

2018-19 STUDENT HANDBOOK

ST JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK 2018-2019

NOTE:	This Student/Parent Handbook is based in significant part on policies adopted by the Board of Education and Administrative Guidelines developed by the Superintendent. Those Board Policies and Administrative Guidelines are incorporated by reference into the provisions of this Handbook. The Policies and Administrative Guidelines are periodically updated in response to changes in the law and other circumstances. Therefore, there may have been changes to the documents reviewed in this Handbook since it was printed in July 2018.. If you have questions or would like more information about a specific issue or document, contact your school principal, or access the document on the District's website: www.sjschools.org by clicking on parent information and finding the specific policy or administrative guideline in the Table of Contents for that section.
--------------	--

**BROWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Student/Parent Handbook**

**2027 Brown School Road
St. Joseph, MI 49085**

Welcome to Brown Elementary School. All the members of the staff and I are pleased to have you as a student and will do our best to help make your experience as productive and successful as you wish to make it.

Kristen Bawks, Principal (269) 926-3500

Brianne Van Hekken, School Social Worker (269) 926-3500

Sara Codde, School Secretary (269) 926-3500

Ann Cardon, Superintendent of Schools (269) 926-3100

Kelly Gaideski, Curriculum Director (269) 926-3122



**E. P. CLARKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Student/Parent Handbook**

**515 East Glenlord Road
St. Joseph, MI 49085**

Welcome to E. P. Clarke Elementary School. All the members of the staff and I are pleased to have you as a student and will do our best to help make your experience as productive and successful as you wish to make it.

Michelle Allen, Principal	(269) 926-3600
Colette Jasiak, School Social Worker	(269) 926-3600
Laura Koetsier, School Secretary	(269) 926-3600
Ann Cardon, Superintendent of Schools	(269) 926-3100
Kelly Gaideski, Curriculum Director	(269) 926-3122

**LINCOLN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Student/Parent Handbook**

**1102 Orchard Ave.
St. Joseph, MI 49085**

Welcome to Lincoln Elementary School. All the members of the staff and I are pleased to have you as a student and will do our best to help make your experience as productive and successful as you wish to make it.

Craig Hubble, Principal	(269) 926-3700
Colette Jasiak, School Social Worker	(269) 926-3700
Brianne Van Hekken, School Social Worker	(269) 926-3700
Janet Trumbley, School Secretary	(269) 926-3700
Ann Cardon, Superintendent of Schools	(269) 926-3100
Kelly Gaideski, Curriculum Director	(269) 926-3122

Appendix A: School Calendar

Appendix B: Elementary Discipline Rubric

Appendix C: School Staff Listing

Appendix D: Board of Education

FOREWORD

This student handbook was developed to answer many of the commonly asked questions that you and your parents may have during the school year and to provide specific information about certain Board policies and procedures. This handbook contains important information that you should know. Become familiar with the following information and keep the handbook available for frequent reference by you and your parents. If you have any questions that are not addressed in this handbook, you are encouraged to talk to your teachers or the building principal.

This handbook summarizes many of the official policies and administrative guidelines of the Board of Education and the District. To the extent that the handbook is ambiguous or conflicts with these policies and guidelines, the policies and guidelines shall control. This handbook is effective immediately and supersedes any prior handbook and other written material on the same subjects.

This handbook does not equate to an irrevocable contractual commitment to the student, but only reflects the current status of the Board's policies and the School's rules as of the 2018-2019 school year. If any of the policies or administrative guidelines referenced herein are revised after June 30, 2018 the language in the most current policy or administrative guideline prevails.

MISSION OF THE SCHOOL

Brown Elementary: "Inspire. Innovate. Achieve."

E. P. Clarke Elementary: "Working together to prepare every child for a successful tomorrow."

Lincoln Elementary: "Every Child, Every Day"

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of this District to provide an equal education opportunity for all students.

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disability Act of 1990, and the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1977, it is the policy of the St. Joseph Public School District that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex,

disability, height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to, discrimination during any program, activity, service or in employment.

Any person who believes that s/he has been discriminated against on the basis of his/her race, color, disability, religion, gender, or national origin, while at school or a school activity should immediately contact the School District's Compliance Officer listed below:

Craig Hubble
Principal, Lincoln Elementary
269-926-3100
3275 Lincoln Ave.
St. Joseph, MI 49085
chubble@sjschools.org

Denise Reisig
Director of Special Education
269-926-3100
3275 Lincoln Ave.
St. Joseph, MI 49085
dreisig@sjschools.org

Complaints will be investigated in accordance with the procedures as described in Board Policy 2260. Any student making a complaint or participating in a school investigation will be protected from any threat or retaliation. The Compliance Officer can provide additional information concerning equal access to educational opportunity.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We recognizes and values parents and families as children's first teachers and believe that student learning is more likely to occur when there is an effective partnership between the school and the student's parents and family. Family involvement generally results in higher academic achievement, improved student behavior, and reduced absenteeism.

Parent and family members are encouraged to be involved with their children's education. We offer parents the opportunity to volunteer in classrooms, at the media center, and for school-wide activities. We believe that strong parent involvement and high expectations contribute to quality schools.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

See Appendix A. The school calendar is also available online at www.sjschools.org.

SCHOOL DAY

DAILY SCHEDULE

Students Enter Building: 8:25 a.m.

Tardy Bell: 8:30 a.m.

Dismissal: 3:48 p.m. (Full Day)

Half Day: Dismissal at 12:05 p.m.

Late Start: Students enter building at 9:25 a.m.. Classes begin at 9:30 a.m.

Arrival and Dismissal

Supervision on school playgrounds and grounds is limited to school hours. Students should not arrive early or stay after school without parent supervision.

Students enter school at 8:25 AM. No early entry is permitted, except for participation in before school programming, including breakfast. Instruction begins at 8:30 a.m.

Students riding home with parents/guardians are to be picked up by 4:05 p.m. For safety reasons, parents and guardians are required to follow established pick up and drop off procedures.

At some schools, adult crossing guards report for duty at the respective locations at 8:05 a.m. Lincoln school has students on duty as safety patrol who report at 8:05 AM. Both adult and student crossing guards are on duty after school until 4:05 p.m. (Lincoln only).

On days of inclement weather, students are permitted to enter the building for shelter when they arrive.

At the close of school, students are asked to leave the playground and go directly home. This will ensure that our patrols, crossing guards, etc., are available to cross the children.

Bicycles

Students in grades 3-5 may ride their bicycles to school. Students are asked to be especially careful and follow all safety precautions. All bicycles should be locked while at school. The school is not responsible for loss or damage to bicycles on school property or while being ridden to and from school.

