

## **St. Catherine of Siena School Handbook**

Dear St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School Family,

On behalf of the entire staff, we welcome you and your child(ren) to our school. It is essential that parents read the handbook and that students are made aware of its contents. We are more than happy to answer questions or concerns you may have. We encourage your active involvement in your child's education. A strong partnership between home and school can greatly benefit your child as he/she grows and matures.

This handbook has been designed to be of assistance to the students and parents. Its purpose is to provide guidelines for grades K-8 and to open communication between home and school. School is a cooperative venture among parents, students and school personnel. Collaboratively, we need to ensure maximum learning for all students.

School can and should be a happy, worthwhile experience. Hopefully, this information will help to accomplish these goals. If you have questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your child's teacher or me. This handbook replaces all prior handbooks and other written materials on the same subjects. Current copies of Board policies are available in the school office as well as the St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School's webpage

<https://www.stcatherineofsiena.org/school>.

It is a pleasure to have you as a member of the St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School family! I feel blessed to be part of a school community that values responsibility, hard work, and a willingness to do what it takes to succeed. We are looking forward to working with each and every one of you as we embrace the new school year, continue to build on a tradition of academic excellence, and provide a positive learning experience. I look forward to a very successful and impactful school year!

Blessings,

Mike Jacks  
Principal

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## **BACKGROUND**

St. Catherine of Siena School is a Catholic elementary school in Fort Thomas, Kentucky. The School is part of the Diocese of Covington School System and is under the direction of the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, the Pastor, the Principal, and St. Catherine's Board of Catholic Education.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of St. Catherine School is to provide quality Catholic education by helping each student reach his/her full potential spiritually, academically, emotionally, physically and socially according to the Catholic faith. Each individual is assured academic achievement and develops social and emotional growth while embracing the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. ~ Revised spring 2022

## **PHILOSOPHY**

St. Catherine of Siena School shares, with the family, the educational mission of the Church and strives to bring each child to an awareness of the uniqueness and value of self and others. As a Christian community, the school is organized to foster the total development of its members in accordance with the gospel message.

## **OBJECTIVES**

To carry out this philosophy we will strive:

1. To provide opportunities to worship, to teach doctrine, to build community and to serve.
2. To assist students in learning to make reflective application of Christian values to contemporary issues.
3. To develop a deepening sense of peace and justice towards self, neighbor and the world.
4. To promote a total educational program of the highest caliber which fosters the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth of the school community.

## **PARISH PLEDGE PROGRAM**

St. Catherine of Siena School does partial tuition for members of the parish. The operational budget for the school is provided from the general revenue of St. Catherine of Siena Parish. All parish families are asked to make a pledge in support of the parish.

## **AGE TO ENTER SCHOOL**

To enter Kindergarten your child must be 5 years old by August 31st of the current school year.

To enter first grade, your child must be 6 years old by August 31st of the current school year.

## **CUSTODY**

The office needs, in writing, any existing information regarding custody and visitation rights for your children. Unless we have documentation to the contrary, the school will deal only with the custodial parent. Kentucky law provides that "the custodial parent may determine the child's upbringing including his/her education." Legal counsel has advised that the non-custodial parent may have access to the child's records under one or more of the following conditions:

1. Access is granted by divorce decree.
  2. The custodial parent has given permission for limited or total access to the child's records.
  3. A court order has been issued granting access to the child's records to the Non-custodial parent.
- Documentation granting or refusing access to the student's records will be kept in the student's file.

## **CURRICULUM**

A continuing objective of St. Catherine of Siena School is to meet the needs of the individual students and to provide a learning environment that is challenging, stimulating and in accordance with Diocesan Curriculum Guidelines and the Kentucky State Program of Studies. Students are instructed in a variety of ways to meet the needs of the various learning styles present. Various modes of learning are utilized including direct instruction, inquiry, and hands-on. Special Area teachers provide art, computer/STEAM, humanities, music, and P.E./health programs to increase interest and expand learning.

## **W.I.N.**

W.I.N. stands for What I Need. Each classroom teacher will be choosing specific skills that students will work on during this time. Based on assessment data, students will receive instruction with below level, on level, and above level skills. The Special Education Instructor and both Resource Teachers will be available during W.I.N. time to provide extra support. W.I.N. Time occurs Monday-Thursday afternoon from 2:05-2:35.

## **FRIDAY GENIUS TIME**

Each Friday from 2:05-2:35, students will participate in an elective class. Each teacher plans and presents an elective class each quarter. Students will select two choices per quarter. Their choices will be prioritized by first choice and second choice. All attempts will be made to honor one of their choices. There will be a maximum of 14 students in each class.

## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT**

The parent holds the right and the responsibility for the spiritual development of his/her child. The uniqueness of a Catholic school lies in its explicit effort to complement and reinforce this role of the parent. Christian values become a vital part of the total curriculum. Students attend Mass weekly at an all-school liturgy. Parents are always invited and encouraged to participate in these liturgies. Sacramental preparation is highlighted in the second and eighth grades with Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation programs for students and parents. The students in grades two through eight are given the opportunity to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation twice (Fall and late Spring) throughout the year. Religion classes are taught regularly along with opportunities for private and group prayer, and service activities.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Open lines of communication are an important means of strengthening bonds between school and home. School announcements are sent home each Friday explaining important information and events for the following week(s). If a problem arises or you need clarification about a classroom issue, parents are asked to first speak directly with the teacher concerned. Parents are asked to call the school office 572-2680 or 572-2681 or send a note or email requesting the teacher to contact them to discuss the situation. Spontaneous and unannounced visits cannot always be accommodated. Parents who wish to speak to the Principal are also asked to call for an appointment.

## **COURTESY**

Respect for human dignity is a hallmark of Christian behavior and is expected from every person, whether child or adult. Students are to consider it a matter of personal honor to show courtesy and thoughtfulness at all times to the faculty, staff, volunteers, and maintenance personnel, all guests and to each other. This courteous interchange must also be evidenced by the respect with which the students are treated.

## **DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS**

Discipline is defined as the important and fundamental training of children that develops self-control, character, and orderly conduct, as well as acceptance of or submission to authority and control. The home and school must work in such a way that children learn to help each person to live the Gospel values of our faith. “Respect for law and order should be instilled in the minds of children and be expected from the behavior of all youth. The ultimate goal is a responsible person capable of self-control and capable of the initiative to creatively attain the goals for Catholic Education.” (Vatican II Document)

The students at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School are entitled to learn and develop in a setting which promotes respect for self, others, and property. The school environment should encourage spiritual, academic and social maturation and should promote the dignity and worth of each student in preparation for the responsibilities of adulthood. The school fosters the total well-being of each person spiritually, physically, emotionally, and intellectually. School administration, staff members, parents, and students are charged with cooperating to develop mature, healthy, and responsible individuals capable of self-control.

## **DISCIPLINE DEFINITION AND PURPOSE**

Integral to Catholic education are the skills of taking ownership; building trust, respect, and confidence; showing consideration for others; learning to share and accepting responsibility for the choices that are made.

1. Discipline is as fundamental in Catholic education as it is in Christian life. Good discipline originates in the home because parents are the first teachers of the child. It is a parent’s obligation to teach by example in order to develop in child good habits of behavior as well as proper attitudes toward school.
2. The church is always to be entered reverently in silence and genuflecting to the altar upon entering a pew.
3. School discipline is an outgrowth of good home training; therefore, cooperation between home and school is essential. It is the school’s obligation to expand, encourage and develop those habits and attitudes.
4. Individual students must contribute to the good of the group, take ownership for their actions and learn to accept consequences.
5. Discipline is based on mutual respect for each person as a human being with needs and feelings, while knowing each individual has the ability to act in a responsible manners.
6. Students have feelings, needs and rights. In addition, students need to know that teachers also have feelings, needs, and rights.
7. There will be an atmosphere within each classroom and throughout the school that is conducive to learning and where healthy self-concepts can develop. A whole class should not be disrupted by the inappropriate behavior of one or several students.
8. Recognizing that there are distinct differences in acceptable conduct in the hallways, restrooms, gym/lunch room, at assemblies, and on the playground, quiet is not demanded in these areas. However, anytime classes are in session, students are expected to be quiet when moving within the building out of respect to others who are at work.
9. Students are also to be respectful upon entering and exiting the building.

## AREAS OF DISCIPLINE

The parish/school premises are important areas of discipline:

- While on parish/school premises
- While engaged in related school activities and functions, such as approved field trips and extracurricular activities
- Conduct of students away from the school grounds is subject to school discipline if it directly affects the welfare of the school

## BE A COLT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

*Be a Colt* is a school-wide program with a consistent set of expectations with positive reinforcement and consequences for all students in grades K-8. The objective for implementing *Be a Colt* creates a learning environment that encourages positive social interactions, active engagement, and self-regulation for every student. This will help develop and implement procedures and routines that support high expectations for student learning. The foundation of *Be a Colt* are the four building-wide expectations which are reinforced daily in all school settings:

