one or more core subjects must meet the remediation guidelines of the originating school. After these criteria have been met, further assessment may be administered by the school principal to ensure proper placement.
 - Upon returning to school, students who have completed remediation will automatically be placed on academic probation for one semester
5. Academic probation includes the following:
 - Two parent-teacher conferences during the first half of the year
 - The school counselor or resource teacher meets with students regularly to offer support

Note: Students with an existing student support plan will be reviewed individually, utilizing the student support team process.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are made available for printing through the FACTS Family portal, and a link is emailed to parents and guardians each marking period.

RESOURCE PROGRAM

St. Stephen Catholic School supports students with special needs. Any student may be referred for screening and evaluation by the parent/guardian or faculty. Once a student has been screened, a student support team meeting will be held with the parents, resource personnel, the classroom teacher(s), and an administrator. Parents are encouraged and expected to participate in this process if their child is receiving support services through the Resource Program.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

We participate in the Diocesan Safe Environment Program. As a part of this program, all faculty, staff, and parent volunteers are expected to complete the online training and undergo background screening and fingerprinting. These must be updated every five (5) years through CMG Connect at <https://cmgconnect.org>.

SAFETY IN PRIVATE SPACES

The school complies with the requirements of §553.865, Florida Statutes, "The Safety in Private Spaces Act", which is consistent with the teaching and tenets of the Catholic Faith. Except where facilities are specifically designated as unisex, the school's bathroom and locker rooms/changing facilities are designated exclusively for use by biological females or biological males. Any student who willfully enters a school restroom or locker room/changing facility designated for the opposite sex and refuses to depart when asked to do so by any school personnel will be subject to disciplinary consequences as established by the school principal unless a specific statutory exception applies. This handbook provision shall be considered a part of the school's code of student conduct.

SCHOOL NEWS

The school Google Calendar is available on the school website. Weekly and upcoming events will also be announced in Tidbits.

SPORTS PROGRAM

St. Stephen Catholic School is a member of the Hillsborough Catholic Youth Sports League (HCYSL). As a member, we offer a sports program for Junior Varsity (JV) and Varsity. A fee is charged for each sport. The fees are used for Athletic League membership dues, referees, and uniforms. The fee for is \$75 per sport.

Junior Varsity (J.V) and Varsity Athletics will be offered in the following sports: Girls Volleyball, Basketball, Track and Field, and Varsity Flag Football, co-ed Varsity Soccer, Boys Track, Basketball, and Varsity Flag Football as long as there are enough students and volunteers to coach the teams.

Coaches

All coaches must complete a diocesan application, have a current Safe Environment certification, level II background screen, and must acknowledge that they have read the diocese Ethics for Coaches document.

Student Eligibility

In order for a student to be eligible to play, at least one parent must be present at the orientation meeting, which provides information. The diocesan sports physical and participation forms must be current and in the student's file.

During athletics, all participants and parents must adhere to and comply with the Catholic School Ethics for Athletics. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from participation.

See "Eligibility for Extracurricular Activities" for further information.

Athletes' Recognition

A special recognition ceremony will be held towards the end of the school year. The Principal, Assistant Principal, PE teacher, and/or Athletic Director will govern all athletic events and their participants.

Sports Transportation

Transportation to all games is the sole responsibility of parents. Arrangements must be made prior to the game day. Parents must submit written permission for their child to be transported by another parent. School employees are not generally permitted to transport children other than their own children.

TELEPHONE USE

We understand that situations may arise where a student needs to call a parent/guardian. If necessary, a teacher will give permission for the student to use the office phone. Students may not use a cell phone to call home during the school day.

TEXTBOOKS

Tuition covers a rental fee for all textbooks, electronic textbooks, consumable workbooks, apps, an art fee, a music fee, standardized

test fees, and student insurance. Textbooks should be covered. Book Sox are recommended. Parents must pay for any lost or damaged textbooks at the time of loss, including the cost for damaged books at the end of the year.

TUTORS

St. Stephen Catholic School does not support nor recommend any individual paid tutors. Tutoring services for profit may not take place on school premises. Employees of the Catholic schools in the Diocese of St. Petersburg may not tutor students that are in their current classes for compensation. Employees may tutor other students for compensation on school premises upon following school guidelines. Prior authorization is required. Parents may contract private tutors.

UNIFORM POLICY

The St. Stephen uniform policy creates equity among students and should be worn as a symbol of school pride. **All students** are to be in full uniform at all times unless otherwise directed by the school. **Written notification** is required if there are exceptional medical reasons for the student not to be in the proper uniform. Administration and the student’s homeroom teacher must be notified. Parents and students share the responsibility for following the uniform policy. Parents may be called to provide the proper uniform, or a student may be required to change into a uniform provided by the school. Students out of uniform will receive a uniform violation notification in their planner, which is to be taken home and signed. Middle school student uniform violations will be sent electronically to parents. Upon receiving three uniform violations, the student may not participate in the next jeans/free dress day.

All students must follow these general requirements:

- Uniforms must be appropriate in size and fitting (skorts, PE shorts, dresses, and jumpers should be no more than 2 inches above the knee.)
- Shirts should be tucked in at all times (except when in PE uniform)
- No tattoos (temporary or permanent), henna, or visible body piercing
- No writings or markings on the skin
- Due to the hazards of sun exposure, hats may be worn for P.E. and are encouraged for any outdoor activities. However, hats, hoodies, and scarves are not to be worn inside.
- Students may wear a watch (no smartwatches, i.e., Apple Watch, Android Watch, etc.), a cross/crucifix, or religious medal on a simple metal or rope/cord, chain, necklace, or bracelet. In addition, students may wear school-issued charm bracelets through the SSYRA reading program, and House bands or other school issued wristbands
- Girls may wear one pair of stud earrings in the earlobe (no hoops or hooks). Armbands are not allowed. Jewelry beyond the items mentioned above will be turned in to the front office to be collected by the parents.
- No inappropriate or extreme haircuts (i.e., Mohawks, fauxhawks, undercuts, side cuts, or half-shaved hairstyles).
- No hair dyes. Hair must be its natural color.
- Boys’ hair must be cut up around the ears and above the eyebrows and collar. **Girls’ hair must also be cut above the eyebrows. Boys and girls both should wear their hair out of their faces.**
- Hair accessories must match the uniform plaid or be coordinating colors

to the uniform, including elastic hair ties.