Late Start

Several times during this school year the student day will start one hour late to provide professional development time for our staff. On these days, all bus schedules and attendance times will be adjusted by one hour. The school day will be 9:25 a.m. until 3:48 p.m.. Students should be at their bus stops one hour later than their regularly scheduled time.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The rules and procedures of the school are designed to allow each student to obtain a safe, orderly, and appropriate education. Students can expect their rights to freedom of expression and association and to fair treatment as long as they respect those rights for their fellow students and the staff. Students will be expected to follow teachers' directions and to obey all school rules. Disciplinary procedures are designed to ensure due process (a fair hearing) before a student is removed because of his/her behavior.

Parents have the right to know how their child is succeeding in school and will be provided information on a regular basis and as needed, when concerns arise. Many times it will be the student's responsibility to deliver that information. If necessary, the mail or hand delivery may be used to ensure contact. Parents are encouraged to build a two-way link with their child's teachers and support staff by informing the staff of suggestions or concerns that may help their child better accomplish his/her educational goals.

Students must arrive at school on time, prepared to learn and participate in the educational program.

STUDENT WELL-BEING

Student safety is a responsibility of the staff. All staff members are familiar with emergency procedures such as fire, lock down and tornado drills and accident reporting procedures. Should a student be aware of any dangerous situation or accident, s/he must notify any staff person immediately.

State law requires that all students must have an emergency medical form completed, signed by a parent or guardian, and filed in the School office. A student may be excluded from school until this requirement has been fulfilled.

Students with specific health care needs should deliver written notice about such needs along with proper documentation by a physician, to the School Office.

INJURY AND ILLNESS

All injuries must be reported to a teacher or the office. If minor, the student will be treated and may return to class. If medical attention is required, the office will follow the School's emergency procedures.

A student who becomes ill during the school day should request permission to go to the office. An appropriate adult in the office will determine whether or not the student should remain in school or go home. No student will be released from school without proper parental permission.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

The District shall arrange for individual instruction to students of legal school age who are not able to attend classes because of a physical or emotional disability.

Parents should contact the school administration regarding procedures for such instruction. Applications must be approved by Denise Reisig, Director of Homebound Services. The District will provide homebound instruction only for those confinements expected to last at least five (5) days.

Applications for individual instruction shall be made by a physician licensed to practice in this State, parent, student, or other caregiver. A physician must: certify the nature and existence of a medical condition; state the probable duration of the confinement; request such instruction; present evidence of the student's ability to participate in an educational program.

SECTION I - GENERAL INFORMATION

ENROLLING IN THE SCHOOL

In general, State law requires students to enroll in the school district in which their parent or legal guardian resides unless enrolling under the District's School of Choice policy.

Parents are required to provide accurate and current information regarding residency and to notify the School District promptly upon any change of residency. A resident student is, as an example, one who lives within the School District boundaries in the home of parent(s), who has legal physical custody, or the legal guardian.

New students under the age of eighteen (18) must be enrolled by their parent or legal guardian. When enrolling, parents must provide copies of the following:

- A. a birth certificate or similar document,
- B. court papers allocating parental rights and responsibilities, or custody (if appropriate),
- C. proof of residency,
- D. proof of immunizations.

Under certain circumstances, temporary enrollment may be permitted. In such cases, parents will be notified about documentation required to establish permanent enrollment.

Students enrolling from another school must have an official transcript from their previous school in order to have credits transferred. The school secretary will assist in obtaining the transcript, if not presented at the time of enrollment.

Homeless students who meet the Federal definition of homeless may enroll and will be under the direction of the District Liaison for Homeless Children with regard to enrollment procedures.

A student who has been suspended or expelled by another public school in Michigan may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of suspension or expulsion even if that student would otherwise be entitled to attend school in the District. Likewise, a student who has been expelled or otherwise removed for disciplinary purposes from a public school in another state and the period of expulsion or removal has not expired, may be temporarily denied admission to the District's schools during the period of expulsion or removal or until the expiration of the period of expulsion or removal which the student would have received in the District had the student committed the offense while enrolled in the District. Prior to denying admission, however, the Superintendent shall offer the student an opportunity for a hearing to review the circumstances of the suspension or expulsion and any other factors the Superintendent determines to be relevant.

SCHEDULING AND ASSIGNMENT

The school principal will assign each student to the appropriate classroom and program. Any questions or concerns about the assignment should be discussed with the principal.

Student placement is based on the professional judgment of school staff. Every effort is made to create balanced classes. We consider the following factors when making class lists:

- An even distribution of students according to ability;
- A fair balance of boys and girls in a classroom;
- A fair distribution of students who demand more care and attention from a teacher; and,
- The mixture of students' personalities and probable "fit" as a class.

Parents may submit written information for staff to consider for student placement. Specific requests for teachers are not accepted.

EARLY DISMISSAL

No student will be allowed to leave school prior to dismissal time without a written request signed by the parent or legal guardian, a person whose signature is on file in the School office, or the parent/guardian coming to the school office to request the release. No student will be released to a person other than a custodial parent(s) without permission of the custodial parent(s) or guardian.

Appointments During the School Day

Appointments during the school day should be limited. When it is necessary for a child to leave during the school day advance notification to the teacher or school secretary is required. Parents or guardians must meet the student in the school office and sign him/her out on the log sheet prior to leaving the building. If returning to school on the same day, students must be signed in on the arrival log sheet in the school office.

After School Activities and Arrangements

After school transportation changes and activity arrangements should be made prior to the beginning of the school day to limit the interruptions to the learning process. Any communication with the school related to changes to a students' after school schedule must be made prior to 2:00 p.m..

TRANSFER OUT OF THE DISTRICT

Parents must notify the principal about plans to transfer their child to another school. If a student plans to transfer from our school, the parent must notify the principal. Transfer will be authorized only after the student has completed the arrangements, returned all school materials, and paid any fees or fines that are due. School records, may not be released if the transfer is not properly completed. Parents are encouraged to contact the building secretary for specific details.

School officials, when transferring student records, are required to transmit disciplinary records including suspension and expulsion actions against the student.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

No student under the age of eighteen (18) will be allowed to withdraw from school without the written consent of his/her parents.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must be current with all immunizations required by law or have an authorized waiver from State immunization requirements. If a student does not have the necessary shots or waivers, the principal may remove the student or require compliance with a set deadline. This is for the safety of all students and in accordance with State law. Any questions about immunizations or waivers should be directed to the building secretary.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

The Board has established a policy that every student must have an Emergency Medical Authorization Form completed and signed by his/her parent in order to participate in any activity off school grounds. This includes field trips, spectator trips, athletic and other extracurricular activities, and co-curricular activities.