*Be Faithful*

*Be Respectful*

*Be Responsible*

*Be Safe*

### **Be a Colt in the Church**

#### **Faithful**

Enter and exit quietly

Genuflect when entering your pew

Receive the Eucharist respectfully

#### **Respectful**

Participate in prayer and song

#### **Responsible**

Be an attentive listener

#### **Safe**

Meaningful participation throughout Mass

### **Be a Colt in the Classroom**

#### **Faithful**

Politely acknowledge teacher

Acknowledge teacher as you leave

#### **Respectful**

Focus on teacher/speaker

Allow others to learn without distraction

Allow teacher to instruct without interruption or distraction

Honor and respect ideas of others

**Responsible**

Sit in assigned seat  
 Take out all materials needed for class  
 Follow all directions  
 Write down upcoming assignments

**Safe**

Enter and exit quietly  
 Maintain quiet during transitions  
 Wait for teacher direction before lining up

**Be a Colt in the Hallway****Faithful**

Walk quietly in the hall  
 Walk in a single-file line facing forward

**Respectful**

Keep hallway clean  
 Use respectful language

**Responsible**

Bring all materials to class

**Safe**

Gather your materials quickly and be on time to class  
 Keep hallways clean and organized

**Be a Colt in the Cafeteria****Faithful**

Meaningful participation in lunch prayer

**Respectful**

Include all students in your conversations  
 Use respectful and appropriate language  
 Wait quietly and patiently in the lunch line  
 Use good manners with classmates and staff

**Responsible**

Stay seated while eating  
 Clean up your own area  
 Use appropriate voice level when talking

**Safe**

Follow directions from lunch staff and adults  
 Wait to be excused  
 Raise your hand if you need something

**Be a Colt in the Bathroom****Faithful**

Use respectful language  
 Use appropriate voice level

**Respectful**

Respect others privacy

**Responsible**

Report needed maintenance

Flush

Wash hands with soap and water

Put trash in proper place

**Safe**

Use bathroom quickly and return to class

Use bathroom at appropriate learning times (unless emergency)

**Be a Colt on the Playground****Faithful**

Include everyone in your games

Use respectful and appropriate language

**Respectful**

Follow the rules and play fair

Show good sportsmanship

Honor Personal Space

Share equipment

No unnecessary roughness

**Responsible**

Return used equipment

Only balls/equipment from storage shed are allowed during recess

Treat equipment as your own and use equipment safely

Be a responsible reporter if there is a problem

**Safe**

Keep hands to yourself

Walk quickly and carefully into line when the bell rings

Enter the school quietly

Listen to all staff on duty

**VOICE LEVELS**

There are common [Be a Colt Voice Levels](#) that adults and students will follow throughout the school day:

**0** = silent voice

**1** = whisper (partner) voice

**2** = inside (small group) voice

**3** = large groups (presentation) voice

**4** = outside (across the playground) voice

When walking in the hallway, students will be at a Level 0 in order to respect the work being done in the school.

Classrooms will use appropriate voice levels during various activities.

**APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**

Students will have the opportunity to earn classroom incentives (as deemed appropriate by each teacher) as well as school incentives. When classrooms and individual students follow **Be a Colt** expectations, they earn incentives such as visiting the office, adding to our yearly spiritual board, and other incentives provided by the principal.

## **INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**

To address inappropriate behavior, a [Behavior Response Flow Chart](#) will be implemented by all staff. When school expectations are not followed, consequences will be specific to the behavior. Problem behaviors are divided into minor and major referrals. A minor/major description chart is used by staff. St. Catherine's *Be a Colt* program provides school wide support, targeted group support, and individual support. Teachers will record student behaviors in Sycamore so teachers, staff and parents can track and see student behaviors across all areas of school.

## **BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES**

### ***Think Sheet***

The [Think Sheet](#) is designed to help students be more mindful of their behavior and its consequences after a situation has occurred. Rather than lecture or berate a student, the teacher gives them a few minutes to calm down, and asks them to complete the Think Sheet. The student and teacher fill this out collaboratively, signaling they are a team and planning for future behavioral success.

### ***Quiet Table-Grades K-1***

Quiet table is a consequence assigned to students in grades K-1 who choose to behave inappropriately. The student will eat lunch in a classroom monitored by an adult. In order to stay Virtu compliant, the classroom door remains open at all times during Quiet Table. This time away from peers is designed to provide quiet reflection on appropriate choices.

### ***Detention-Grades 2-8***

Detention is a consequence assigned to students who choose to behave inappropriately (follow Behavior Response Flow Chart.) Detentions will be communicated to parents as to when and where a student will serve the detention. Late work detentions will be used to get caught up on work or work ahead. Students are expected to be punctual. Students arriving after that time will be assigned an additional detention. If detention is not served at the assigned time, the student will need to report to the next detention day. Without reasonable excuse students may serve additional detentions or community service.