- Hair accessories should be subtle, no bandanas, hair wraps, charms, or large bows. If accessories become a distraction, teachers may remove them to be returned to parents.
- No make-up, nail polish, French manicure, gel, or fake nails
- No frayed cut-offs or ripped jeans that expose skin
- Short-shorts are not permitted at any time, including free dress days. Shorts should be Bermuda-type or no more than two inches above the knee. If longer shorts are not available, PE shorts may be worn as an alternative.
- Clothing that exposes the entire shoulder, tube tops, spaghetti straps, or similar types of clothing is not allowed. If shoulders are exposed, they must be covered by a sweater or shrug.
- Closed-toe shoes must be worn at all times. No flip-flops, open-toed sandals, backless, or shoes with heels higher than 2 inches. No boots, including cowboy boots or combat boots unless approved for a special dress day (i.e., costumes during Catholic Schools Week)
- When wearing a sports uniform to school, a shirt with a sleeve must be worn under any tank tops.

UNIFORMS

All items must be purchased from Risse Brothers School Uniforms. Pants, shorts, and khaki skorts must have the Mustang logo.

All Student Uniform Requirements and Options (Pre-K – 8)

- Red or navy fleece zip-up jacket with logo
- Navy Cardigan Sweater with logo
- Navy zip-up hooded sweatshirt
- Black shoes or black athletic shoes and shoe strings (no slip-on ballerina flats). The soles of the shoes may be white but everything else must be solid black (no colored/white logos).
- White, black, or navy ankle socks (no logos)
- White ankle socks with plaid ruffle may be worn **only** with the plaid jumper or skort.
- White or navy knee socks (girls only)
- White or navy footed tights on cold days, **no leggings**. Generally, **Leggings** are much thicker, footless, and can sometimes be worn like pants. **Tights** are somewhat sheer or knit, cover the foot, and must be worn under another garment.
- Black, brown, or navy belt must be worn with flat-front pants (boys and girls, grades 3-8)

PE Uniform Girls and Boys (Grades K – 8)

- PE shorts with logo
- PE shirt with logo
- Sweatpants with logo
- Red Sweatshirt with logo
- Black athletic shoes (see note about shoes above)

Pre-Kindergarten

GIRLS	BOYS
Short/long sleeve red knit dress PE shorts with logo PE shirt with logo Short sleeve and/or long sleeve red polo shirt with logo Pull-on pants with logo Plaid jumper with white blouse White button-down collared blouse (under jumper only) Sweatpants with logo Red sweatshirt with logo	PE shorts with logo PE shirt with logo pull-on shorts with logo Pull-on pants with logo Short/long sleeve red polo shirt with logo Sweatpants with logo Red sweatshirt with logo

Kindergarten – 2nd Grade

GIRLS	BOYS
Short/long sleeve red knit dress Plaid Skort Plaid jumper with white blouse White button-down collared blouse (under jumper only) Short/long sleeve polo with logo Pull-on pants with logo (Dec.-Feb.)	Pull-on navy shorts with logo Pull-on navy pants with logo Short/long sleeve red polo shirt with logo

3rd – 5th Grade

GIRLS	BOYS
Plaid Skort Plaid jumper White button-down collared blouse (under jumper only) Short/long sleeve red polo shirt with logo Navy pants with logo (Dec.-Feb.)	Flat front navy shorts with logo Flat front navy pants with logo Pull-on navy shorts with logo (optional for Grade 3 only) Pull-on navy pants with logo (optional for Grade 3 only) Short/long sleeve red polo shirt with logo

6th – 8th Grade

GIRLS	BOYS
Khaki skort with Mustang logo (Junior sizes only) Navy polo shirt with logo Khaki pants with logo (Dec.-Feb.)	Flat front khaki shorts with logo Flat front khaki pants with logo Navy polo shirt with logo

After School Activities

If a uniform change is required, the PE uniform or sports uniform must be worn unless otherwise directed (i.e., dance or drama).

Field Trips

The options of dress for field trips will be determined by the location and the teacher.

Free Dress Days

Students may only wear the following: Bottoms should be long jeans or pants, Bermuda shorts (no more than 2 inches above the knee), or capris. Skirts and dresses are to be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee. The top must be modest with sleeves. Jewelry and make-up restrictions apply. No yoga or spandex pants, flip-flops or open-toed shoes are allowed. Pant-like legging may be worn only with a tunic-style top that is at least fingertip in length.

Additional free dress days will include monthly Mass attendance cards, purchased birthday dress pass, accumulated Mustang Bucks reward, and other distributed passes approved by administration.

Jean Day

There will be a “Jean Day” the last Friday of each month unless there is another day that month when jeans are allowed (i.e., Valentine’s Day, etc.). Students may wear the following: **blue or black** denim in long jeans, capris, or shorts (Bermuda and no frayed cut-offs or ripped jeans that expose skin). Top: P.E. Mustang t-shirt or any school-issued t-shirt or spirit shirt. **Students may also choose to wear their full P.E. uniform (shorts & top).** All other uniform regulations still apply (see Uniform Policy).

Cold Weather

Only school logo sweaters, sweatshirts, or fleece are allowed to be worn inside the school building, the Family Life Center, and Church. **Non-uniform jackets or sweatshirts can be worn to school but must be removed in the classroom. Leggings and sweatpants worn under the uniform must also be removed in the classroom.** Non-uniform outerwear will only be permitted outside during the school day on extremely cold days over their school-issued sweater or sweatshirt. White undershirts/camisoles may only be worn if they do not show beneath the uniform (no long sleeves). **They have the choice of wearing the school sweater or sweatshirt.**

SPIRIT WEAR

Spirit wear is not part of the regular uniform. It may be worn on free-dress and jean days or as outerwear on cold days and then removed in the classroom.

