

St. James School Parent/Student Handbook

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A Message from the Principal...

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the St. James School Family. We have prepared this handbook to acquaint you with our philosophy, our programs, and our policies. It should prove an easy reference for you and your children whenever any question on policy or procedure arises. We ask you to read it carefully, discuss it with your children, and keep it in a handy location.

We hope that the information included in the handbook will assist us in our efforts to communicate well with you, our parents. Please feel free to contact us if we can be of any assistance to you. Remember that good communication is a key to success in your child's education. You may call the school office any time at 847-432-2277.

Sincerely,
Ms. Mary Kay Tschanz

St. James School Mission Statement

St. James School advances the educational mission of the Church by serving students of various cultures, who come from the local faith and military communities. St. James provides all students an opportunity for educational excellence and religious formation in the Catholic intellectual tradition, and challenges them with a curriculum of the highest caliber. Faith formation is an integral part of the entire educational experience, not a discrete course. We integrate Christian values into each child's learning experience and social interactions, calling on them to learn how to respect each other and all life. We educate the whole child, body and mind, heart and soul, in order ***to prepare the children of our school to be contributing Christian citizens of tomorrow's society.***

SAINT JAMES SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

We at St. James School believe that Catholic education develops in children an attitude of true Christianity. We believe that the purpose of education is the growth and development of the whole person, mind, body and spirit.

RELIGIOUS DIMENSION

We believe:

1. The Gospel message must be taught and sacramental preparation must be provided.
2. The children must be taught Christian moral values in the home, in the classroom, through regular instruction, by the positive example of the family, faculty, and staff on a daily basis
3. Students must be provided with opportunities for prayer, worship, and Christian service to the community.

THE WAY CHILDREN LEARN

We believe:

1. Children learn best when they are fully involved in learning activities. We also believe that the depth and style of involvement should correlate with their physical and intellectual level of development.
2. All students have the ability to learn and are responsible for their own learning; therefore, they should have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential as individuals committed to their vocation as students.

ROLE OF CURRICULUM

We believe:

1. The students and faculty are partners in learning. Through our educational programs we foster parent awareness of student progress, strive to create and enhance in each individual a positive self concept, incorporate all aspects of quality and sound moral education, teach the basic skills and augment the skills of critical thinking and self-direction necessary to function in future society as a contributing person.
2. The parents are the primary educators of their children with their teachers as their partners. To achieve this, communication and cooperation between and among students, parents, and staff is vital to a healthy Catholic school environment.
3. The utilization by the teacher of a variety of learning methods benefits the individual needs of each student. We believe our purpose is to enhance and expand the students' interests and skills. The students are expected to participate in the learning process appropriate to their developmental levels, and take responsibility for their actions.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

BOARD of SPECIFIED JURISDICTION

The Board is normally made up of nine to fifteen members; school parents, parishioners, and community members/leaders . Members are appointed by the pastor for three year terms. Three vacancies occur each year. Meetings with the pastor and principal are held monthly and are open to parents and other interested parties. Committees meet monthly and parents are encouraged to join a committee of their choice.

The major responsibilities of the Board are to promote the ministry of Catholic elementary school education, to formulate local school policies that will enable the school to reach its agreed upon goals, to work with the pastor and principal on creating and reviewing the annual school budget, to determine the sources of funding; and to act as the public relations arm of the school.

PAFA

The Parents and Friends Association is the official parents' organization of St. James School. Membership is open to all parents, parishioners, benefactors, faculty, staff and friends of St. James School. The main objectives of the association are to enhance the school's educational programs by providing equipment and support for special projects; and to aid financially, and otherwise, the administration and faculty. Secondary objectives of PAFA are to encourage cooperation and dialog between parents and educators to maintain a harmonious relationship between school and community.

PARENTAL SUPPORT

Parents are asked to cooperate fully with the school in the total education of their children. If the need arises, the Chair of the BSJ, the principal, and pastor shall address the responsibilities of citizenship with any individuals whose actions are seriously undermining the school.

St. James accepts children into the school at each child's level of ability. Given the guidance and encouragement of teachers and parents, the student is expected to put forth effort to maintain a satisfactory level of progress in keeping with his/her own ability. The faculty and administration encourage parents to participate actively in the education of their children. We welcome the services of volunteers and are pleased to have visitors to the classroom. However, we ask that you request permission of the teacher involved, and come by appointment. Visitors must report to the office to sign in before entering classrooms. Please do not enter classrooms during school hours without permission.

Teacher conferences should be scheduled in advance. Parents should not expect to meet with a teacher between 8:00 a.m. and 3:10 p.m.

It is not appropriate for parents to congregate for purposes of socializing in the hallways outside the classrooms during school hours. The Parish Hall is always available for parents' use. In the event that this occurs, the principal will request that parents move to the Parish Hall.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

This school abides by the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act with regard to parents' rights of access to their child's school records. The school also abides by the provisions of the Illinois law regarding the right of access of a non-custodial parent to his or her child's school records.

Release of copies of school records to the non-custodial parent is granted unless there is a court order to the contrary.

It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the principal with an official copy of the court order.

Unless informed otherwise and in writing and with adequate evidence that a parent is not permitted to have unqualified access to the child, the school may release a child to a non-custodial parent after school hours or allow said parent to visit a child outside the school hours.

ADMISSIONS

Policy: St. James admission policy is non-discriminatory. Children of any race, religion, color, national and ethnic origin are welcome. In order to avoid any misunderstanding later, any custody arrangements should be made known at the time of registration.

Preschool: The preschool program is designed for children who are between 3-5 years of age. Contact the school office for the tuition rate which differs from the regular school tuition. Children in the program must be potty trained.

At the time of enrollment parents should present:

- Child's birth certificate
- Medical records
- Baptismal records (if Catholic)

Kindergarten: A child entering kindergarten must be 5 years of age on or before September 1st of that year.