### ***Community Service***

Community Service consequences may also be utilized. These consequences may be used for any major violations of student conduct such as fighting, overt or covert bullying, vandalism, habitual violations, etc. Community Service would include, but not be limited to, general cleaning around the school (gym/lunchroom, hallways, classrooms, grounds, etc). The principal or principal designee will supervise community service. This, of course, does not preclude utilizing the remaining options of in-school suspension should the situation warrant it as determined by administration.

### ***Suspension***

Suspension is a warning that a student's behavior is not in keeping with the St. Catherine of Siena Catholic School philosophy and that such conduct may lead to recommendation for expulsion. Suspension may be "in-school" or "out-of-school". The student will be provided with educational material to work on throughout the day. The student will be excluded from all regular classes and contact with other students throughout the day as well as any school related activities during that time. The student is responsible for getting homework assignments for the next day. It should also be noted that each quarter of the school year all students begin with a "clean slate" when accumulating detentions for missed assignments, inappropriate behavior, etc.

## DRESS CODE

Why do we have a dress code?

First and foremost, as a Catholic school, the dress code should reflect values such as virtue and modesty. In addition to this, uniforms give children a sense of pride in their education, which is exemplified by their respectful attitude toward their schoolwork, their teachers, fellow students and the facilities themselves. It has been proven in various studies that schools that employ uniforms have higher student achievement and fewer discipline problems. By putting on a uniform, it is a psychological cue for the students to prepare themselves for

learning. Uniforms "even out" any disparity in students in terms of economic status or ethnic differences.

Uniforms not only save parents money but remove the whole "what to wear" headache when getting the kids up for school in the morning. Uniforms do not prevent children from expressing their individuality, but refocus kids to expressing their individuality through their essays, creative writing, artwork, music, etc., which is a more beneficial way of teaching them how to express themselves.

When purchasing clothes for your child, make sure they are “uniform” style and free of any logos.

	Boys	Girls
Bottoms	<p>Navy blue uniform pants</p> <p>Navy blue uniform shorts no more than 3” above the knee</p>	<p>Navy blue uniform pants</p> <p>The following items must be no more than 3” above knee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o School approved jumper (K-5)</li> <li>o School approved skirt (6-8)</li> <li>o Navy blue uniform short</li> <li>o Navy blue uniform skorts</li> </ul>
Tops	<p>White or light blue collared polo style or oxford shirt; short or long sleeves, tucked in.</p> <p>Navy blue or white turtleneck shirts (may be worn under uniform shirts or sweatshirts) tucked in.</p> <p>School approved sweatshirt or fleece. <i>(no hoods)</i></p> <p>Navy blue cardigan or pullover sweater.</p> <p>Short sleeve plain white undershirt (under the school shirt)</p>	<p>White or light blue collared polo style or oxford shirts: short or long sleeves, tucked in.</p> <p>Navy blue or white turtleneck shirts (may be worn under, uniform shirt or sweatshirts) tucked in. Turtlenecks may also be worn under jumpers.</p> <p>School approved sweatshirt or fleece. <i>(no hoods)</i></p> <p>Navy blue cardigan or pullover sweater.</p> <p>Short sleeve plain white undershirt (under the school shirt)</p>
Shoes	<p>Gym Shoes</p> <p>Hard soled shoes that tie or fasten</p> <p><i>No Sandals, crocs or open toed shoes</i></p> <p>(Snow boots allowed in winter, but must</p>	<p>Gym Shoes</p> <p>Hard soled shoes that tie or fasten</p> <p><i>No Sandals, crocs or open toed shoes</i></p> <p>(Snow boots allowed in winter, but must be</p>

	be removed once in school)	removed once in school)
Socks/ Leggings	Solid white, black, navy or hunter green with no logos	Solid white, black, navy or hunter green with no logos White, gray, black, navy, or hunter green footed tights or ankle length leggings without lace or decoration.

Belts	Belts must be worn in grades 3-8 with pants or shorts. Navy, brown, or black belts enclosed in the belt loops.	Belts must be worn in grades 3-8 with pants or shorts. Navy, brown, or black belts enclosed in the belt loops.
Hair and Accessories	Hair color should be a natural color, traditionally cut, off the face and well kept.	Jewelry, makeup, and other accessories should be kept to a minimum.  No piercings other than ears.  Hair color should be a natural color, traditionally cut, off the face and well kept.

#### Physical Education Uniform:

All students should wear navy blue or black gym shorts or sweatpants and the gray uniform gym shirt. They should wear it to school and all day so they do not have to change for gym class.

- Deodorant may be brought to gym class to reapply after class.
- Gym shoes that support the foot and fasten (tie or velcro) must be worn during class.
- Socks should be uniform colors and must be seen above the entire shoe.