The Emergency Medical Authorization Form is provided at the time of enrollment and at the beginning of each year. Failure to return the completed form to the school will jeopardize a student's educational program.

USE OF MEDICATIONS

In those circumstances where a student must take prescribed medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- A. Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- B. The Medication Request and Authorization Form must be filed with the respective building principal before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours.
- C. All medications must be registered with the principal's office.
- D. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured.

Medication must be delivered to school directly by the parent. A two to four (4) week supply of medication is recommended.

Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student's lunch box, pocket, or other means on or about his/her person, except for emergency medications for allergies and/or reactions.

- E. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.

F. The parents shall have sole responsibility to instruct their child to take the medication at the scheduled time, and the child has the responsibility for both presenting himself/herself on time and for taking the prescribed medication.

G. A log for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written instructions and the parent's written permission release.

ASTHMA INHALERS AND EPI-PENS

Students, with appropriate written permission from the physician and parent, may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms. Epinephrine (Epi-pen) is administered only in accordance with a written medication administration plan developed by the parent and a physician in cooperation with the school principal. The Allergy and Asthma Action Plan form must be updated annually. See the District's Life Threatening Allergy plan for additional information.

NON PRESCRIBED (OVER-THE-COUNTER) MEDICATIONS

No staff member will be permitted to dispense non-prescribed, over-the-counter (OTC) medication to any student. This includes topical treatments, such as ointments, lotions, sunscreens, etc..

Parents may authorize the school to administer a non prescribed medication using a form which is available at the school office. A physician's prescription or order is necessary to allow students to take non-prescription medication (including topical ointments, lotions, sunscreen, etc.) at school and all of the other conditions described above under prescribed medications will also apply to non prescribed medications. No other exceptions will be made to these requirements.

CONTROL OF CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND PESTS

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly-transient pest, such as lice.

Specific diseases include; diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, measles, rubella, and other conditions indicated by the Local and State Health Departments.

Any removal will only be for the contagious period as specified in the school's administrative guidelines. See the District website for more information.

CONTROL OF NON CASUAL-CONTACT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

In the case of non casual-contact, communicable-diseases, the school still has the obligation to protect the safety of the staff and students. In these cases, the person in question will have his/her status reviewed by a panel of resource people, including the County Health Department, to ensure that the rights of the person affected and those in contact with that person are respected. The school will seek to keep students and staff persons in school unless there is definitive evidence to warrant exclusion.

Non Casual-contact communicable diseases include sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC-AIDS Related Complex (condition), HIV (Human-immunodeficiency), HAV, HBV, HCV (Hepatitis A, B, C); and other diseases that may be specified by the State Board of Health.

As required by Federal law, parents will be requested to have their child's blood checked for HIV, HBV, and other blood-borne pathogens when the child has bled at school and students or staff members have been exposed to the blood. Any testing is subject to laws protecting confidentiality.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provide that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of a disability. This protection applies not just to the student, but to all individuals who have access to the District's programs and facilities.

A student can access special education services through the proper evaluation procedures. Parent involvement in this procedure is important and required by Federal (IDEA) and State law. Contact Denise Reisig, Director of Special Education, at (269) 926 - 3123 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs.

LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Limited proficiency in the English language should not be a barrier to equal participation in the instructional or extra-curricular programs of the District. It is, therefore the policy of this District that those students identified as having limited English proficiency will be provided additional support and instruction to assist them in gaining English proficiency and in accessing the educational and extra-curricular program offered by the District. Parents should contact the Craig Jeffers, District ELPA Coordinator, at (269) 926-3409 to inquire about evaluation procedures and programs offered by the District.

STUDENT RECORDS

The District maintains many student records including both directory information and confidential information. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

All parents and guardians of a student have the right to examine the official records, files, documents, and data kept by the school district directly related to the student. Procedures for the examination and review of records are available upon request of the building administrator. Copies of such records are available upon request at the cost of the school. A copy of the complete administrative regulation is also available from the school administrator.

Under the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, no such records shall be made available to any person without the consent or notification of the parent or guardian of the student, except for certain director information as listed in the administrative regulation mentioned above, except to those teachers and officials of the school who have a legitimate educational interest in such information. If a student's records are transferred to another school district, or if a court has ordered access to those records, the parent or guardian will be notified by the school administrator.

STUDENT PRIVACY

The St. Joseph Public Schools must obtain your consent or allow your child to opt out of school activities, surveys, or evaluations that concern one or more of the following areas:

- 1) Political affiliations or beliefs of students or families;
- 2) Mental or psychological problems of students or families;
- 3) Sex behavior or attitudes;
- 4) Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- 5) Critical appraisals of others when respondents have close family relationships;
- 6) Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as therapists, doctors, lawyers, or clergy;
- 7) Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs;
- 8) Income, other than reporting for legal eligibility or financial assistance.

The school will notify parents when consent or the opt-out choice is applicable.

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND SUPPLIES

St. Joseph Public Schools may charge specific fees for designated non-curricular activities and programs. Such fees or charges are determined by the cost of materials, freight/handling fees, and add-on fees for loss or damage to school property. The school and staff do not make a profit. Fees may be waived in situations where there is financial hardship.

The District will provide all basic supplies needed to complete the required course curriculum. The student and/or his/her family may choose to purchase their own supplies if they desire to have a greater quantity or quality of supplies, or desire to help conserve the limited resources for use by others. The teacher or appropriate administrator may recommend useful supplies for these purposes. (See Policy 6152)

Students using school property and equipment can be fined for excessive wear and abuse of the property and equipment. The fine will be used to pay for the damage, not to make a profit.

STUDENT FUNDRAISING

Students participating in school-sponsored groups and activities will be allowed to solicit funds from other students, staff members, and members of the community in accordance with school guidelines. The following general rules will apply to all fundraisers.

§ Students involved in the fundraiser must not interfere with students participating in other activities when soliciting funds.

§ Students who engage in fundraisers that require them to exert themselves physically beyond their normal pattern of activity, such as "runs for", will be monitored by a staff member in order to prevent a student from over-extending himself/herself to the point of potential harm.

§ Students may not participate in a fund-raising activity conducted by a parent group, booster club, or community organization on school property without the approval of the Principal.

STUDENT VALUABLES

Students are encouraged not to bring items of value to school. Items such as jewelry, expensive clothing, electronic equipment, and the like, are tempting targets for theft and extortion. The School cannot be responsible for their safekeeping and will not be liable for loss or damage to personal valuables.