VALUABLES

School administrators and staff are not responsible for valuables students bring to school. It is recommended that students leave all valuables at home. Common sense and consideration is the best guide in determining whether or not to bring personal possessions to school. In general, students should not bring toys or unusual items to school unless they are intended for a specific purpose in the classroom and have been requested by the teacher. If a student brings one of these items to school, it will be placed in the front office for the parent to pick up.

VISITORS

While we value our visitors, it is imperative that class instructional time not be interrupted. When you come to school during the day for any reason, please stop at the office and sign in. The school will provide an opportunity for parents to visit the classroom during the school year. Please look for further information in school communications.

VOLUNTEERS

The Diocese of St. Petersburg requires all school and parish volunteers to complete a Safe Environment Course through CMG Connect at cmgconnect.org and a Level II background check. Volunteers are required to pay the cost of the background check. In addition to the financial support of the school, each family is asked to provide volunteer service hours to the many different projects that support our school. Service obligations not met or resolved by the last day of school may jeopardize the child’s continued enrollment at the school. St. Stephen Catholic School greatly encourages parents to volunteer, as it benefits each child greatly to have their families involved in their school. To receive credit for your volunteer hours at school, parents must sign in and out at the reception desk. All other hours (Angels Gala, Fish Fry, etc.) will be verified with the respective committee. **Student volunteer hours do not count toward the parent obligation.** (See Volunteer Service Hours in the Financial Policy section.)

WATER BOTTLES

Students are encouraged to bring water bottles to school. All containers must have a sealed cover and may only contain water. No tumblers. Students can use the touchless bottle fillers located in both the main building and Angel’s Wing.

YEARBOOK

Yearbooks are included in school tuition and fees and will be distributed in May. A specific day will be designated for student yearbook signing.

DIocese OF ST. PETERSBURG AND ST. STEPHEN PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

This **Code of Conduct** applies to all parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors who interact with our schools and Catholic Education in the Diocese of St. Petersburg. It also applies to all parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors who are present at school and school-sponsored activities, meetings, and/or functions within and outside of school hours. As parents, guardians, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors, there is an expectation of support for the Vision and Mission of Catholic Education in the Diocese of St. Petersburg.

Code of Conduct for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of St. Petersburg

The school is a multifaceted organization comprising a diversity of populations that have distinctive relationships to one another. Relationships are at the very core of our Catholic Christian belief in our Triune (three persons in one) God. The Holy Trinity is God in

relationship! This beautiful doctrine inspires all of us in Catholic Schools, to attempt to be a living Christian community in relationship with God and others. It is essential in such a community that all members recognize and respect not only their own rights and responsibilities but also the rights and responsibilities of other members of the community and those of the school itself. "All rights have to be balanced by responsibilities because we are in relationship" (Putney, 2005).

The responsibility for promoting and upholding these core values of the school community must fall on all those with the greatest capacity to reason and control their actions. Therefore, it is the expectation of the school that all parents/guardians/caregivers/volunteers and visitors model acceptable behavior always within the school setting, at school-sponsored activities or when the school can be involved in any social or professional media. "It is incumbent upon parents to cooperate closely with the school teachers to whom they entrust their children to be educated; and in fulfilling their duty, teachers are to collaborate closely with parents who are to be willingly heard and for whom associations or meetings are to be inaugurated and held in great esteem" (*The Code of Canon Law*, Canon 796, Para. 2).

As a parent, celebrate that you play a foundational role in the development of your child's sense of justice, equity, and worth of all members of the school community. You are one of the most instrumental role models within your child's life. "Since parents have given children their life, they are bound by the most serious obligation to educate their offspring and therefore must be recognized as the primary and principal educators" (*Gravissimum Educationis*, 1965, para. 3).

This Code is designed to guide all stakeholders in their dealings with staff, other parents, students, and the wider school community. All staff and students at our Catholic schools are guided by similar codes. The Code is written in line with the school's values and expectations. The Code stands beside but does not, of course, exclude or replace, the rights and obligations of individuals under common law. All Catholic schools are private property owned by the Roman Catholic Diocese of St. Petersburg. The school joyfully exercises its responsibility to teach Catholic faith and morals in all fullness. Parents whose religious practices and beliefs run counter to Church teaching might experience conflicts as we maintain mission integrity. Sincere questioning of the practices and doctrines of the Catholic faith—whether by students or their parents—in order to more deeply understand them are welcome; but openly hostile or persistent defiance of Catholic truths or morality are a violation of the Family-School Agreement and may result in denial of admission or dismissal from the school.

The Gospel and Our Values:

We are called to emulate Jesus' call to love God and to love each other. We look to the values taught to us in scripture and the Christian belief to guide us, including **Love** (1 John 4:7-19); **Promoting Life in Abundance** (John 10:10); **Inclusion** (Luke 19: 1-10); **Reconciliation** (Luke 15: 11-32); **Compassion** (Luke 10: 30-37); **Justice** (Matthew 25: 31-460); **Liberation** (Luke 4: 16-21); **Community** (John 15); and **Hope** (Luke 24: 13-35).

In living out these Gospel values, we strive to develop the following:

- An inclusive approach including a non-judgmental and welcoming attitude towards all people
- An ability to appreciate the situation of others
- A cooperative attitude in working with others
- Open, positive and honest communication
- The ability to work civilly with other people
- Reverence for Creation
- Trusting relationships
- Responsible actions

As a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and/or Visitor, we ask that you:

- Support in words and actions the philosophy of Catholic Education
- Work in trust with the school for the common goal of achieving what is best for all
- Support your child/ren in all educational endeavors by giving praise and showing interest in school activities
- Help your child/ren to discover that it is more the process that is experienced, rather than the end-product, that makes it all worthwhile
- Model flexibility – encourage healthy problem solving
- Respect the decisions made by the administration, even if you disagree with them.
- Help your child/ren to understand that 'giving of your very best' is what matters rather than always comparing yourself against the capabilities or achievements of others