At the time of enrollment parents should present:

- Child's birth certificate
- Medical records
- Baptismal records (if Catholic)

Older Children: Parents should present the proper transfer forms from the sending school, as well as:

- St. James School application
- Student's report card
- Child's birth certificate
- Medical records
- Baptismal records (if Catholic)

PHYSICAL / DENTAL / EYE EXAMINATIONS

State law requires all children entering preschool, kindergarten, grade 6, and new to the school to have a complete physical. Dental exams are needed for Kindergarten, grade 2 and grade 6. Eye exams are needed for all Kindergarten students. Completed forms are to be brought to the school office. No child whose medical records, as to current physical examinations, immunizations, and lead tests are incomplete, will be allowed in school after October 15.

BEFORE CARE and AFTER CARE

St. James School provides a Before Care and After Care Program. The Before Care program begins at 6:30 a.m. The After Care program begins at dismissal and runs until 6:00 p.m. Information on fees and other aspects of the program are available in the school office.

ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL HOURS:

K - 8	8:05 a.m. - 3:05 a.m.
Preschool	8:30 a.m.. - 11:00 a.m. 12:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential if an effective educational program is to be conducted. However, students with symptoms of contagious illnesses should be kept home for their good and the good of others.

Students should also be free of fever for 24 hours before returning to school.

TARDINESS

Any student not in the classroom with his/her class at 8:15 a.m. is considered tardy and must report to the office, explain the reason to the school secretary and obtain a tardy slip before admission to class. Frequent tardiness may result in making up the time after school. Parents will be notified. Exceptions to this rule are made for students who ride the District 112 bus or Metra train. Both parents and students must understand the importance of being at school on time. Persistent tardiness is unacceptable. ***Parents MAY NOT accompany the child to his/her classroom at any time.***

EARLY ADMITTANCE

Pupils should not arrive on the playground before 8:05 A.M. The placement of traffic cones and teacher supervision begins at that time. Early admittance to the building is permitted **ONLY** if authorized by a teacher. In case of inclement weather, all pupils may enter early and go directly to the parish hall.

STUDENT ABSENCE

Please phone the school office at 847- 432-2277, between 8:00-9:00 A.M. if your child is to be absent. This is most important to ensure your child's safety. If you have not called the office, you will be called. When your child returns to school, a written excuse must be presented to the teacher before admission to class. Frequent absence could be reason for retention or summer school attendance.

MISSING RECESS

Students too ill to be outdoors for the noon recess should remain home until they are healthy, as there is no provision to supervise them.

PROLONGED ABSENCE

A planned family vacation that requires a prolonged absence from school should be discussed with the principal and the teacher well in advance of the departure to determine the advisability of such a plan.

EARLY DISMISSAL

If it is absolutely necessary for a pupil to be excused early for a medical or dental appointment or some family emergency, please send a written request to the office for the principal's signature.

For the child's safety, we ask that you or an authorized adult come to the office to meet your child and to sign the dismissal book. No student will be permitted to leave the building unless accompanied by an identified adult.

WHEN A CHILD BECOMES SICK AT SCHOOL

When your children become ill during the school day, they are sent to the office. Our secretary, Mrs. Julie Leske, will take the child's temperature, ask about symptoms and together with the principal will determine whether or not to call parents. We normally will not call a parent unless the child is truly ill. If you are called it is expected that you will find a way to pick up the sick child in as little time as possible. We do not have the ability to care for sick children for long periods of time.

If a parent cannot be reached we will call the people listed on your emergency contact form. This contact person will be asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. Please keep your child home for 24 hours after a fever has subsided or other symptoms are gone.

Please keep emergency information updated.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

Every effort is put forth to prevent accidents. In the event one occurs, the parent will be contacted and the school will follow the directions as specified by the parent on the emergency procedure form. The school completes an emergency information sheet letting parents know the nature of the accident and steps taken by school personnel. Parents are asked to sign this form.

ARRIVAL and DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

MORNING DROP-OFF:

- 1.) Enter school parking lot from Lewellyn at northwest entrance.
- 2.) Drive to south end of lot, turn left as in a giant U-turn.
- 3.) Drop children off from **passenger side** of car at southeast entrance to lot.
- 4.) Proceed out of lot at northeast exit.
- 5.) If you **MUST** park (preschool, scheduled teacher meeting, important school business, etc.), park along the East or West side of the parking lot by the fence. Otherwise, please drop off your child and promptly exit the parking lot. **THERE WILL BE NO PARKING OTHER THAN ALONG THE WEST OR EAST SIDE OF THE LOT. PLEASE DO NOT TAKE UP THESE SPACES UNLESS YOU HAVE A VALID REASON AS THE SPACES ARE LIMITED.**

AFTERNOON PICK-UP:

- 1.) Enter lot by 3:00 P.M. through the northwest entrance.
- 2.) The entrance will be closed promptly at 3:00 P.M.
- 3.) Remain in parked car to wait for children.
- 4.) All cars must BACK INTO parking spaces along west and east fence.
- 5.) Remain parked until teacher and safety patrol signal that it is safe to depart. That signal will be given as close to 3:10 as possible. It will not be given until all children are off the lot and in their cars.
- 6.) Proceed out of the lot at the northeast gate.

NOTE: If you arrive to pick up your child after the parking lot has been cleared, you must park and go to the office to pick up your child and walk out together.

- **Door 1:** Main security door by the library.
- **Door 2:** Security door by preschool (stone courtyard).
- **Door 3:** Back parking lot door by PK 3 and playground.
- **Door 4:** Funston North glass door.
- **Door 5:** Funston South glass door.
- **Door 6:** Courtyard door by Room 104.