REVIEW OF INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

Parents have the right to review any instructional materials being used in the school. They also may observe instruction in any class, particularly those dealing with instruction in health and sex education. Any parent who wishes to review materials or observe instruction must contact the principal prior to coming to the School. Parents' rights to review teaching materials and instructional activities are subject to reasonable restrictions and limits.

MEAL SERVICE

The Board believes the development of healthy behaviors and habits with regard to eating cannot be accomplished by the District alone. It will be necessary for the school staff, in addition to parents and the public at large, to be involved in a community-wide effort to promote, support, and model such healthy behaviors and habits. Parents interested in being involved should contact Demrhy Youngquist, Food Service Director.

The school participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes lunches available to students for a fee of \$2.45 (adults \$3.75). Breakfast is sold from 8:00-8:25 daily for \$1.75 (adults \$2.50). Students may also bring their own lunch to school to be eaten in the school's cafeteria. Milk is available for students bringing their own lunch and can be purchased for 60-cents. Students should not exchange food with other children. All food is to be eaten in the lunchroom.

The breakfast and lunch programs are paid on a debit card system. Money can be deposited in student foodservice accounts on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis by paying at school by cash/check or online by credit card at www.sendmoneytoschool.com. Please note: a student id number is needed to use the online system. Please contact the school office.

No student shall be allowed to leave school premises during the lunch period without consent of the parent. Students must be signed out in accordance with school procedures.

Applications for the school's Free and Reduced-Priced Meal program are available online at www.lunchapp.com and are distributed to each family. If a student does not receive one and believes that s/he is eligible, contact Demrhy Youngquist, Food Service Director, at (269) 926-3127.

St. Joseph Public Schools Breakfast/Lunch Charging Procedures

The goal of the St. Joseph Public Schools is to provide students with healthy meals each day. However, unpaid charges place a large financial burden on our Food Services Department. The purpose of this policy is to insure compliance with federal reporting requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program, and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances. The intent of this policy is to establish uniform meal account procedures throughout the St. Joseph Public Schools. The provisions of this policy pertain to regular priced school breakfast and lunch meals only. While the USDA Child Nutrition Program does not require that a student who pays for regular priced meals be served a meal without payment, the St. Joseph Public Schools provides this policy as a courtesy to those students in the event that they forget or lose their lunch money.

Full Pay Students – Elementary, Middle School and High School Students will pay for meals at the district’s published standard rate each day. A student will be allowed to charge a maximum of five (5) meals to their account after the balance reaches zero. Once a student has charged those five meals, he/she will not be allowed to charge a la carte item, however he/she will be offered a designated menu alternate. Sample: Soy butter and jelly sandwich, veggie sticks, fruit and milk. This designated menu alternate will be charged to the child’s meal account at the standard rate. Free Meal Benefit - Free status students will be allowed to receive a free breakfast and lunch each day. To make ala carte purchases students must have cash or funds in they’re lunch account. Reduced Meal Benefit- Reduced status students will be allowed to receive a breakfast for \$.30 and lunch for \$.40 each day. A student will be allowed to charge a maximum of five (5) meals to their account after the balance reaches zero. Once a student has charged those five meals, he/she will not be allowed to charge a la carte items, however he/she will be offered a designated menu alternate. Sample: Soy butter and jelly sandwich, veggie sticks, fruit and milk. This designated menu alternate will be charged to the child’s meal account at the reduced rate. There is a no charging policy for Adult lunch sales.

Students/Parents/Guardians - pay for meals in advance via www.sendmoneytoschool.com, by cash or with a check payable to SJPS Food Service. Funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds for a particular student will be carried over into the next school year. All school cafeterias possess computerized point of sale/cash register systems that maintain records of all monies deposited and spent for each student and said records are available by setting up an account at www.sendmoneytoschool.com or by speaking with the Food Service Director.

Weekly reminders for low and negative balances can be sent electronically to parents when they sign up to www.sendmoneytoschool.com. Letters from the Food Service Office will be sent home with the student biweekly. Refunds - for withdrawn, and graduating students; a written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted. An email request is also acceptable. Students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given the option to transfer to a sibling’s account with a written request.

FIRE, LOCK DOWN AND TORNADO DRILLS

The school complies with all fire safety laws and will conduct fire drills in accordance with State law. Specific instructions on how to proceed will be provided to students by their teachers who will be responsible for safe, prompt, and orderly evacuation of the building.

Tornado drills will be conducted during the tornado season using the procedures provided by the State.

Lock down drills in which the students are restricted to the interior of the school building and the building secured will occur a minimum of two (2) times each school year.

MISSING STUDENT

If a student is thought to be missing by parents and/or school personnel, the following shall be contacted to begin a search of their respective areas for the child:

The parents and building principal.

Emergency card contacts.

The transportation supervisor.

All other building principals in district.

The superintendent of schools.

The local police department.

ANIMALS AND PETS

In all cases, parents must contact the teacher before sending animals to school. The animal(s) must be properly controlled by the student or parent at all times. Animals are not allowed on buses.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND DELAYS

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, announcements will be posted on our school website, www.sjschools.org. Parents are encouraged to subscribe to the RSS feed for instant notification via email. School closing announcements will also be distributed using our district call-out system and are announced on local radio and television stations beginning at approximately 7:00 a.m.

If appropriate, a two hour delayed start will be utilized instead of cancelling school. School will begin at 10:25 a.m. and dismiss at the regular time. Students should be at their bus stops two hours later than their regularly scheduled time.

In case it is necessary to dismiss during the regular school day, announcements are made on the school website and local radio stations. Parents will also be notified using the district call-out system. If you work or are not at home, please advise your children where they should go during emergencies. If parents consider that weather conditions have become severe during the day and wish to pick their students up before dismissal time, they may do so without any attendance penalty to their students. Also canceled are any school and/or PTO sponsored activities, programs, and meetings which have been scheduled during after school and evening hours.

Parents and students are responsible for knowing about emergency closings and delays.

PREPAREDNESS FOR TOXIC AND ASBESTOS HAZARDS

The School is concerned for the safety of students and attempts to comply with all Federal and State Laws and Regulations to protect students from hazards that may result from industrial accidents beyond the control of school officials or from the presence of asbestos materials used in previous construction. A copy of the School District's *Preparedness for Toxic Hazard and Asbestos Hazard Policy* and asbestos management plan will be made available for inspection at the Board offices upon request.