Orders will be placed, processed & picked up from Vennefron - 2106 Monmouth Street, Newport, KY 41071. Make sure you order soon so you are ready for the first week of school! \*\*ORDERS are NOT delivered to school, you must pick them up from the address listed above\*\*

[csgymuniform.itemorder.com](http://csgymuniform.itemorder.com)

#### Out of Uniform Days:

While out of uniform days are meant to give students a break from wearing their school uniforms, students are still expected to wear clothing that is appropriate for a Catholic School. If for any reason you are not sure about whether a piece of clothing is appropriate, do not wear it.

- Shorts and skirts should be no more than 3" above knee.
- No open toed shoes, spaghetti straps, tank tops, or inappropriate logos/writing may be worn.

During cold weather the students will still have outdoor recess unless the temperature goes below 20 degrees. Students are expected to bring appropriate attire for the weather.

Homeroom teachers are required to check students for dress code infractions each morning. Students who do not follow dress code will be given an infraction (for Responsibility) and sent to the office to call parents

(to bring up appropriate clothes). If parents are unable to come to school, students will be given clothes from the uniform exchange to wear the remainder of the school day.

Students who have multiple dress code infractions will lose out-of-uniform day privileges.

## **BACKPACKS**

Due to safety concerns, students may not have the "rolling bookbags." They are tough on the steps and are a hazard for students walking in a line. Bookbags should be carried on the shoulders.

## **SCHOOL DAY**

Classes begin at 7:50 a.m. for all students. Children may not be dropped off at school earlier than 7:25 and should not be left unattended. There is no supervision for any children before 7:25. Children may enter by the parish center or front doors before 7:45. Students arriving between 7:45 and 7:50 must use the front doors of the school. All children must be in their homerooms by 7:50 or will be counted as tardy. Late arrivals are to report to the school office for a tardy slip before going to the classroom. If a child is tardy to school three times, parents will be contacted for an explanation as to the reasons for the tardiness. Further tardies will result in the child being required to stay after school to "recover" this time. Continued tardiness may also result in truancy charges being filed.

Dismissal is at 2:45 p.m. The school is not responsible for students who play on the school property when school is not in session.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Parents should see that their children's attendance at school has priority over all other activities. Regular attendance is vital to successful progress. If a child is absent from class for illness or another legitimate reason, the parent must notify the school by calling the office before 8:30 a.m. Books and assignments for children absent from school should be requested early in the day and picked up after school or given to an assigned student. Kentucky attendance laws require that children who are absent from school present to their homeroom teacher on the day they return to regular classes a note, signed by the parent or guardian, which states the date and reason for their absence. Students are only allowed 3 unexcused and/or 10 excused absences per year without direct consultation with the principal. If a student's absences exceed these numbers parents will be contacted and truancy charges may be filed. Any further absences must be accompanied by a doctor's excuse unless otherwise noted by the administration. The primary purpose for this policy is to see that the student, through regular attendance, is successful in school.

If students need to leave class early, they should present to the teacher, during homeroom, a note signed by the parent or guardian that verifies the reason. Parents who need to pick up children for appointments, illness or any other reason must come to the school office and sign their child out. Students will always be dismissed from the school office. Please try to schedule all appointments for after school when possible. The best interests of the child are served by regular attendance in class. If a special event necessitates taking a child out of school for a day or more, the parent or guardian must send separate notes to the principal and the teacher giving the reason and dates for the absence. The principal will determine if the absence will be excused. Teachers are not required to prepare lessons and assignments ahead of time for prearranged absences, so it is important for your child to

ask a classmate to keep track of homework and classroom notes and lessons. When your child returns to school, he/she must make arrangements with the teacher for completing all missing work within three days of returning. If the work is not completed, a grade of zero may be given. In all cases, the parent assumes responsibility for assisting the child in keeping up to date on material covered during the absence so that the child, the teacher, and the class are not prevented from moving ahead upon return.

**WEATHER DELAY**

If for any reason classes must be canceled or delayed due to bad weather, parents will be contacted using our phone message system. In addition to this, delays and closings will be posted on Facebook and communicated via email.

**TRANSPORTATION**

Students either walk to school or rely upon private transportation. To ensure the safety of all students, the following directions are to be followed.

**DROP OFF:**

1. Enter the driveway on Rossford Avenue nearest the church. Do not enter through the exit area of the parking lots.
2. Proceed straight toward the bottom parking lot. Please pull up as far as possible before stopping to let students out in order to avoid traffic tie-ups on Rossford Avenue.