STUDENT ARRIVAL:

1. All students in grades K-8 will be allowed to enter the building through Door 4 between 8:05-8:15. Supervision and placement of cones will begin at 8:00 a.m.
2. Children dropped off before 8:05 a.m. **will be unsupervised.** Parents must be aware of this.
3. The first bell will ring at 8:05 a.m. After the bell rings the teachers will take attendance. If not present by the second bell at 8:15 a.m., a child will be considered tardy and must report to the office for a tardy slip.
4. Prayer begins at 8:17 a.m. All children are expected to be present for Morning Prayer.
5. Parents of K-8 children who also have preschoolers will drop off the older children in the lot and then should park and bring the preschooler into the school. They should enter by Door 3. I encourage parents and their preschoolers to join us in church for Morning Prayer. If needed, the teachers' aides will supervise these children from 8:20-8:30 a.m..
6. PK 3 parents who do not have children in K-8 should park in the lot and enter the school through Door 3.
7. PK 4 parents may park on North Ave. and enter the building through Door 1.
8. We will assign parking spaces for faculty members and staff so that the parking spaces on North Ave. are open for PK parents.

9. For the safety and security of the children, we are making Door 1 the only main entrance. Door 2 should be used only as a *handicapped accessible entrance*. Mothers with strollers may enter this door, but all other parents, students, visitors, and delivery person will use only Door 1.

STUDENT DISMISSAL:

1. Grades K-8 are dismissed at 3:05 p.m. through the North Funston door (Door 4).
2. Bus students are dismissed at 3:05 p.m. through the South Funston door (Door 5).
3. Train students are to report to Room 204 until their 3:20 p.m. dismissal time for the train.
4. After-Care students are to wait in the primary hallway until the teacher arrives to walk them to the After-Care room.

DRESS CODE

GIRLS' UNIFORM

- (K-4) Uniform plaid jumper, white perma-press blouse with choir boy collar
- (4-8) Uniform plaid skirt with navy vest, white perma-press blouse with pointed collar or white turtleneck.
- Girls in grades 4 and 5 may wear either jumper or skirt.
- **St. James** Sweatshirt or cardinal red uniform sweater, a uniform blouse must be worn under the sweatshirt at all times.
- Girls' jumpers/skirts are available at Dennis Uniform Co. only.

BOYS' UNIFORM

- Navy blue trousers (not jeans, cargo pants, or patch pockets); white long or short sleeve shirt with a collar, or white turtleneck (no mock turtlenecks). Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- BELTS are required with slacks designed with belt loops.
- **St. James** Sweatshirt or cardinal red uniform sweater, a uniform shirt must be worn under the sweatshirt at all times
- Boys trousers and shirts may be purchased at any department store.

*Dress Down Days, once per month on Special Lunch Days. Dress must be appropriate.

SUMMER UNIFORM

- Summer uniform for boys and girls consists of navy blue walking shorts.
- White shirts are listed above. Shorts may NOT be worn on days we attend Mass.
- Dates are Aug. – Sept. 30 and May 1 - June

SHOES

- Uniform shoes are required. Uniform shoes must be solid black leather with a solid back. They must be low heel and toe (less than 1 inch) with rubber or leather soles
- No stripes, trademarks, pumps, colored laces, lights or platforms.
- No winter boots or combat boots allowed in the classroom.

SOCKS

- Girls may wear solid white, navy blue, gray or cardinal knee socks or tights. Bobby socks will be allowed with shorts.
- ***NO leggings or sweatpants are permitted except on the playground.***
- Boys may wear solid white or navy blue ankle socks.

DRESS UP DAYS

- During the school year there are specific days specified as “out of uniform days”.
- Unless the day is specially designated as a jean day, the days are “dress up days.
- Dress up means DRESS-UP. Please use good judgment for proper attire.
- If a child comes with inappropriate clothing, parents will be required to deliver the school uniform before the student will be admitted to class.

HAIRSTYLES

Fad fashion hairstyles are to be avoided on boys and girls. No spiked or teased hairstyles are allowed. Hair must remain natural, God-given color. Boys’ hair must be trimmed neatly across the back of the neck in a straight cut. Bowl type cuts with long hair on top and shaved sides are also unacceptable. Girls’ hair must be neat and groomed so as to be combed away from the face and eyes. The school reserves the right to determine proper grooming. Any hairstyles that draw attention are not allowed.

MAKE-UP / JEWELRY

In general, the wearing of jewelry should be avoided by both boys and girls. Religious medals and crosses are permitted. If girls have pierced ears they should wear simple stud type earrings. Long dangling or large earrings are not

part of the uniform. The boys' uniform does not include earrings. Any other form of body piercing or tattooing is not allowed. Use of make-up is not allowed, i.e., lipstick, eye-liner, eye shadow, rouge.

STUDENT PROGRESS

ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

Assessment of academic growth is an ongoing process at St. James. Each spring, students in grades 3-8 will be administered a standardized achievement test to provide teachers with a measure of the academic growth which took place during the school year. Parents receive a copy of the results and are encouraged to discuss the results with the child's teacher(s). The Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools has mandated the use of the Terra Nova Tests in all of our schools.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued each trimester in 14 week intervals. The primary and upper grade report cards will vary in format and in style of reporting. In an effort to insure timely communication, mid-trimester reports are issued to Grades 4-8 during periods between report cards. If a student has a number of incomplete assignments due to absence, an I (incomplete) will be issued until the assignments are completed.

GRADING SCALE - Grades 4-8

93-100	A
85-92	B
78-84	C
70-77	D
69-below	F
I	Incomplete

(Work must be completed within 5 days to remove the incomplete. Incomplete assignments revert to a zero.)

HONOR ROLL

Students in Grades 4-8 who maintain a high scholastic average, good effort and conduct are eligible for the honor roll. The purpose is to recognize students for their academic achievement and to encourage everyone to excel. The following are the guidelines by which it is determined whether or not a student qualifies for Honor Roll status:

High Honors:

- *93% average with no grade below 90%
- *No effort grade of U (Unsatisfactory)
- *No unsatisfactory marks in work habits or attitudes
- *No negative comments regarding behavior, effort, work/study habits

Honors:

- *90% average with no grade below an 85%
- *No effort grade of U (Unsatisfactory)
- *No unsatisfactory marks in work habits and attitudes
- *No negative comments regarding behavior, effort, work/study habits

STUDENT RECOGNITION

Each trimester we will recognize students for their efforts and achievements. In June, a formal Honors Assembly will recognize students for service to the community and for academic achievements. An Athletic Banquet is held to recognize those who have participated in athletic programs. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend school programs which recognize student achievement.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Official Parent-Teacher Conferences for grades K-8 are held twice a year in November and March. Our November conferences are mandatory. Either parent or teacher may request a conference at the March session. A schedule of appointments will be sent home with your child. All parents are asked to make every effort to abide by the schedule and to take advantage of the opportunities to communicate with the teachers.