VISITORS

Visitors, particularly parents, are welcome at the school. In order to properly monitor the safety of students and staff, each visitor must report to the office upon entering the school to obtain a pass. Any visitor found in the building without a pass shall be reported to the principal. If a person wishes to confer with a member of the staff, s/he should call for an appointment prior to coming to the School, in order to schedule a mutually convenient time.

Students may not bring visitors to school without prior written permission from the Principal.

VOLUNTEERS

We encourage and promote parent volunteers at school. Volunteers must work through the classroom teacher, PTO, or building principal. All volunteers are required to have a background check. When visiting school, volunteers must sign in at the school office before going to work stations and wear identification when in the building. School volunteers are expected to respect the confidentiality of our students and will be asked to sign a confidentiality statement.

USE OF THE SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER

The media centers in St. Joseph Public Schools exist to support the belief that students are Creators and Innovators, Communicators and Collaborators, Researchers, Problem Solvers, Global Digital Citizens, and Readers. Students are encouraged to use their school library media center on a regular basis for reading material, collaborative work spaces, and access to computers and other digital resources. Classes will visit weekly for book checkout; however, individual students may also check out books during other times of the school day. The elementary media specialist works closely with the library assistants in each school and provides direct instruction to classes on a variety of topics involving literacy, inquiry, and innovative use of technology.

Materials in the media center can be checked out by students for one week at a time with options for renewal when needed. The media center staff strives to teach students responsibility for school and library materials, and students are expected to return items in a timely manner. Exceptions can be made for long-term projects, just-in-time learning, and other

special circumstances. Fines are not charged for overdue materials; however, lost and damaged items will be assessed a replacement cost if the item is not found or can no longer be circulated.

The school library media center is designed to be the heart of the school. Students should visit often and take advantage of the wonderful resources available to them.

USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

Students must receive the permission of the teacher before using any equipment or materials in the classroom and the permission of the Principal to use any other school equipment or facility. Students will be held responsible for the proper use and protection of any equipment or facility they are permitted to use.

LOST AND FOUND

Students who have lost items should check the designated lost and found area at school to retrieve their items. Unclaimed items will be given to charity at winter break and the close of the school year.

STUDENT SALES

No student is permitted to sell any item or service in school without the approval of the building principal. Violation of this may lead to disciplinary action.

USE OF SCHOOL TELEPHONES

Office telephones are not to be used for personal calls. Except in an emergency, students will not be called to the office to receive a telephone call. School personnel will approve and initiate all calls from school made on behalf of the student.

USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may bring personal music devices to school for classroom projects, field trips, and transportation times. Music lyrics and file content on such devices should be appropriate for the school environment. Headphones must be used on the school bus.

We discourage elementary students having cell phones at school. If parents consider such devices a must, they should alert the classroom teacher and must be stowed in a backpack during school hours.

No video games are allowed at school or on the school bus.

All personal electronic devices must be turned off and remain off during school hours. Failure to comply with school rules related to personal electronic device use may result in suspension of a student's right to have said devices at school.

Any personal property that is disruptive to the educational process will be confiscated. Students assume responsibility for their personal property. The school is not responsible for loss or damage to personal electronic devices.

ADVERTISING OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Students may not post announcements or advertisements for outside activities without receiving prior approval from the principal. The principal will try to respond to requests for approval within forty-eight (48) hours of their receipt.

SECTION II - ACADEMICS

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are academic activities that are held off school grounds. There are also other trips that are part of the school's co-curricular and extra-curricular program. No student may participate in any school-sponsored trip without parental consent.

GRADING PERIODS

Students shall receive a report card at the end of each trimester indicating their progress for each area of study for that portion of the academic term.

When a student appears to be at risk of failure, notification will be provided to the parents so they can talk with the teacher about what actions can be taken to improve poor grades.

PROMOTION, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTION

Promotion to the next grade (or level) is based on the following criteria:

1. current level of achievement
2. potential for success at the next level
3. emotional, physical, and/or social maturity

HOMEWORK

The assignment of homework can be expected. Student grades will reflect the completion of all work, including outside assignments. Homework is also part of the student's preparation for the State mandated test and promotion.

Homework will not generally be used for disciplinary reasons but only to enhance the student's learning.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY AND NETWORKS

Before any student may take advantage of the School's computer network and the internet, s/he and his/her parents must sign an agreement which defines the conditions under which the student may participate. Failure to abide by all of the terms of the agreement may lead to termination of the student's computer account and possible disciplinary action as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct or referral to law enforcement authorities. Copies of the School District's *Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use And Safety Policy* and the requisite student and parent agreement will be distributed upon enrollment and is available online at www.sjschools.org.

Students must complete a mandatory training session/program regarding the appropriate use of technology and online safety and security as specified in Policy 7540.03 – Student Network and Internet Acceptable Use and Safety before being permitted to access the Network and/or being assigned an e-mail address.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Periodic and annual assessments tests are given to students to monitor progress and determine educational mastery levels. These assessments are used to help the staff determine instructional needs.

Classroom tests will be used to assess student progress and assign grades. These are selected or prepared by teachers to assess how well the students have achieved specific objectives.

Parents and students should school communications for announced testing times.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Berrien RESA staff members and district personnel may periodically visit St. Joseph Public Schools classrooms to observe students and consult with teachers for the purposes of improving teaching practice and designing academic and behavioral interventions for students.

SECTION III - STUDENT ACTIVITIES

SCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

St. Joseph Public Schools provides students the opportunity to broaden their learning through curricular-related activities.

Extra-curricular activities do not reflect the School curriculum, but may be made available by Parent Teacher Organizations to students to allow them to pursue additional worthwhile activities such as recreational sports, drama, and the like.

All students are permitted to participate in the activities of their choosing, as long as they meet the eligibility requirements.

NONSCHOOL-SPONSORED CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Nonschool-sponsored student groups organized for religious, political, or philosophical reasons may meet during noninstructional hours. Permission can be obtained from the principal. The applicant must verify that the activity is being initiated by students, that attendance is voluntary, that no school staff person is actively involved in the event, that the event will not interfere with school activities and that nonschool persons do not play a regular role in the event. All school rules will still apply regarding behavior and equal opportunity to participate.

All groups must comply with School rules and must provide equal opportunity to participate.

No nondistrict-sponsored organization may use the name of the school or school mascot.

SECTION IV - STUDENT CONDUCT

ATTENDANCE

School Attendance Policy

It is imperative that students be in attendance each school day in order not to miss a significant portion of their education. Many important learnings result from active participation in classroom and other school activities which cannot be replaced by individual study.