**PICK UP:**

1. For after-school pick up, drive in the proper entrance and park in your assigned pick up zone while waiting for students to be dismissed. **DO NOT ENTER THROUGH THE EXIT AREA OF THE PARKING LOTS.** Please do not block the driveway or park in the fire zone directly in front of the building. Be cautious and watch for children walking around or in front of cars.
2. All students will be dismissed out of their zone doors assigned prior to the start of the school year at 2:45.
3. Parents, volunteers, and other visitors are not to park in such a way as to interfere with playground movement. Please do not park in the handicapped area next to the classrooms in the lower parking lot. Children's safety is our number one concern with these directives.

**WALKERS:**

1. Students who walk to school must observe proper crosswalk areas, and follow traffic rules.
2. Students should be respectful and attentive to the traffic patrols and student patrols.
3. Bike riders must "walk" their bikes on the playground during school hours and immediately before and after school when cars are present.
4. All bicycles must be parked and locked in the bike racks during school hours. Mini-bikes, scooters, and skateboards are strictly forbidden on St. Catherine's property at all times.

**BUILDING SAFETY AND VISITOR PROCEDURES**

During the school day, all exterior doors will be kept locked. All visitors must report to the main office. All visitors must sign-in and receive a volunteer type badge. No one, for any reason, may enter the building by the Parish Center doors during the school day. Students should never open the Parish Center doors for anyone during the school day. Volunteers or visitors will only be allowed in the school if the teacher is aware that they are coming and they have checked in and received a badge. If you wish to speak to a teacher during the school day, please call and make an appointment (see Communication). This includes before and after school and during lunch. No parent should enter the building or cafeteria to talk with a teacher without first checking into the school office.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is given as a help to students and an extension of the classroom. Assignments involve out of class experiences. They are geared to the needs, interests, and abilities of the students. In addition to their value of helping students explore or reinforce material presented in class, another value of home assignments is to help students develop good study habits. Homework teaches self-discipline: students must learn to budget time and exert themselves, realistically, to meet deadlines. Under the heading of home assignments, students are expected to do research and to write and/or rework papers. Homework, however, is not always written. Students are frequently expected to review notes taken in class, work on projects, read books, watch a specially assigned TV program, memorize needed facts, or study for a test. Parents would do well to show interest in these broader aspects of home assignments and to support the student's accomplishments as faithfully as they usually check on the more traditional written homework. It is recommended that students have a set time and place to do homework in order to set up a daily routine. Parents are encouraged to check and sign homework assignment books daily. The amount of homework varies according to grade level, the nature of the assignments, and the ability of the student. Every attempt is made to see that the amount of time spent is reasonable. Please consult with the teacher if you observe, over an extended period of time, that your child is spending an excessive amount of time on homework or if your child claims he/she has none.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards will be sent home approximately every ten weeks or four times a year. Scheduled conferences between parents and teachers will be held during one or more grading periods. Other conferences for clarification, questions, and discussion may always be scheduled. At the end of the second grading period, letters will be sent home to parents whose child is having academic difficulty. These letters will be followed by a conference with the teacher and the principal to develop a plan to help the child. By identifying problems early in the year, we hope to avoid future problems and retention. In all aspects of grading, we encourage good communication between the principal, parents, teachers and students.

## **GRADING**

All grades except Kindergarten use the letter grading system (A, B, C.). The kindergarten report card is different because it measures social skills and appropriate readiness skills for the kindergarten students. We encourage parents, teachers and students to communicate well to make sure the grading system is clearly understood.

## **TESTING**

MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) testing is completed three times per year (Fall, Winter, and Spring.) MAP Growth is the assessment used for measuring achievement and growth in K–8 math, reading and language. It provides teachers with accurate and actionable evidence to help target instruction for each student or groups of students regardless of how far above or below they are from their grade level.

## **PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY**

### **Promotion – Grades K-3**

Promotion for these grades is based on teacher recommendation which is determined mainly by the child's proficiency in religion, language arts and math essential skills, as well as social and emotional maturity. If it is necessary for a child to repeat a grade, either because of immaturity or lack of understanding of the basic fundamentals of religion, language arts and mathematics, it is best to retain the child in one of the primary grades. A conference with teachers, parents, and the administration would be necessary with the welfare of the individual student taking top priority. A student with an Alternative Learning Plan (ALP) will be evaluated based on their individual plan. The final decision rests with the principal.

### Promotion – Grades 4-5

Promotion for these grades will be based on the four major academic subjects: religion, reading, language arts, and math. Failing more than two of these subjects may more likely result in the student being retained. Failure in one or two of the following academic subjects (religion, reading, language arts, and math) must be made up through an approved summer program or through private tutoring arranged by the parents and approved by the principal. If a student does not succeed in demonstrating proficiency in those academic subjects prior to the beginning of the next school year, the school will retain the student in the current grade. A student with an Alternative Learning Plan (ALP) will be evaluated based on their individual plan. The final decision rests with the principal.