PARENT-TEACHER CONTACTS

The school encourages frequent parent-teacher contacts. *If you wish to have a conference with a teacher, please arrange for it in advance.* Such conferences are not to interfere with the teacher's classroom schedule. No "hallway" or "before class conferences" will be held. Call the school office, 847- 432-2303 to arrange a time appropriate for you and the teacher. Each faculty/staff member has their own e-mail address. The format is the first letter of the first name then last name. This is followed by @stjameschoolhwd.org (ex. mvitulli@stjameschoolhwd.org.)

HOMEWORK

Homework is the natural outgrowth of a class activity. It is designed to help students review, understand, extend, or enrich the subject matter presented in class. Homework can also be an invaluable DIAGNOSTIC TOOL to the

student and the teacher. Homework errors can pinpoint specific stumbling blocks to mastery of a particular subject area. Focusing on the type of error being made may provide a break-through for the student as understanding replaces misunderstanding.

HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to do some homework daily, be it written work, study or reading. Teachers will generally try to avoid assigning specific written homework over weekends and holidays. However, if a student has poor study habits or is not able to budget his/her time effectively during the week, it is possible that weekends may have to be spent “catching up”, that is, completing overdue assignments. To help avoid this, an ASSIGNMENT BOOK is required, (Grades 3-8). The Student Council will provide one for each student. We will be piloting an online homework board this year.

TIME SPENT ON HOMEWORK

The amount of time spent on homework varies with each student. Work habits, attitude and home conditions are all factors.

LONG RANGE HOMEWORK BENEFITS

These may be considered side benefits, but they are important in the student’s development.

- Effective budgeting of time.
- Development of good work habits.
- Opportunities for more self direction.
- Greater use of community resources.
- Personal growth in responsibility.

PARENTAL COOPERATION

The school and the home are partners in a student’s progress. It is important that the parent cooperates with the teacher. We ask you.....

.....to provide good conditions for study.

.....to check the assignment notebook every night.

.....to encourage your child to complete the assignments.

.....to check to see that the work is done.

.....to contact the teacher IF:

--your child finds it difficult to complete the work within a reasonable amount of time.

--in your judgment the child has insufficient homework.

ALWAYS avoid the temptation to **DO** the assignment for your child.

MISSING ASSIGNMENTS DUE TO ILLNESS

Students who are absent from school due to illness are expected to make up the work they have missed. After an absence of two days, a call should be made to the office and assignments and books picked up in the office between 3:00 and 3:15 p.m.

MISSING ASSIGNMENTS DUE TO FAMILY TRAVEL

Travel is educational, but it does not provide the requirements for promotion under State Law. It is recommended to keep such travel to a minimum. It is not required that the teachers prepare a program of studies in advance of such an absence. After the student returns, it is the responsibility of the parents and the student to determine what work has been missed and what has to be done to make up the work. Contact the teacher.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The primary reason for the existence of St. James School is to provide for the Catholic/Christian development of the students who are enrolled. The clergy, administration, and faculty cooperate in the development of curriculum, liturgies, and other religious activities to fulfill this obligation.

LITURGY

School liturgies prepared by the students are celebrated each month. The monthly school calendar lists these religious services. The children will attend Mass weekly at 8:20 a.m., on First Friday's, holy days of obligation and other special feasts and occasions. Parents are always welcome to attend these meaningful liturgical celebrations. We know that parents will not assume that this weekly Mass takes the place of the Sunday obligation.

Prayer is another important dimension of our religious training. Every school day begins with all school prayer service. Students are expected to learn formal prayers in order to communicate with God, but they are also encouraged to talk to Him informally during the day. In this way, the power of prayer is made meaningful to the students.

Catholic students in grades 5-8 have the opportunity to be trained as *Altar Servers*. This form of participation in the spiritual life of the school and parish is highly encouraged.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Special parent meetings will be held prior to the children's first reception of the sacraments. The purpose of these meetings is to prepare parents and children

for the faith commitment required. Attendance at these meetings is mandatory for all involved. First Reconciliation and First Communion are received in Grade 2. Confirmation is received in Grade 8.

ACADEMICS

GENERAL CURRICULUM

The required academic areas for Catholic elementary schools are: religion, language arts, (reading, writing, speaking, listening), mathematics, science, social studies, art, music and physical education. In order to ensure quality instruction and provide for the individual needs of each student, classes in grade 4-8 are departmentalized. Each subject area curriculum for each grade level is described in length in the *Curriculum Handbook*.

COMPUTER PROGRAM

St. James has a newly renovated and updated computer/technology lab. All students in grades K-8 have regular access to the lab and to computers in the classroom. They receive instruction in general use of the computer, keyboarding, word processing, spreadsheet, database, PowerPoint, etc. Instruction is grade appropriate. All parents and students must sign the school's Acceptable Use Consent Form, which includes parents' permission for the student to access the internet. Students may only use the USB data sticks purchased through the school. Only school material may be kept on this stick! No others will be allowed in the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Attendance: The gym class is a regular academic session. Therefore, the students are to be at every class. It is the responsibility of the student to inquire about any material presented or tested when a class was missed.

Participation: The students are expected to be dressed and ready for participation for every class. If the student can not participate due to illness or injury, a doctor's medical excuse is required as well as a release from the doctor to again participate in the gym class. For less serious, occasional conditions, a parent's note is required.