- Listen to your child/ren, but remember that a different version of the event may be interpreted by others
- Understand the importance of a healthy parent/teacher/child relationship and communicate any concerns to your school in a constructive and appropriate manner
- Validate that both parents and teachers work together for the benefit of the child/ren
- Observe the school's policies, as outlined on the school webpage and/or the school's handbook, and endeavor to support them in the home
- Cooperate where your child's behavior has overstepped accepted school standards, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, and follow specified protocol for communication with faculty/staff members
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment
- Castoff gossip and hearsay by communicating with the school and always model good manners for your child/ren
- Sustain a positive and cooperative attitude and interact positively with other parents and members of the school community
- Encourage community building with other parents in your year, level, and across the school
- Value the school community and its reputation, especially when engaging with social media
- Do not smoke or use offensive language on school premises

Rights of a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:

- To be treated with respect and courtesy by staff, students, and other parents
- To be listened to and clearly communicated with by the school regarding your child/ren's education and development
- To have confidentiality over sensitive issues respected by faculty/staff
- To be treated in a caring and polite manner
- To have a timely response to concerns raised, usually within 24-48 hours
- To be treated with professionalism by all faculty/staff members

Responsibilities of a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:

- Value and advocate for your school and its reputation. Be mindful of the hurt and damage social media may cause to faculty/staff members and other parents
- Under no circumstances approach another child while in the care of the school to address, discuss or reprimand them because of actions towards your own child/ren
- Respect the rights of faculty/staff members and other individuals
- Respect the reputation of teachers and be mindful of communications - especially social media; e.g., tone of emails
- Follow the correct procedures to resolve a grievance or conflict, as outlined in the school's handbook
- Respect teachers' preparation time before, during, and after school. Make an appointment for long discussions at a mutually convenient time. If you wish to speak to a teacher, please do not expect a meeting unless pre-arranged
- To protect our children, do not discuss any grievances or perceived failings in front of them regarding the school
- On excursions, helping in class, or on campus, parents must follow the instructions and directions of the teacher. A parent may remind students of the rules but at no time issue consequences and should refer the student to the teacher if the behavior continues
- As valued members of the school community attend and participate appropriately in school liturgies or special events, including athletics, concerts, academic and cultural events

Grievance Process for a Parent, Guardian, Caregiver, Volunteer, and Visitor:

Our Catholic schools want to work in partnership with our families. If anyone has a **current complaint, criticism, or concern**, it is expected the following steps be followed in the first instance:

1. Speak to the appropriate school person involved (e.g., class teacher) first and try to resolve the concern with mutual respect and clear communication. Where/if possible, make an appointment with the relevant person. Follow the chain of command.
2. If, for some reason, this is not possible, then make an appointment to see an administrator or other designated leadership personnel
3. The Administrator (or designee) should attempt to mediate and find resolution in the presence of both parties.
4. If having followed Steps 1-3 with no satisfaction, you may complete the online form found on the website of the Diocese of St. Petersburg - Office of Catholic Schools and Centers for further facilitation.

It is important to note that criticism regarding a faculty/staff member will only be heard if it is related to their professional conduct.

Deliberate breaches and inability to respect the Diocese of St. Petersburg – Office of Catholic Schools and Centers Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, Caregivers, Volunteers, and Visitors, or exasperating complaints, may result in the expulsion of a parent, guardian, caregiver, volunteer, and/or a visitor from a school, and/or possible termination of enrollment of their child/ren.

If your complaint relates to Sexual Abuse by a faculty/staff member towards a child in both a historical or current matter, you should contact the statewide toll-free abuse and neglect registry at 1-800-96ABUSE (1-800-962-2873) and/or law enforcement.

Parents, Guardians, and/or Caregivers, when signing off on accepting the school's policies in the Enrollment Application Form, and by the act of accepting enrollment at a Diocese of St. Petersburg Catholic School, are accepting of this Code of Conduct in its entirety.

Excerpts of this policy have been used by permission of the Diocese of Townsville, AU.

ST. STEPHEN FINANCIAL POLICY

CHURCH SUPPORT

Families are required to support a Catholic parish via Mass attendance and the use of the envelope system on a weekly basis, as noted in the school agreement that parents sign during the enrollment process. Envelope contributions from each family are reviewed periodically. To maintain the Catholic tuition rate, each parent/guardian must ensure that he/she attends weekly Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday with his/her children and participate weekly in the parish envelope system. Families who attend other churches in the Diocese must provide a new Parish Verification form each year in order to receive the Catholic parish tuition rate.

TUITION AND FEES

A tuition schedule is prepared each year based upon the anticipated financial needs for the upcoming school year, and reviewed by the School Advisory Board. All annual, semi-annual, and monthly tuition payments are made with direct withdrawals from a checking, savings, or credit card, through Facts Management Company. Parents are responsible for paying any fees associated with the use of credit or debit cards.

Parents/guardians may select one of the following tuition payment options:

- One annual payment, including a 2% discount, on Jul 10th
- Semi-annual payments, July 10th and January 10th (no discount applies)
- **Twelve monthly payments, June-May for PK students and eleven monthly payments, July-May for students in grades K-8.**

Please contact the school with questions concerning FACTS. All changes to a FACTS agreement require five (5) business days.

Tuition rates are determined by the following:

- **Catholic Parish Rate**
The family agrees to support a Catholic parish by attendance at Mass on Saturday evenings or Sunday and use of the envelope system on a weekly basis. Registered, practicing, and contributing members of a Catholic Church qualify for the Catholic Parish Rate. For St. Stephen Parishioners, the family's church envelope number must be used, submitted, and maintained weekly in the parish collection. For those who are supporting another Catholic Parish, verification is required.
- **Full Tuition**
This is a non-subsidized rate for non-practicing families. Families who are not Catholic or are not supporting and/or practicing at any

Catholic parish will be charged the non-subsidized tuition rate.

Late Tuition Payments

In the event that there are insufficient funds available for a FACTS withdrawal, the family will receive notification from FACTS that another withdrawal will be attempted on the date of the next available withdrawal. FACTS will attempt a payment three (3) times. After the 3rd unsuccessful attempt, the school will contact the parent to make arrangements for payment. If the family is not able to meet the monthly financial agreement, the family may no longer have the benefit of having the child enrolled at the school.