### Promotion – Grades 6-8

Promotion for these grades will be based on the three major academic subjects: religion, reading and math. Failing all three of these subjects may more likely result in the student being retained. The following academic subjects will be taken into account as well: language arts, social studies, and science. Failure in one or two of the following academic subjects (religion, reading, language arts, math, social studies, and science) must be made up through an approved summer program or through private tutoring arranged by the parents and approved by the principal. If a student does not succeed in demonstrating proficiency in those academic subjects prior to the beginning of the next school year, the school will retain the student in the current grade. A student with an Alternative Learning Plan (ALP) will be evaluated based on their individual plan. The final decision rests with the principal.

## **8TH GRADE PROMOTION**

Ceremonies marking the successful completion of the work required of eighth graders at St. Catherine of Siena School will take place at the end of the school year. There will be a simple religious ceremony and a reception. The student must successfully complete the course of studies in order to participate in the promotion ceremonies.

## **LIBRARY**

A part-time librarian operates the school library. Every class is scheduled to use the library each week. Books are checked out during the library period and are to be returned the following week. Books may be renewed once. If a book is lost or damaged, the child is responsible for its replacement. If a student has a book overdue, no other books may be checked out until that book is returned. If you have a problem with a book and its content or would like to suggest book titles, please feel free to contact the principal or the librarian.

## **CAFETERIA**

St. Catherine of Siena School has a hot lunch program subsidized by the government. Government and diocesan regulations are followed. Students may choose to purchase the hot lunch or bring their lunch from home. The cost of hot lunch is determined at the beginning of each school year. Milk and a la carte items can also be purchased. The students are not permitted to bring soft drinks in cans or bottles to school. Lunches brought to the school after 8 a.m. should be labeled with the child's name and dropped off in the office. Absolutely no fast food is to be brought to students at any time during the day.

## **BOARD OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

The Board of Catholic Education is a discerning group of the parish that works with the Pastor and the Principal, in formulating policies for the educational programs of the parish. St. Catherine's Board represents all areas of education: early childhood, parish school, out-of-school religion programs, and adult education. The Board of Catholic Education meetings are usually the 1st Tuesday of the month in the parish center meeting room. The meetings are open to parishioners.

### **ST. CATHERINE SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

The School PTO is a vital link of communication between the home and the school. Parents are urged to join and take an active part in this important group in the school community. Meetings are usually the third Thursday of the month. The School PTO encourages fund raising and provides special programs and needs for the school and cafeteria. The School Forum, conducted at the close of the business meeting, is the place where important issues are presented, by the principal, in an open discussion type format. The PTO also does many things for the school and staff including assigning Room Parents and having Staff Appreciation lunches, dinners, and other events throughout the school year.

### **ST. CATHERINE BOOSTER ASSOCIATION**

The St. Catherine Boosters encourages, promotes and finances sporting activities, and playground equipment for St. Catherine School. Their intent is to provide an opportunity for as many students as possible to develop good moral character, while maturing physically through the participation in organized sports. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to become active in the St. Catherine Boosters. Meetings are usually the second Thursday of each month in the Undercroft.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

St. Catherine School offers a variety of extracurricular activities to its students. The Booster Association sponsors the following sports teams for the students; Spring and Fall Soccer Leagues, Volleyball, Basketball and Cheerleading. In addition to these programs, many other activities are available including a school play, academic competitions (Governor's Cup, Quick Recall).

### **FIELD TRIPS**

The teacher, in consultation with the principal, will arrange field trips that relate to specific units of study or provide enrichment for the students. Parents or guardians must sign and return the permission slip from the school before any student is allowed to leave the school premises. Students generally wear school uniforms unless the nature of the field trip calls for another type of dress. Usually there is an extra fee charged to cover transportation and entrance fees. Field trips are privileges afforded to students; no student has an absolute right to a field trip. The student is still responsible for coming to school if not privileged to attend the field trip. The parent will be informed of his/her child's loss of the field trip privilege and the reason for such action.