Dress Code: The students in grades 6 through 8 are to wear gym uniforms which may be ordered by the parents from the Dennis Uniform Co. Students in K-8 must have proper gym shoes in order to participate in class.

Gym Uniform: St. James School uniform shorts and shirts, white socks and clean tennis shoes, worn only for gym classes. A carrying tote bag is required for gym classes. All of the above items are to be clearly marked with the student's name, cleaned weekly and not worn outside of gym class.

BAND

The band program is optional. Those students who are interested in instrumental music is provided with an opportunity to develop this interest. Our band instruction is provided by Music on the Move. Mr. Christopher Hills, the director, can be reached at 847-869-5251. Students are introduced to the program early in September.

CHOIR

Students in grades 4-8, interested in music and singing are encouraged to join our choir, under the direction of Mrs. Carol Kiwala.

CULTURAL ARTS PROGRAM

The cultural arts program provides St. James students with exposure to plays, musical productions, dance, etc. It represents an extension of the school's basic fine arts program. The enjoyment and appreciation for the arts which this program provides has proven to be an important part of our educational offering.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips provide many invaluable learning experiences. A written parental request that the school allow a child to participate is required. The school accepts no responsibility for the children other than that of reasonable, prudent care and supervision which is provided at all times. All parents who drive children on field trips must submit proof of insurance, fill out the insurance form and sign the Volunteer Driver's Statement. All must be VIRTUS trained. Buses are often hired to transport students.

STUDENT SERVICES

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council is the core student organization from which emerges the student leaders. The opportunities for participation in democratic process, for the planning of events, and for promotion of school spirit makes this group of students an important adjunct to the school's educational process. Active participation is encouraged.

SAFETY PATROL

All Upper level students serve on the safety patrol. These students are on duty at designated areas to ensure the safety of the children from 8 - 8:15 a.m. and 3:00 - 3:15 p.m. If a student is unable to meet their scheduled time it is their responsibility to find a substitute. It is vital that students take safety patrol seriously. Written parental permission is required.

Parents are responsible for the safety of the student traveling to and from school. The purpose of the student safety patrol is to assist in the safe conduct of students to and from school. However, by providing this service, St. James School and the Catholic Bishop of Chicago accept no liability for the safety of the student. There may be times, due to circumstances beyond the control of the school, when a student is not on duty at a crossing.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Opportunities for service to the school and community are many. Students are encouraged to volunteer in a variety of service activities which help the school to function effectively and provide invaluable leadership experience. Becoming an **Altar Server** is highly encouraged for students in grades 5-8 (*See Liturgy, page 7*)

SCHOOL POLICIES

POLICY REGARDING RACIAL, SEXUAL, CULTURAL, ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS MISUNDERSTANDINGS

St. James School Policy Objective

We believe that each individual at St. James School has the right to learn and play, or work in a safe learning environment free from comments or behaviors that are hurtful regarding race, culture, religion or behaviors/comments that are sexually harassing.

Incidents of religious, racial, ethnic, cultural or sexual harassment are against the principles of our Catholic faith and the Mission of our school.

General Policy Statement

It shall be a violation of this policy for any St. James student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel to harass a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel through behavior or communication of a sexual nature or relating to religion, race or ethnic background.

Definitions

1. **Racial harassment** – Racial harassment consists of physical or verbal behavior relating to an individual’s race when the conduct has the purpose of creating an intimidating or offensive working or academic environment, has the purpose of substantially interfering with an individual’s work or school performance or otherwise affects person’s employment or academic opportunities.
2. **Religious/ethnic/cultural harassment** – Religious/ethnic/cultural harassment consists of physical behavior or communication which is related to an individual’s religious beliefs, cultural or ethnic background

when that conduct: has the purpose of creating an intimidating or offensive working or school environment, has the purpose of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or adversely affects a person's employment or academic opportunities.

3. **Sexual Harassment** - Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances or sexually motivated physical conduct or other behavior or communication of a sexual nature when submission to that behavior or communication is inferred or explicitly made a condition of obtaining or retaining employment or education or:
 - a. When submission or rejection of that conduct or communication by a person is used as a factor in decisions affecting a person's employment or education or:
 - b. That conduct or communication substantially or unreasonably interferes with an individual's employment or education or contributes to a hostile or offensive work or educational environment.

Reporting Procedures - Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of racial, religious/ethnic/ cultural harassment by a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute racial, religious, ethnic, cultural conduct toward a student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel. should report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official as designated in this policy.

Appropriate school official(s): Incidents should initially be reported to the classroom teacher, playground or lunchroom supervisor, coach, or individual deemed by the school to be in a position of authority or supervision at the time and place that such an incident is alleged to have occurred. Any adult school personnel who receives a report of harassment shall inform the principal or assistant principal immediately.

Investigation – The school principal or assistant principal shall immediately undertake or authorize an investigation. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individuals(s) against whom the complaint has been reported and others who have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances surrounding the complaint.

Determination of Violation of Policy – In determining whether conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the principal and others deemed to be part of the investigation should **consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents, or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred.**

Consequences – Upon consideration of all information relating to alleged incidents, the school shall take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, remediation/education, warning, exclusion, suspension, termination or discharge.

Consequences for such incidents with students would be in keeping with our general Student Discipline Policy.

Right to Appeal Decisions

Students and parents have the right to appeal decisions to suspend, put on probation or expel a student. Parents should make a written request to meet with the principal and the pastor to review the decision. The principal will seek guidance from the Office of Catholic Schools.

SAFETY POLICIES

MEDICATION POLICY

Parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for the administration of medication to their children. The administration of medication to students during regular school hours and during school related activities is discouraged unless necessary for the critical health and well being of the student.

It is the policy of the school that school personnel, including teachers, administrators, administrative staff, shall not administer medication to students except as provided in the School Medication Procedures established for the administration of medication.