Enrollment/Registration Fees

Each returning family must pay a nonrefundable \$300 registration fee, including those receiving financial aid, to guarantee enrollment for the following school year. New families must pay a nonrefundable New Family Registration Fee of \$350.

In addition to the registration fee, the following fees are collected throughout the school year:

- Extended Day Fees (refer to the Extended day section)
- Unsatisfied volunteer hours (refer to the Volunteer hours section)
- Unsatisfied fundraising obligation (see fundraising below)
- 1:1 Technology device fee for middle school students
- **School Safety Fee (\$300/family to cover the cost of a security officer during school hours)**

A returned check fee of \$30 will be charged for any checks that are returned to us for insufficient funds, stop payments, or closed accounts.

FUNDRAISING

In order to keep the tuition as low as possible as well as to provide for special programs, parents are required to take an active part in the fundraising activities sponsored by the school and the Parent-Teacher Community Organization. Each family must meet a required \$200 Fundraising Obligation for the 2023-24 school year. **This obligation can only be met through participation in the Fall Walkathon and Spring Spirit Raffle.** Expected revenue from these fundraisers is factored into determining tuition fees for the school year. If you do not meet your required Fundraising Obligation, it will become necessary for you to incur an additional fee of \$200 in tuition. This amount will be billed in May.

There can be no independent fundraising. Contact the school office for details.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

Due to Diocesan insurance regulations and for the safety of your child, students may not remain on school grounds prior to school or after dismissal without being supervised. Therefore, any child arriving before 7:25 a.m. or not picked up at dismissal will automatically be sent to the Extended Day Program and assessed the normal fees.

The Extended Day Program is available to all St. Stephen Students

Morning Care: 6:30 am – 7:30 am **Aftercare:** 3:15 pm – 6:00 pm
Half-day Aftercare: 12:15 – 6:00 pm

How do we charge? We charge by the half-hour; therefore, there is no grace period. For example, students in Extended Day from 3:00 pm- 3:30 pm are charged ½ hour. If the student remains in extended day after 3:30 pm and is picked up before 4:00 pm, they will be charged 1 hour. Students in Extended Day from 3:00 pm – 5:15 pm will be charged for 2 ½ hours. All students in morning care are charged 1 hour each day. Late Pick-up: Parents picking up any child after 6:00 pm will be assessed \$15 and an additional \$15 for every 15 minutes they are late.

PAYMENT PLANS**

Hourly Plan: \$7 per hour per child and *\$5 per hour for each additional child within a family. Morning care is billed as one hour.

Hourly Bills: Bills are emailed the first week of each month. Payments are due on the 15th of each month.

Late Payments: Late payments will be assessed a \$15 late fee each

month. Families with a balance due over 30 days may be restricted from using the Extended Day Program until payment is received.

Prepayment (Discount) Plan:

Annual: \$2,700.00 - due the 1st Friday of the school year

Monthly: \$300 – due on the 1st of each month

Prepayment Bills: Prepayment is optional; therefore, bills are not distributed. In order to receive the discount benefits of our Prepayment Plans, monthly prepayments must be received by the 1st of each month, and the Annual prepayment must be received by the 1st Friday of the school year.

*\$5 per hour rate cannot be combined with Prepayment Plans which are already discounted

**rates are subject to change

IMPORTANT NOTE: Bill discrepancies must be reported within 60 days of the initial bill.

UNFULFILLED FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Students whose families have not met all their financial obligations, including tuition, extended day, lunch, lost or damaged textbooks or library books replacement fees, or volunteer hours, will not receive their final report card or diploma until these obligations have been met. Students may not start school if they have unpaid bills and are not guaranteed a place in class. **Payments received may be applied to the oldest balance due, which may affect the student's participation in other school activities or events (i.e., sports, extended day).**

VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS

In addition to the financial support of the school, each family is required to provide volunteer service hours to the many different projects that support our school. Approved volunteer hours are those in which a parent/guardian participates in a hands-on activity that directly helps the operation of the school. **Student volunteer hours will not count toward the parent obligation.** These hours can be obtained on-site or off-site. Approval of hours is made through the Administration. All off-site volunteer hours must be reported to the front office in order to be recorded. All volunteer service hours must be completed and reported by April 30th. Volunteer hours are counted from May 1st of the previous school year to April 30th of the current school year. All service hours must be completed within that time frame. Any unfulfilled hours after April 30th will be billed to the family. Only teacher-approved chaperones may receive volunteer hours for a field trip. All chaperones must be up-to-date on their safe environment certification and background check.

The following parent hour requirements will be strictly enforced for all school families:

- **Twenty** total service hours: Ten of these hours must be completed by December 31st.
- All new families are required to devote 4 hours of their total requirement to our Angels Among Us Auction.

In the event that completion of parent hours presents a significant family hardship, a family may send a written petition to the Principal of St. Stephen Catholic School describing the nature of the hardship. Each family hardship is heard and decided on a case-by-case basis, with Christian compassion and discretion.

All unfulfilled volunteer service hours will be billed at the hourly rate of \$50.00. Families whose service obligations are not met or resolved by the last day of school may jeopardize the child's continued enrollment at the school. St. Stephens Catholic School greatly encourages parents to volunteer, as it benefits each child greatly to have their families involved in their school.

WITHDRAWALS AND REFUNDS

To keep tuition rates as low as possible for the school, St. Stephen Catholic School must be able to adequately predict tuition revenues for the school year. Therefore, requests for refunds will be handled as described in this section.

Withdrawals and Tuition Refunds

The family must provide written notice when withdrawing, explaining the reason their child/ren is being withdrawn from the school. Pre-paid tuition refunds will be effective at the end of the month in which the written notice is submitted. All FACTS payments must continue through the end of the withdrawal month. The school will cancel the FACTS contract after receiving

final payment. To ensure administrative efficiency, in no event will tuitions be refunded on a partial month, prorated, or mid-month basis. For example, if a family withdraws a student on March 8, the parent is responsible for paying March's tuition in full.

Fees

Registration fees, 1:1 technology device fees, sports fees, monthly extended day fees, and all other fees, except annual prepaid extended day fees, associated with St. Stephen Catholic School shall be non-refundable. Annual prepaid extended day fees will be refunded for the unused balance of the year if a student is withdrawn from school after the discount is given back to the school.