### **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY SUSPENSION POLICY**

Education is not limited to classroom experiences; it is derived from all opportunities that contribute in any way towards personal and social growth. It is a privilege to participate in extracurricular activities. With every privilege, there is corresponding responsibility. At any time, a student may be declared ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities at the discretion of the administrator. Extracurricular eligibility with regard to academic progress will be determined at each of the established grading periods (progress reports and report cards). To be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities sponsored by St. Catherine of Siena School, students in grades 4-8\*;

1. Must have no "F's" in the core subjects (Religion, Math, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts)
2. Must meet the standards of conduct as set by the administrator, and have no serious behavior infractions. Suspension of the right to participate will be for a minimum of two weeks and must include all practices, games or activities during this period. The administrator will give notification to the parents and coaches/supervisors at the time that the student is suspended. After two weeks, the student must present proof of satisfactory progress to the administrator. If satisfactory progress has been made, the suspension will be lifted. Otherwise, the suspension will continue until satisfactory progress has been made. Upon returning to extracurricular activities, the student must continue to pass. If a student is failing a second time, the student will no longer be eligible for extracurricular activities until satisfactory progress has been shown on two successive grading periods (as determined by progress reports and report cards).

If a student has been absent from school, or left early due to illness, she/he cannot participate in extracurricular activities on that day. The administrator may make exceptions for special circumstances.

\*In grades 1-3, if a student is failing, a conference will be used to determine if suspension is in the best interest of the child. The conference will include the parent, teacher and school administrator. If a suspension is justified, suspension dates will begin at the date of the conference and last for the required two weeks.

### **BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

Student birthday treats may be brought to school with prior approval from the teacher and can only be distributed to your immediate class. Invitations to parties, which are held outside of school, may only be distributed at school if the entire group is invited; for example, all boys, or all girls, or the entire class. These may only be distributed outside of class time and with the permission of the teacher.

### **TELEPHONE**

The school telephone is for business only. Neither students nor teachers may be called to the phone during the school hours unless there is an emergency. Students may not use the phone for unnecessary phone calls. Calling home for homework, gym clothes, permission to visit another student after school, etc. is not permitted. Emergency situations will always be addressed. No student may use the phone in the Parish Center for any reason during the school day and only after school with permission from a teacher or sponsor.

### **COMPUTER USAGE**

Computers are meant to allow for technology integration within the regular curriculum. Students must limit computer usage to teacher mandated activities. Misuse of the technology by uses such as internet browsing and email or Facebook by students is strictly prohibited. Students who are caught using the computers in an inappropriate manner will be removed from the computers for a length of time specified by the administrator.

### **CELL PHONES**

Students are not permitted to carry cell phones during the school day. We realize some students rely on this form of contact for after school events. If that is the case, the cell phone should be turned off at all times and kept in his/her backpack during school hours. If a student is caught using a cell phone during the day, the cell phone will be confiscated and held until parents can get it from the administrator.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost clothing and articles are a continual problem. Students' names should be on everything they bring to school. A "Lost and Found" basket is kept at school and emptied periodically with the items going to charity. The students are discouraged from bringing unnecessary and/or valuable articles to school. Electronic devices such as I-pods, radios, games, laser pointers, and skateboards may not be brought to school. The school cannot be responsible for lost/broken articles. Items will be confiscated and sent to the principal's office.

### **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Every year the school coordinates vision, hearing and scoliosis screening for the students. Other health related screenings might be conducted. An emergency file is kept on each child for the sole purpose of enabling the school to reach someone in the event of illness. Parents are responsible for supplying information on this sheet and keeping the information up to date. Hospitals will not treat children without parental permission, and it is important for school personnel to be able to reach the parent or guardian in case of emergency. In accordance with state regulations, aspirins, Tylenol, cough drops, or any other non-prescription medication will not be dispensed to any student without written permission from parents. Students may not bring non-prescription medications of any kind to school. If a child needs to take a non-prescription medication, the parent or guardian

must bring the medicine to the office with a note dictating time and dosage to be given to the child. This will allow the office personnel to give the child the medicine as needed. The same will apply to cough drops but will be distributed by the classroom teachers. If a student is required to take prescription medication, the above information and the medication, in the original bottle, must be given to the school secretary. Students must report to the office at the appropriate times to take their medication. It is the responsibility of the student to come to the office for prescription medication. No student may give medication of any kind, prescription or non-prescription, to any other student for any reason.

## **DRILLS**

Fire drills are conducted as required by state regulations. Annual inspections by local and state officials ensure that our procedures and buildings meet state and local fire codes. Each teacher explains the procedures for fire drills at the beginning of the school year. For the safety of all, the students must proceed in an orderly and quiet manner when evacuating the building during a fire drill.

Tornado drills are practiced periodically. In the event of a tornado watch, the weather will be monitored. In the event of a tornado warning, students will leave their classes and go to the designated places remaining there until the warning is lifted.

Earthquake drills are conducted on or near the Great Shakeout Day usually mid October.

Lockdown drills are conducted twice a year. Once in the fall and once in the spring.

## **RIGHT TO AMEND**

Statements in the handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school will attempt to keep you informed of all changes as soon as is practical; however, some changes might be necessary immediately due to unforeseen circumstances.