Compliance with the School Medication Procedures established for the administration of medication is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

All parents are given a copy of the Medication Policy and the required forms. It is essential that the proper forms be filled in by the parent/guardian and the child's physician when required. Copies of the above are also included in this handbook.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION INFORMATION

It is required that two emergency notification forms be filled out by each family, for each child. The Medical Information and Emergency Notification Form is an Archdiocesan form and the school is mandated to comply with this requirement. In addition, St. James School has a form for our front desk, with emergency numbers and other necessary information. Your cooperation in filling out both of these forms is appreciated. **Make sure to indicate with a star, the phone number you want the school to use in an emergency or when instituting the Honeywell Instant Alert.** Your child's safety is our greatest concern.

THE SCHOOL CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE IF YOUR EMERGENCY FORM IS NOT COMPLETE OR UP-DATED! Whenever there is a change of home address, phone, or name and the phone of emergency contacts, **PLEASE PHONE THE SCHOOL OFFICE IMMEDIATELY (847-432-2277)**. Be sure a record of allergies, asthmatic condition or any health problem is noted on the emergency forms. You must keep your emergency information updated. If you have questions see Julie Leske in the school office.

FIRST AID

State law regulates that minor injuries be treated with only water, disinfectant and band aids. If there is a serious injury, parents will be notified immediately. The school abides by all OSHA regulations and takes universal precautions. Children are not allowed to carry aspirin or any other medication, except asthma inhalers and epi-pens on their person at any time.

INSURANCE

School insurance is available for the students. Each student will receive an envelope on registration day in August. These envelopes must be marked YES or NO and signed. If you choose to take this coverage place your payment in the envelope. Parents are strongly urged to participate in this insurance program. For a very minimal charge you can supplement your current insurance policy. The church and school do not carry insurance which cover children's injuries at school. With medical costs being what they are today, it is very wise to carry supplemental insurance.

VISITORS/VOLUNTEERS

For the safety of the children, **ALL VISITORS**, including parents and volunteers **MUST** enter through the courtyard entrance and go to the office to sign-in.

POLICY ON PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

The administration and faculty of St. James School will expect all students who participate in any school sponsored activity to maintain the following four standards of performance:

1. Scholarship: Working to one's abilities in academic areas.
2. Citizenship: Displaying a positive attitude.
3. Attendance: Regular attendance.
4. Conduct: Behaving in a manner that brings honor to St. James School.

A violation of any one or a combination of violations of these standards may make a student ineligible to serve the school or participate in any extra curricular activities.

SCHOLARSHIP

The student is to maintain passing grades in the content areas, i.e., social studies, language arts, science, math, religion, or a satisfactory level of performance equal to his or her potential.

The student who receives an “I” must complete work that is due. The “incomplete” will be changed to an “F” within one week after the report card is issued if the work is not completed to the teacher’s satisfaction. The student will be suspended from all service or extra curricular activities during this probationary period.

The student will regain the right to participate in service or extra curricular activities if all work is completed during the week’s probation. The “I” will then be changed to the earned grade.

The student will lose the right to participate in service or extra curricular activities during the next school quarter IF the incomplete work is not finished during the probationary period. Then the “I” (incomplete) will become an “F” and the standards of performance will apply.

CITIZENSHIP

The student is to maintain satisfactory effort in every area of the school curriculum. This will be indicative of a positive attitude and a sense of responsibility.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is expected of students engaged in a service capacity to ensure that they are assuming full responsibility for the school service they provide.

CONDUCT

Appropriate behavior and self-control will be expected of all students who provide a service to the school, or who participate in any school endorsed function. The principal reserves the right to choose other disciplinary measures if removal of a student from a team would jeopardize the rights of other students to participate in the activity.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR POLICY

Guiding one’s child to develop Christian values is a parental responsibility. We at St. James School consider ourselves to be an extension of the home; therefore, we actively continue to work with all parents to assure continued development of responsible behavior and positive attitudes in their child/children.

The primary goal of a Catholic school is to assist students in the formation of a personal, Catholic/Christian set of values. In partnership with the parents, we hope to form courteous, self-disciplined young adults who treat all persons with respect and show proper respect to the property of others.

The St. James School Behavior Policy is designed to safeguard the health, safety and academic/spiritual growth of every student. Discipline will be administered in a fair, consistent manner with the welfare of the student as well as the whole student body, uppermost in mind. Parental cooperation and support of this effort is important for the learning which can emerge from the disciplinary action.

General School Rules

All rules and procedures are in place to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all the students. Minor infractions of school rules will be handled by the individual teachers in accord with their classroom policies.

1. Treat others with respect at all times.
2. Pursue your studies to the best of your abilities.
3. Follow all classroom/playground behavior procedures at all times. Be respectful of parish/school property and the belongings of others. (Willful or careless damage to property must be reimbursed by the child/family.)
4. Gum chewing is not allowed on school/parish property or the property of schools we visit. Gum can cause significant maintenance difficulties and can be a courtesy issue.
5. Electronic entertainment equipment is not to be brought to school. (i.e. DVD players, iPods, MP3 players, games, etc.) This pertains to field trips, as well. If confiscated, a parent/guardian must pick it up in the office.
6. Cell phones (if requested by parents) must be in “off mode” during the school day and given to the home room teacher each morning. Students may pick up their phone at 3:05 p.m. If confiscated, the parent/guardian must pick it up in the office.
7. Students are expected to behave in a manner consistent with St. James School policies whether at school, on the train, on the District 112 busses, on field trips and when visiting other schools.

Persistent and/or Gross Misconduct

Behaviors which fall into this category will be referred to the principal or assistant principal. Gross Misconduct can be defined as any behavior which has the potential to cause injury or interference with the rights of other students.