ST. STEPHEN CHROMEBOOK USAGE POLICY

1. Introduction

The focus of the St. Stephen's Catholic School Chromebook initiative was to provide students with the tools and resources to compete and excel in an increasingly technologically competitive landscape through a fully integrated use of technology by both the students and teachers in our middle school. Increasing students' access to technology is essential in preparing students to maximize their potential, high school, and college preparation and the workplace. St. Stephen's focus is to enhance the learning and culture of the school while providing a safe environment for students to engage and enhance their religious and educational studies. All students will use Chromebooks.

As the primary educator of their children, parents are encouraged to talk to their children about the values and standards that children should follow when using the Chromebook and applications that access the internet, such as e-mail and web browsing.

Parents will purchase the students' Chromebook through the school, and they will be distributed the 1st month of school. The school will install predetermined applications (Apps & Extensions). Students and parents are required to review this document, as well as sign the accompanying agreement to protect the hardware and software inherent with this technology.

2. General Information

The procedures and information within this document apply to all middle school students' Chromebook use at St. Stephen Catholic School. Teachers may set additional requirements for use in their classrooms.

2.1 Securing your Chromebook

The Chromebook purchased through the school will include a charger, a Chromebook, and a case. Repairs will be made by school personnel.

2.2 Submitting your Chromebook

Chromebooks will be distributed in the first month of the school year. Both a parent/legal guardian and the student must sign and return the St. Stephen's Catholic School Electronic Media, Devices and Systems Acceptable Use Agreement and the attached Student Pledge for Chromebook Use before the Chromebook can be assigned to the student for the calendar year.

2.3 Setting up the Chromebook

Maximum transparency and integration of the technology, maintaining a safe and Catholic environment, and ensuring private programs are stored elsewhere are part of the set-up process. The school will install the necessary software and apps.

2.4 End of 8th Grade

At the end of 8th Grade, all school-owned apps will be removed.

3. Care of the Chromebook

The Chromebook is the student's property, but during the school calendar year, all users will follow the St. Stephen Catholic School Electronic Media, Devices, and Systems Acceptable Use Agreement. Students are responsible for the general care of the Chromebook. Chromebooks that are broken or fail to work properly must be taken to the technology coordinator as soon as possible.

General Precautions

Only use a clean, soft cloth to clean the screen.

Cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the Chromebook to prevent damage

Chromebooks must never be left in an unlocked locker, unlocked car, or any unsupervised area.

Students are responsible for keeping their Chromebook's battery charged for school use each day.

Carry and Transporting Chromebooks

Students must keep their device in the provided case to protect the Chromebook from normal treatment, and that provides suitable means for carrying the device within the school. Students must keep Chromebooks with their teams/clubs in a secured location when they are participating in after-school co-curricular activities (sports, drama, etc.), which will be designated by the A.D., coach, or club moderator.

Screen Care

The Chromebook screens can be damaged if subjected to rough treatment. The screens are particularly sensitive to damage from excessive pressure on the screen. Avoid placing too much pressure and/or weight (such as folders and workbooks) on the Chromebook screen.

Do not lean on top of the Chromebook when it is closed

Do not place anything near the Chromebook that could put pressure on the screen.

Do not place anything in the carrying case that will press against the cover.

Clear the screen with a soft dry cloth or anti-static cloth

Do not bump the Chromebook against lockers, walls, car doors, floors, etc. as it will eventually break the screen.

Parents should ensure the safe and responsible use of the Chromebook, charger, and case.

4. Using your Chromebook at School

Chromebooks are intended for use at school each day. In addition to teacher expectations for Chromebook use, school messages, announcements, calendars, and schedules may be accessed using the Chromebook. Students must bring their Chromebook to all classes unless specifically instructed not to do so by their teacher.

4.1 Chromebooks Left at Home

If students leave their Chromebook at home, they are responsible for getting the course work completed as if they had their Chromebook present. If a student repeatedly leaves their Chromebook at home, they may lose at home privileges of the Chromebook and will have to leave their Chromebooks in school. Since the use of a Chromebook will now be an essential component of our middle school curriculum, loaner Chromebooks will be available for student use in an emergency. The school reserves the right to charge a daily fee if this privilege is abused.

4.2 Chromebook Undergoing Repair

Loaner Chromebooks may be issued to students when needing repairs. However, there may be a delay in getting a Chromebook should the school not have enough to loan.

4.3 Charging your Chromebook's Battery

Chromebooks must be brought to school each day in a fully charged condition. Students need to charge their Chromebooks each evening. Repeat violations may result in student disciplinary actions and/or parent conferences.

4.4 Passwords for Chromebook and school e-mail

Chromebooks will be password protected. This password will be kept on record with the technology department and may not be changed without school permission. Students are prohibited from sharing this password with anyone else except their parents. St. Stephen Catholic School will provide a password to each student for his/her e-mail account. This password may not be changed by the student. All passwords will be distributed to parents by the school.

4.5 Screen Savers, Background Photos, and other media

St. Stephen Catholic School will do all in its power to ensure that the material on the Chromebook always conforms to our values and mission. Inappropriate media may not be used as a screensaver, background photo, sounds, etc. Inappropriate media includes, but is not limited to, the following: the presence of guns, weapons, pornographic materials, inappropriate language, tobacco, alcohol, drug, gang-related symbols or pictures, and violations will result in disciplinary action.

4.6 Personal apps and music

Parents and students may submit a request for a limited number of additional apps that meet age-appropriate guidelines. New apps may be installed after approval from the IT department at St. Stephen Catholic School. If at any time device storage/space becomes an issue, additional apps may be removed.

4.7 Sound and Music

Sound must be muted at all times unless permission is obtained from the teacher for instructional purposes.

4.8 Printing

Printing will be available within the classroom when needed. Students should talk to their teachers about which printer to use. Students will be given information and instruction on printing with the Chromebook at school.

4.9 Home Internet Access

Students are allowed to set up wireless networks on their Chromebooks.