The school chooses, however, not to provide perfect attendance awards, because there are students with health conditions that will not allow them to be in attendance every school day, although they are present every day they are capable of attending.

Truancy

Unexcused absence from school (truancy) is not acceptable. After five days of truancy in any grading period or 10 days of truancy in a school year, a student will be considered an "habitual truant" which can result in:

§ A referral to county truancy officials, including a possible hearing before a judge in a court of law;

§ a report to local authorities concerning lack of parental responsibility in providing proper care and supervision of a child.

Excused Absences

Students may be excused from school for one or more of the following reasons and will be provided an opportunity to make-up missed school work and/or tests:

Students with a health condition that causes repeated absence are to provide the school office with an explanation of the condition from a registered physician.

Parents must provide an explanation for their child's absence by no later than 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence or by the following day. They are to call the building secretary and explain the reason for the absence.

Although daily attendance in school is extremely important, students should stay at home if they are not feeling well enough to participate in the school day. We do not want students to communicate illnesses to classmates. Of course, students who are well enough to attend school may return to school at any time. Students who are absent for more than half a day of school due to illness should not participate in evening programs at the school.

If the absence can be foreseen and the "good cause" must be approved by the principal, the parent should arrange to discuss the matter as many days as possible before the absence will occur so that arrangements can be made to assist the student in making up the missed school work.

Students who are excusably absent for more than five days in a grading period or 10 days in the school year, regardless of the reasons, will be considered "frequently absent". If there is a pattern of frequent absence for "illness", the parents will be required to provide a statement from a physician describing the health condition that is causing the frequent illness and the treatment that is being provided to rectify the condition. Without such a statement, the student's permanent attendance record will indicate "frequent unexplained illness", a possible sign of poor work ethic and irresponsible behavior.

During the next grading period, a "frequently-absent" student will be placed on "attendance watch" to monitor whether or not the pattern continues. In cases of extreme absenteeism affecting academic progress, promotion to the next grade level may be denied.

Suspension From School

Absence from school due to suspension shall be considered an authorized absence, neither excused nor unexcused.

A suspended student will be responsible for making up school work lost due to suspension. It is recommended that a student complete missed assignments during the suspension and turn them in to the teacher upon his/her return from school. Assignments may be obtained from the classroom teacher beginning with the first day of a suspension. Make up of missed tests may be scheduled when the student returns to school. The student will be given credit for properly-completed assignments and a grade on any made-up tests.

Unexcused Absences

Any student who is absent from school for all or any part of the day without a legitimate excuse shall be considered truant and the student and his/her parents shall be subject to the truancy laws of the State.

If a student, under the age of eighteen (18), is truant for more than ten (10) consecutive or fifteen (15) total days of truancy during a semester, s/he will be considered a "habitual" truant and will be reported to the proper authorities.

Notification of Absence

If a student is going to be absent, the parents must contact the school by 8:30 a.m. and provide an explanation. If prior contact is not possible, the parents should provide a written excuse as soon as possible. When no excuse is provided, the absence will be unexcused and the student will be considered truant. If the absence of a student appears to be questionable or excessive, the school staff will try to help parents improve their child's attendance.

An excused absence allows the student to make up all possible work. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain missed assignments. It is possible that certain kinds of school work such as labs or skill-practice sessions cannot be made up and, as a result, may negatively impact a student's grade.

Tardiness

A student who is not in his/her assigned location by 8:30 a.m. shall be considered tardy. Any student arriving late to school is to report to the school office before proceeding to class.

Vacations During the School Year

Parents are encouraged not to take their child out of school for vacations. When a family vacation must be scheduled during the school year, the parents should discuss the matter with the principal and the student's teacher(s) to make necessary arrangements. It may be possible for the student to receive certain assignments that are to be completed during the trip.

Make-up of Tests and Other School Work

Students who are excusably absent from school or who have been suspended shall be given the opportunity to make-up work that has been missed. The student should contact the classroom teacher as soon as possible to obtain assignments. Students will be given the number of days of excused absence within which to make-up work.

If a student misses a teacher's test due to excused absence, s/he may make arrangements with the teacher to take the test. If s/he misses a State mandated test or other standardized test, the student should consult with the classroom teacher to arrange for taking the test.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL EVENTS

The school encourages students to attend as many school events held after school as possible, without interfering with their school work and home activities. Enthusiastic spectators help to build school spirit and encourage those students who are participating in the event.

However, in order to ensure that students attending evening events as nonparticipants are properly safe-guarded, it is strongly advised that students be accompanied by a parent or adult chaperone when they attend the event. The School will not be able to supervise unaccompanied students nor will it be responsible for students who arrive without an adult chaperone.

The school will continue to provide adequate supervision for all students who are participants in a School activity. Students must comply with the Code of Conduct at school events, regardless of the location.

CODE OF CONDUCT

A major component of the educational program at St. Joseph Public Schools is to prepare students to become responsible workers and citizens by learning how to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with established standards.

Expected Behaviors

Each student shall be expected to:

§ abide by national, State, and local laws as well as the rules of the school;

§ respect the civil rights of others;

§ act courteously to adults and fellow students;

§ be prompt to school and attentive in class;

§ work cooperatively with others when involved in accomplishing a common goal, regardless of the other's ability, gender, race, religion, height, weight, disability, or ethnic background;

§ complete assigned tasks on time and as directed;

§ help maintain a school environment that is safe, friendly, and productive;

§ act at all times in a manner that reflects pride in self, family, and in the school.

Dress and Grooming

While fashion changes, the reason for being in school does not. Students are in school to learn. Any fashion (dress, accessory, or hairstyle) that disrupts the educational process or presents a safety risk will not be permitted. Personal expression is permitted within these general guidelines.

Students should consider the following questions when dressing for school:

Does my clothing expose too much? (no)

Does my clothing advertise something that is prohibited to minors? (no)

Are there obscene, profane, drug-related, gang-related, or inflammatory messages on my clothing? (no)

Am I dressed appropriately for the weather? (yes)

Do I feel comfortable with my appearance? (yes)

If a student has selected a manner of appearance that is beyond mere freedom of expression and disrupts the educational process or presents risk to themselves or others, they may be removed from the educational setting.

Clothing that exposes underwear or too much skin is prohibited.

Care of Property

Students are responsible for the care of their own personal property. The school will not be responsible for personal property. Valuables such as jewelry or irreplaceable items should not be brought to school. The school may confiscate such items and return them to the student's parents.