Gross Misconduct shall include, but is not limited to the following:

1. Fighting (physical force or provocative behavior: i.e. hitting, biting, pushing, kicking, holding, spitting, etc.)
2. Bullying (violating a person's right to feel physically or emotionally safe)
3. Intimidation of or attempt to intimidate others.
4. Verbal abuse or use of threatening or profane language or gestures.
5. Possession, use, or display of any weapon or toy which looks like a weapon.
6. Intentional damage to school property or property of another person.
7. Truancy or leaving school property during school hours without permission.
8. Chronic and/or repeated disruptive behavior and/or refusal to comply with school rules.
9. Gang Activity:

The principal has the responsibility and authority to gather data relating to possible gang activity and to act upon violations of the following activities. The following activities/behaviors shall be constituted as violations and are subject to disciplinary action:

Any conduct, on or off school premises, during school hours or at school sponsored events and activities outside of normal school hours, that may be gang related.

- a. Students wearing clothing/symbols that may be, in the manner displayed, gang related. This includes but is not limited to, jewelry jackets, sweatshirts, caps, tee shirts, or other forms of clothing.
- b. The display of signs/symbols on paper, notebooks, textbooks or other possessions that may be gang related.

10. Any other acts which directly or indirectly jeopardize the health, safety and welfare of others at school.

Student Discipline Procedures

According to the policies of the Office of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Chicago, discipline measures shall be progressive and foster student growth.

St. James School shall follow these procedures in dealing with student misconduct which goes beyond the ability or responsibility of the classroom teacher to deal with it.

1. A conference will be held with the child/children involved. Consequences are to be determined as seen fit by the principal/assistant principal according to the misbehavior. Possible consequences are as follows:

- a. Verbal guidance
- b. Verbal warning
- c. Loss of recess
- d. Detention
- e. Telephone call to parent/guardian
- f. Removal from class for a limited time.

Written documentation will be kept, making note of decisions and recommendations.

2. In the case of repeated infractions or infractions of a more serious nature, a conference will be held between the child and principal. Logical consequences will be chosen such as, but not limited to:
 - a. Conduct Referral Form may be sent to parent/guardian which will identify the reasons for the referral, actions taken and recommendations.
 - b. Parent conference or telephone call.
 - c. Appropriate disciplinary action will be decided upon. Parent/guardian will be notified either by meeting, telephone call or Conduct Referral Form.
 - d. Written documentation will be kept, making note of decisions and recommendations.
 - e. No more than three (3) Conduct Referral Notices will be given to an individual student without incurring the necessity of more severe consequences.
3. In the case of a very serious or dangerous offense or repeated gross misconduct as indicated above, the principal may impose other disciplinary measures, in accord with Archdiocesan Policy 158.1. This includes disciplinary actions such as suspension, probation, and expulsion. These disciplinary measures may be imposed, separately or progressively, as the situation warrants, in accordance with the local written discipline procedures.

Written documentation will be kept of all disciplinary meetings.

4. The school reserves the right to call the Highwood Police if the situation warrants such action.
5. Students and parents have the right to appeal decisions to suspend, put on probation or expel a student. Parents should make a written request to meet with the principal and the pastor to review the decision. The principal will seek guidance from the Office of Catholic Schools.

OTHER BASIC RULES and REGULATIONS

Lunchroom and Playground Codes are to be honored. (This is co-signed by parent/child and kept on file in the school office.)

LUNCHROOM CODE OF CONDUCT

1. I WILL practice proper conduct and eating habits in the lunchroom.
2. I WILL be courteous, respectful, and obedient toward any teacher, parent, or lunch monitor on duty.
3. I WILL talk at the lunch table at an acceptable conversational level.
4. I WILL remain seated at all times. Permission is needed to use the bathroom.
5. I WILL leave my lunch table and floor area neat and clean; I will put my garbage in the drums provided. Garbage drums will be circulated by adults.
6. I WILL eat only in the lunchroom and not on the playground. This includes candy, chips, cookies, etc.
7. I WILL drink only milk, juice, or water. Soda is not allowed.
8. I UNDERSTAND that gum chewing is never allowed at school.

PLAYGROUND CODE OF CONDUCT

1. I WILL remain in the designated play areas and will not leave the school grounds without permission.
2. I WILL not take food or drinks onto the playground.
3. I WILL use only the play equipment provided by the school. I understand I am not to bring personal play items to school unless I receive specific permission from my homeroom teacher.
4. I PROMISE to use the swings and slide in the proper way to insure everyone's safety. I will also be willing to take turns on this equipment.
5. I PROMISE not to throw or kick snow or ice under any circumstances.
6. I PROMISE to respect the teacher or staff member on duty.
7. I PROMISE to use acceptable language on the playground. I understand that crude or obscene remarks or actions will be the cause of severe disciplinary action.
8. I PROMISE not to become involved in any unnecessary roughness and/or fighting. I understand the rule which states that there will be absolutely NO tackling, shoving, or rough play. I understand fighting is cause for suspension.
9. I KNOW that I am responsible to return equipment to the location determined by my classroom or homeroom teacher.

10. I PROMISE to obey the whistle signal to line up at the end of recess.

TECHNOLOGY CODE OF CONDUCT:

1. All students must submit the *St. James School Acceptable Use Consent Form* annually.
2. Students may use technology resources only when school personnel are present and have given permission.
3. Students may NOT download, install, or store software on a school computer without approval of appropriate school personnel.
4. Students may NOT change or attempt to alter any configuration, program, password on any computer system.
5. Students may NOT use inappropriate language, pictures, gestures, in any form on the Internet.
6. Students may NOT use the Internet for unauthorized entertainment, purchases or illegal activities.
7. USB data sticks must be purchased through the school and are the only ones that may be used in school.
8. Students' individual data sticks must contain only school matter material and NO other material including pictures, articles, etc... Data sticks are subject to random viewing.
9. There is to be a general respect of the computer lab. and all technology resources throughout the school.

WALKING SAFETY REGULATIONS are to be obeyed:

- *Walk on sidewalk.
- *Cross only at corners.
- *Cross North Avenue at the corner of North and Funston Avenues at yellow markings.
- *Obey guard on duty.
- *Cross railroad tracks only at authorized crossings. Police can issue a \$75.00 fine for not crossing at authorized areas.