4.10 Chromebook Inspection

Laws within the United States clearly determine the limited privacy rights of students. All Chromebook activity, including communications, internet history, or other uses, are subject to monitoring by St. Stephen Catholic School. Faculty and staff of St. Stephen Catholic School may inspect and, if they deem necessary confiscate, any student's Chromebook at any time without prior notice. The parent/guardian will then be contacted, and a meeting will be scheduled. Offending material will be deleted, and, if warranted, disciplinary action will be taken.

5. Managing your files & saving your work

5.1 Saving documents to the Chromebook

It is recommended that any work students create on their Chromebook is backed to a storage location. Students will be provided with the necessary training in how to back up their work.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that work is not lost due to electronic failure or accidental deletion. Chromebook malfunctions are not an acceptable excuse for not submitting work; therefore, students should back up all work.

6. Software/Apps on Chromebooks

6.1 School Installed Software

The software installed by St. Stephen Catholic School must remain on the Chromebook and be easily accessible at all times. From time to time, the school may add or remove software for use in a particular course or a change in the overall curriculum.

Periodic checks of Chromebooks will be made to ensure that students have not removed the required apps or added apps that are not in accordance with school policy.

6.2 Procedure for Re-loading software

In the event a Chromebook needs to be restored to factory settings or the parent/guardian decides to replace and/or upgrade the device. The device will need to be submitted to the Technology Department for resetting and app installation.

6.3 Software Upgrades

Upgrade versions of the licensed software/apps are available from time to time. Upgrades may be done remotely during the school day, or students may be required to check in their Chromebooks for periodic updates and syncing.

7. Acceptable Use of Chromebook

7.1 Statement of Responsibility

The use of St. Stephen Catholic School resources is a privilege, not a right. The technology resources provided by the school are not transferable or extended to people or groups outside the school and are terminated when a student is no longer enrolled in the school.

This policy is provided to make all users aware of the responsibilities associated with the efficient, ethical, and lawful use of technology resources. If a person violates any section of this policy, privileges may be limited or terminated, access to the school's technology resources may be denied, and the appropriate disciplinary action shall be applied. The St. Stephen Catholic School Electronic Media, Devices, and Systems Acceptable Use Agreement shall be applied to student infractions.

7.2 Parent /Guardian Responsibilities

Talk to your children about values and the standards that your children should follow on the use of the internet just as you would on the use of all media information sources such as television, telephones, movies, social media, and radio.

Parents should monitor their student's usage (see Appendix for guidelines).

7.3 School Responsibilities

Provide internet and e-mail access to its students.

Provide internet blocking of inappropriate materials as able.

Provide staff guidance in training, ability to aid students in doing research, and help assure student compliance of St. Stephen Catholic School Electronic Media, Devices, and Systems Acceptable Use Agreement.

Provide training for teachers, students, and parents in the use of technology.

7.4 Student Responsibilities include:

- Obeying general school rules concerning behavior and communication that apply to network use and according to the St. Stephen Catholic School Electronic Media,

Devices, and Systems Acceptable Use Agreement. This policy is available online and as a hard copy given to each student.

- Using computer/devices in a responsible and ethical manner
- Using all technology resources in an appropriate manner so as not to damage school equipment
- Helping St. Stephen Catholic School protect our computer system/device by contacting an administrator or teacher about any security problems they may encounter
- Monitoring all activity on their account(s)
- Turning off and securing their Chromebook after they are done working to protect their work and information.
- Maintaining individual Chromebooks and keeping them in good working order.
- Notifying the teacher or staff member immediately if a student should receive e-mail or other electronic messages containing inappropriate or abusive language or if the subject matter is questionable.
- Chromebooks that are stolen while on school property must be reported immediately to a teacher and/or the Technology Department.

7.5 Student Activities Strictly Prohibited

- Illegal installation or transmission of copyrighted material
- Any action that violates existing School policy or public law
- Sending, accessing, uploading, downloading, or distributing offensive, profane, threatening, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit materials
- Use of chat rooms, sites selling papers, book reports, or other forms of student works for the purpose of plagiarism
- Use of any messaging services unless authorized by a teacher for classroom use during a lesson
- Use of outside data disks or external attachments without prior approval from administration
- Changing of Chromebook settings (exceptions include personal settings such as font size, brightness, etc.)
- Gaining access to other student accounts, files and/or data
- Bypassing the St. Stephen Catholic School web filter through a web proxy

7.6 Legal Propriety

Comply with trademark and copyright laws and all license agreements. Ignorance of the law is not immunity. If you are unsure, ask a teacher or parent.

7.7 Student Discipline

The discipline procedure at St. Stephen Catholic School Handbook addresses serious and major offenses such as stealing and destruction of school or personal property, which apply to the Chromebook device. Violations of this Chromebook Usage Policy, the Student Pledge for Chromebook Use, and the St. Stephen Catholic School Electronic Media, Devices and Systems Acceptable Use Agreement may result in disciplinary measures, including, but not limited to, suspension and/or expulsion of the student from the school. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

8. Protecting & Storing Your Chromebook

8.1 Chromebook Identification

Student Chromebooks will be labeled in the manner specified by the school. Chromebooks can be identified by the record of the serial number.

8.2 Storing Your Chromebook

When students are not using their Chromebooks, they should be stored appropriately. Nothing should be placed on top of the Chromebook when stored. Students are encouraged to take their Chromebook home every day after school, regardless of whether or not they are needed.

9. Repairs

Parents are responsible for the cost of repairs to Chromebooks. The school will provide a loaner Chromebook, if one is available, while the student's Chromebook is being repaired.

10. Hold Harmless/Indemnification

Each parent/guardian/student agrees not to sue and hereby releases, waives, discharges, holds harmless, indemnifies, and defends St. Stephen Catholic School and the Catholic Diocese of St. Petersburg, as well as their respective employees, personnel, staff, volunteers, agents, directors, affiliates, and representatives, from any and all liability, losses, damages, claims, actions, and causes of action of every nature for any and all known or unknown, foreseen or unforeseen, bodily or personal injuries, property

damage, or other loss, whether claimed by the student, parent, legal representative, or any third party, relating in any way to the use of the Chromebook by the student.