Damage to or loss of school equipment and facilities wastes taxpayers' money and undermines the school program. Therefore, if a student does damage to or loses school property, the student or his/her parents will be required to pay for the replacement or damage. If the damage or loss was intentional, the student will also be subject to discipline according to the Student Discipline Code.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

The Board of Education has adopted the following Student Discipline Code. The Code includes the types of misconduct that will subject a student to disciplinary action. The Board has also adopted the list of behaviors and the terms contained in the list.

It is the school staff's responsibility to provide a safe and orderly learning environment. History has shown that certain student actions are not compatible with a "safe" and "orderly" environment. Discipline is within the sound discretion of the School's staff and administration. Due process ensures that disciplinary action is imposed only after review of the facts and/or special circumstances of the situation.

The St. Joseph Public Schools Elementary Discipline Rubric (appendix B) is available online at www.sjschools.org.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS APPLYING TO THE STUDENT DISCIPLINE CODE

Each of the behaviors described below may subject the student to disciplinary action including suspension and/or expulsion from school.

1. Use of drugs

The school has a "Drug Free" zone that extends 1000 feet beyond the school boundaries as well as to any school activity and transportation. This means that any activity, possession, sale, distribution, or use of drugs, alcohol, fake drugs, steroids, inhalants, or look-alike drugs is prohibited. Attempted sale or distribution is also prohibited. If caught, the student could be suspended or expelled and law enforcement officials may be contacted. Sale also includes the possession or sale of over-the-counter medication to another student.

2. Use of tobacco

Smoking and other tobacco uses are a danger to a student's health and to the health of others. The school prohibits the sale, distribution, use, or possession of any form of tobacco or electronic cigarettes or similar devices during school time or at any school activity. This prohibition also applies when going to and from school and at school bus stops. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion. "Use of tobacco" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, or pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other matter or substance that contains tobacco, in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes. The display of unlighted cigars, cigarettes, pipes, other "smoking" paraphernalia or tobacco products on one's person is also prohibited by this policy.

3. Student disorder/demonstration

Students will not be denied their rights to freedom of expression, but the expression may not infringe on the rights of others. Disruption of any school activity will not be allowed. If a student (or students) feels there is need to organize some form of demonstration, s/he is encouraged to contact the Principal to discuss the proper way to plan such an activity. Students who disrupt the school may be subject to suspension or expulsion.

4. Possession of a weapon

A weapon includes, but is not limited to, firearms, guns of any type whatsoever including air and gas-powered guns (whether loaded or unloaded), knives, razors, clubs, electric weapons, metallic knuckles, martial arts weapons and explosives. It may also include any toy that is presented as a real weapon or reacted to as a real weapon. Criminal charges may be filed for this violation. Possession of a weapon may subject a student to expulsion and possible

permanent exclusion. It makes no difference whether or not the weapon belongs to someone else, unless the student can provide convincing evidence that the weapon was placed in the student's possession without his/her knowledge. If it can be confirmed that a weapon was brought on District property by a student other than the one who possessed the weapon, that student shall also be subject to the same disciplinary action.

State law may require that a student be permanently expelled from school, subject to a petition for possible reinstatement if s/he brings onto or has in his/her possession on school property or at a school-related activity any of the following:

- A. any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas including bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines, or device that can be converted into such a destructive ite
- B. any cutting instrument consisting of a sharp blade over three (3) inches long fastened to a handle
- C. any similar object that is intended to invoke bodily harm or fear of bodily harm (e.g. air gun, blow-gun, toy gun, etc.)

5. Use of an object as a weapon

Any object that is used to threaten, harm, or harass another may be considered a weapon. This includes but is not limited to padlocks, pens, pencils, laser pointers, jewelry and so on. Intentional injury to another can be a felony and/or a cause for civil action. This violation may subject a student to suspension or expulsion.

6. Knowledge of Dangerous Weapons or Threats of Violence

Because the Board believes that students, staff members, and visitors are entitled to function in a safe school environment, students are required to report knowledge of dangerous weapons or threats of violence to the principal. Failure to report such knowledge may subject the student to discipline.

7. Purposely setting a fire

Anything, such as fire, that endangers school property and its occupants will not be tolerated. Arson is a felony. Setting a fire may subject the student to suspension or expulsion.

8. Physically assaulting a staff member/student/person associated with the District

Physical assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor which may or may not cause injury may result in charges being filed. Acts of physical assault may subject the

student to suspension or expulsion. Physical assault is defined as “intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical harm to another through force or violence.”

9. Verbally threatening a staff member/student/person associated with the District

Verbal assault at school against a District employee, volunteer, or contractor or making bomb threats or similar threats directed at a school building, property, or a school-related activity will be considered verbal assault. Verbal threats or assault may result in suspension and expulsion. Verbal assault is a communicated intent to inflict physical or other harm on another person, with a present intent and ability to act on the threat.

10. Extortion

Extortion is the use of threat, intimidation, force, or deception to take, or receive something from someone else. Extortion is against the law. Violations of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

11. Falsification of school work, identification, forgery

Forgery is considered a form of lying and is not acceptable.

Plagiarism and cheating are also forms of falsification and subject the student to academic penalties as well as disciplinary action. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

12. False alarms, false reports, and bomb threats

A false emergency alarm, report or bomb threat endangers the safety forces that are responding, the citizens of the community, and persons in the building. What may seem like a prank is a dangerous stunt. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

13. Explosives

Explosives, fireworks, and chemical-reaction objects such as smoke bombs, pipe bombs, bottle bombs, small firecrackers, and poppers are forbidden and dangerous. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

14. Trespassing

Although schools are public facilities, the law does allow the school to restrict access on school property. If a student has been removed, suspended, or expelled, the student is not allowed on school property without authorization of the Principal. In addition, students may not trespass

onto school property at unauthorized times or into areas of the school determined to be inappropriate. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

15. Theft

When a student is caught stealing school or someone's property, s/he will be disciplined and may be reported to law enforcement officials. Students are encouraged not to bring anything of value to school that is not needed for learning without prior authorization from the classroom teacher. The school is not responsible for personal property. Theft may result in suspension or expulsion.

16. Disobedience

School staff is acting "in loco parentis," which means they are allowed, by law, to direct a student as would a parent. This applies to all staff, not just teachers assigned to a student. If given a reasonable direction by a staff member, the student is expected to comply. Chronic disobedience can result in suspension or expulsion.

17. Damaging property

Vandalism and disregard for school property will not be tolerated. Violations could result in suspension or expulsion.

18. Persistent absence or tardiness

Attendance laws require students to be in school all day or have a legitimate excuse. It is also important to establish consistent attendance habits in order to succeed in school and in the world-of-work. Excessive absence could lead to a referral to truancy officials.