CAR SAFETY REGULATIONS are to be practiced by parents.

- *For drop-off and pick-up procedures, please see pages 7-9.
- *DO NOT pick up or drop off your child on North Avenue in front of Church/School.
- *Walkers are not to enter or cut across this pick-up area en route to home.

BICYCLE SAFETY REGULATIONS

- *Bicycle permits must be obtained from the school office.
- *Bicycles **MUST** be locked in the rack. The school is not responsible for theft.
- *Students are to **DISMOUNT AND WALK** their bikes to the racks upon entering the entrance to the playground.
- *When leaving school, bikes are to be **WALKED** to the street before mounting.
- *Helmets are to be worn by all bicycle riders.
- *Bicycles are moving vehicles and can cause injury. Disregard of bicycle safety will result in the loss of the permit.

To ensure everyone's safety, SNOW IS TO REMAIN ON THE GROUND!

**Snow is not to be thrown or kicked on or around the school or playground.*

RECESS DURING WINTER MONTHS

Children will go outside whenever possible during the winter months. Recess will be indoor when the temperature is below 10°, the wind chill factor is below 0°, when it is raining, or if the parking lot is dangerously icy. We may go out during snow falls if we judge it to be safe. Under normal conditions, the principal makes the decision.

LUNCH TIME REGULATIONS/SUPERVISION

Students bring a bag lunch or purchase a hot lunch on a monthly basis. White milk may be purchased on a monthly basis. Soft drinks may not be purchased at school during the school day.

Special Lunch Days are held once a month by the Parents and Friends Association (PAFA). Parents will be notified in August of the dates and costs.

OTHER GENERAL INFORMATION

CHILD ABUSE

The Illinois Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act mandates that school personnel promptly report alleged or suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) when the alleged abuser is a parent, guardian, relative, or other caretaker who has some responsibility for the child's welfare at the time of the abuse or neglect. This includes professionals such as teachers who are responsible for the care of the child.

TELEPHONE USE

Students should not make personal calls during the school day without permission from the office. Emergency calls will be made by the school secretary. Students will not be called to the phone during the day except for emergencies. The office phone should not be used for unessential personal calls.

CELL PHONES

Please keep your child's cell phone at home unless you feel it is vitally important that he/she carry a cell phone. If this is the case, the phone must be turned off and carried in a closed compartment of the backpack. It is not to be used at school. Upon arrival, students are to give their cell phone to the home room teacher each morning and they may be picked up at 3:05 p.m. Teachers who see a cell phone being used will take it to the principal's office where the parents may pick it up.

SIGNED NEWSLETTERS

Whenever a request is made for your signature, it is most important for us to have this information as an assurance that the bulletin has reached home. Please observe the cut-off date for the return of the portion requiring your signature.

SCHOOL CLOSING

It is our policy and that of the Archdiocese of Chicago to keep school open during winter snow storms. If it is necessary to close the school, you will be so informed if you tune in the radio station WGN. St. James will notify the station by 6:00 A.M. if the school is to be closed. **DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL.** You will be notified through the Honeywell Instant Alert System. You must keep your emergency information updated on the Honeywell Instant Alert System. If you have any questions see Julie Leske in the school office. Emergency school closing information is also available on the internet. This information is sent to you as winter approaches.

EMERGENCY ALERT

The school will follow all Civil Defense emergency procedures: fire, tornado, earthquake, etc. Our number one priority is the safety of the child. Please **DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL AS LINES OF COMMUNICATION MUST REMAIN OPEN** to receive civil defense instructions. The Honeywell Instant Alert or PAFA will notify parents as soon as possible.

CHURCH BULLETINS

The weekly Church Bulletin is often used for school announcements. Please check the Church Bulletin every Sunday.

VOLUNTEERS

There are many opportunities for service around the school. Parents who have the time and interest to help out in the computer lab, library, lunchroom, playground and individual classrooms are encouraged to volunteer. Your services are deeply appreciated.

We are grateful for the assistance of those parents who do volunteer work in the school. For the safety and Protection of all children, Virtus Training is required of all volunteers. Their unselfish efforts on our behalf have enriched our educational program and have benefited our students in so many ways. We hope you will become an active member and will support PAFA efforts. A mandatory meeting for all volunteers is held early in the school year to outline policies and expectations.

LOCKERS

The upper level lockers are the property of St. James School. As such, the administration and staff of St. James has the right to enter any locker at any time. Lockers are to be used only for students' coats, gym uniforms and shoes, books and school materials. Students are not allowed to bring electronic equipment to school, therefore no electronic equipment can be stored in school lockers. If students have submitted a parental letter giving permission to carry a cell phone to school, those cell phones must be turned into the homeroom teacher first thing in the morning and not kept in lockers.

Students may not write on lockers or apply stickers or labels. Only magnets may be used to attach schedules or suitable personal items to the locker. Students may not enter other student lockers. No food may be stored in the lockers. Bagged lunches are to be placed in homeroom basket.

NOTICE OF DISCLAIMER

The School Board, Administration and Faculty of St. James School must advise all parents that we are not able to offer a full range of special services to all students. It is certainly our desire to meet the individual needs of our children and we will do all we can to do so. If, however, the school cannot service your child, we will do everything possible to assist you in finding adequate services.

RELEASE OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES

Names and addresses of pupils and their parents will not be released to any unauthorized person or agency, especially to sales persons or commercial enterprises. We will request your permission before giving this information to

Catholic high schools.

The PAFA Buzz Book is intended solely for the use of our parents and students. Its contents should never be given to unauthorized persons or used for commercial purposes or for recruitment for other activities.

The office will not give teachers' addresses or telephone numbers to parents.

PRINCIPAL'S RIGHT TO AMEND PARENT/ STUDENT HANDBOOK

Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school will attempt to keep the parent/guardian informed of all changes as soon as practical. Some changes might be made immediately due to unforeseen circumstances possible to assist you in finding adequate services.