Appendix

Parent Guidelines for Monitoring Student Chromebook Usage

St. Stephen Catholic School recommends the following actions for monitoring student use of their Chromebooks:

- Routinely check the search and URL history to view the sites your student has visited. If the history is being deleted, discuss the importance of leaving it available for you to monitor.
- Require students to use the Chromebook in a common area of the house so you can monitor the websites they are viewing.
- Charge the Chromebooks in a common area of the house each evening.
- Know all passwords that your student has created.
- Remind students of the importance of keeping private information and passwords confidential. They should not share their information with anyone.
- Remind students that they are responsible for what is on their device, even if someone else put it there. Devices should not be shared.

Student Pledge for Chromebook Use

- I will take good care of my Chromebook
- I will never leave my Chromebook unattended
- I will never loan out my Chromebook to other individuals
- I will know where my Chromebook is at all times
- I will charge my Chromebook's battery daily prior to coming to school
- I will keep food and beverages away from my Chromebook
- I will not disassemble any part of my Chromebook or attempt any repairs
- I will protect my Chromebook by only carrying it in a case provided by my parent/guardian
- I will use my Chromebook in ways that are appropriate and educational, meeting St. Stephen Catholic School expectations.
- I will not deface the serial number on any Chromebook
- I will follow the expectations outlined by St. Stephen Catholic School Electronic Media, Devices, and Systems Acceptable Use Agreement while at school, as well as outside the school day.
- I will file a report to the teacher or administration in case of theft, vandalism, and other acts that occur outside school.
- I will be responsible for all damage or loss caused by neglect or abuse.
- I understand that I may lose my Chromebook privileges as a result of my inappropriate behavior, as per the consequence chart found in the student handbook.

ST. STEPHEN EXTENDED DAY (CLUB MUSTANG) PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

The St. Stephen Catholic School extended day program, Club Mustang, was created to assist families who need a safe, supervised environment for their children to stay before and after school. The extended day coordinator and aides work to ensure that Club Mustang is meeting the social, emotional, and physical needs of all students in the program through a variety of indoor and outdoor age-appropriate enrichment activities and study time.

PICK-UP PROCEDURE

Parents should list anyone who may be picking up their child from extended day in the Family Portal under Emergency Contacts and Pick Up (EC/PU). If you need to add or change the people allowed to pick up your child, please contact the school office.

Everyone picking up a child from extended day must show identification or a St. Stephen Catholic School issued car tag before students will be released. If the pick-up person is not on the list of emergency contacts, parents will be called.

Students will not be released from extended day until after car line is completed at approximately 3:15 PM each day.

SCHEDULE

Students are checked in at 3:15 pm and are given time to have a snack and play outside. Students should bring a snack and a drink when attending Club Mustang aftercare. Some snacks and popcorn during movies may be provided.

Students play outside until 4 pm. Students have the opportunity to play basketball, soccer, 4-square, or use the playground equipment. We also have playground toys for students who prefer unstructured play.

From 4 PM until 4:30 students are to work silently on homework Monday through Thursday.

Fridays are FUN DAYS!!! Weekly movie choices will be posted for parents on the extended day door. All movies are rated G.

On half-days, students enjoy arts and crafts and movies.

CLUB MUSTANG PROCEDURES

Students are assigned to different locations based on their age/grade.

1. All students will go directly to their assigned room to check-in with their Club Mustang aide.
2. Backpacks will have an assigned space to be stored.
3. Any student who does not have homework with them should read or study.
4. All students are to work in **silence** from 4:00-4:30 PM minutes on homework or read a book if they don't have or have forgotten their homework.
5. Students are not allowed to return to their classrooms to retrieve forgotten materials per administration.
6. The Club Mustang coordinator and assistants are available to help students with homework.
7. Students may work cooperatively on their homework.
8. Students will pack up for dismissal before they are allowed to play or engage in extended day activities.
9. Students will clean up after themselves at all times. If you take it out, you put it back where it belongs.
10. Students will take the utmost care with extended day games, toys, and materials.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

All students are to observe the discipline policy as outlined in the student handbook, "In following the guidelines of *Project Achieve and 1-2-3 Magic*, each child must learn that every action or activity, good or bad, will bring about a consequence. The goals of this program are to stop unacceptable behaviors, encourage good behaviors, and establish a peaceful and productive [extended day experience]."

1. Minor infractions will be given three warnings with a time-out upon the third warning.
2. Time-outs will either be supervised, quiet sitting, or walking the perimeter of the playground.
3. Once a student has received three time-outs for the same offense, the parents will be notified in writing via a Club Mustang disciplinary review. Examples of minor infractions would be arguing, name-calling, playing improperly on or with sports equipment/classroom materials.
4. Major infractions (see the SSCS Discipline policy) will receive a Club Mustang Incident Report. Three Incident Reports will result in an SSCS disciplinary report and a conference with the Principal and/or Asst. Principal.

ELECTRONICS

Students **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to use cell phones during extended day hours. Chromebooks/i-Pads will be closely monitored for appropriate sites and games during extended day hours. Non-school-approved sites will not be permitted. After one warning, the student's tablet will be removed and given to the parent/guardian upon arrival along with an Incident Report.

DAMAGES

Parents/guardians are obliged to pay for damages to school property caused by their child, including lost or damaged equipment, toys, and learning materials for the extended day rooms and the playground.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

All families acknowledged the handbook during enrollment or continuous enrollment in 2023 and agreed to read the updated handbooks each year. You have now completed the reading of your 2023-24 St. Stephen Catholic School UPDATED PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK and FINANCE STATEMENT. Some changes have been made and new material added to the 2023-24 Handbook. All changes are highlighted. Please discuss the contents as a family and realizing the need to abide by rules and regulations to establish smooth communication between home and school. The electronic version of this Handbook includes the Chromebook Usage policy and Extended Day Handbook. An updated handbook will be available each August in the Family Portal. The administration of St. Stephen Catholic School retains the right to amend the Handbook. Parents will be notified in writing if changes are made during the school year. The administration reserves the right to waive any disciplinary regulation.