19. Unauthorized use of school or private property

Students are expected to obtain permission to use any school property or any private property located on school premises. Any unauthorized use shall be subject to disciplinary action. This includes use of the internet and communication networks in a manner not sanctioned by policy and administrative guideline. Violations of this rule could result in suspension or expulsion.

20. Refusing to accept discipline

The school may use informal discipline to prevent the student from being removed from school. When a student refuses to accept the usual discipline for an infraction, the refusal can result in a sterner action such as suspension or expulsion.

21. Aiding or abetting violation of school rules

If a student assists another student in violating any school rule, they will be disciplined and may be subject to suspension or expulsion. Students are expected to resist peer pressure and exercise sound decision-making regarding their behavior.

22. Displays of affection

Students demonstrating affection between each other is personal and not meant for public display. Such behavior may result in disciplinary action.

23. Possession of Wireless Communication Devices (WCDs)

A student may possess a wireless communication devices (WCDs) or other electronic communication devices (ECDs) and electronic storage devices (ESDs) in school, on school property, at after school activities, and at school related functions provided that during school hours, school events, and on a school vehicle its use is not disruptive or distracting to the educational process, the scheduled activity, or other participants, provided that the WCD or other ECD/ESD remains off.

Except as authorized under Board policy, use of WCDs and electronic storage devices in school, on school property, at after school activities and at school-related functions will be subject to disciplinary action.

The school prohibits the use of any video device from any restroom, locker room or other location where students and staff “have a reasonable expectation of privacy.” A student improperly using any device to take or transmit images will face disciplinary action up to and including a suspension, loss of privileges, and may be recommended for expulsion.

Taking or transmitting images or messages during class or testing is also prohibited. Loss of privileges is an accompanying penalty, and possible disciplinary action, even on the first offense.

24. Violation of individual school/classroom rules

Each learning environment has different rules for students. Individual rules are for the safe and orderly operation of that environment. Students will be oriented to specific rules, all of which will be consistent with the policy of the school. Persistent violations of rules could result in suspension or expulsion.

25. Violation of bus rules

Please refer to Section V on transportation for bus rules.

26. Disruption of the educational process

Any actions or manner of dress that interferes with school activities or disrupts the educational process is unacceptable. Such disruptions also include delay or prevention of lessons, assemblies, field trips, athletic, and performing arts events.

27. Harassment

Harassment of students is prohibited, and will not be tolerated. This includes inappropriate conduct by other students as well as any other person in the school environment, including employees, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors and volunteers. It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. This policy applies to all activities on school property and to all school sponsored activities whether on or off school property.

Harassment is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional well being. This would include harassment based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status or disability. This policy, however, is not limited to these legal categories and includes any harassment that would negatively impact students.

Harassment through any means, including electronically transmitted methods (e.g., internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), computer or wireless hand held device), may be subject to District disciplinary procedures. Such behavior is considered harassment whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle if it is considered to have a negative impact on the school environment.

Any student that believes s/he has been/or is the victim of harassment should immediately report the situation to a staff member, the classroom teacher, or the principal. Complaints will be investigated in accordance with AG 5517.

Every student should, and every staff member **must** report any situation that they believe to be improper harassment of a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If the investigation finds harassment occurred it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employee, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members.

Retaliation against any person for complaining about harassment, or participating in a harassment investigation, is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same

manner as harassment. Intentionally false harassment reports, made to get someone in trouble, are also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been harassment, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

Harassment

- A. submission to such unwelcomed conduct or communication is made either an explicit or implicit condition of utilizing or benefiting from the services, activities, or programs of the School District;
- B. submission to, or rejection of, the unwelcomed conduct or communication is used as the basis for a decision to exclude, expel or limit the harassed student in the terms, conditions or privileges of the School District;
- C. the unwelcomed conduct or communication interferes with the student's education, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment, or otherwise adversely affects the student's educational opportunities. This may include racial slurs, mocking behavior, or other demeaning comments.

Sexual Harassment, may include, but is not limited to:

- A. verbal harassment or abuse;
- B. pressure for sexual activity;
- C. repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications;
- D. unwelcome touching;
- E. sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.;
- F. suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, or safety,;
- G. a pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another;
- H. remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.

28. Bullying and Other Aggressive Behavior

It is the policy of the District to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment for all of its students.

This policy protects all students from bullying/aggressive behavior regardless of the subject matter or motivation for such impermissible behavior.

Bullying or other aggressive behavior toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties, including Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, and volunteers, is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse, including hazing, gestures, comments, threats, or actions to a student, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm, reasonable fear for personal safety or personal degradation.

Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

This policy applies to all "at school" activities in the District, including activities on school property, in a school vehicle, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, or where an employee is engaged in school business. Misconduct occurring outside of school may also be disciplined if it interferes with the school environment.

Notification

Notice of this policy will be **annually** circulated to and posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment shall also be posted at each building. All new hires will be required to review and sign off on this policy and the related complaint procedure.

Parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim(s), as well as of the alleged aggressor(s), shall be promptly notified of any complaint or investigation as well as the results of the investigation to the extent consistent with student confidentiality requirements. A record of the time and form of notice or attempts at notice shall be kept in the investigation file.

To the extent appropriate and/or legally permitted, **confidentiality** will be maintained during the investigation process. However, a proper investigation will, in some circumstances, require the disclosure of names and allegations. Further, the appropriate authorities may be notified, depending on the nature of the complaint and/or the results of the investigation.

Implementation

The Superintendent is responsible to implement this policy, and may develop further guidelines, not inconsistent with this policy.

This policy is not intended to and should not be interpreted to interfere with legitimate free speech rights of any individual. However, the District reserves the right and responsibility to maintain a safe environment for students, conducive to learning and other legitimate objectives of the school program.

Procedure

Any student who believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying, hazing, or other aggressive behavior should immediately report the situation to the Principal or assistant principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged, and every staff member is required, to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports shall be made to those identified above. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Principal (or other administrator as designated) shall promptly investigate and document all complaints about bullying, aggressive or other behavior that may violate this policy. The investigation must be completed as promptly as the circumstances permit and should be completed within three (3) days after a report or complaint is made.

If the investigation finds an instance of bullying or aggressive behavior has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial action. This may include up to expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers and contractors, and removal from any official position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement or other appropriate officials.

The individual responsible for conducting the investigation shall document all reported incidents and report all verified incidents of bullying, aggressive or other prohibited behavior, as well as any remedial action taken, including disciplinary actions and referrals, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall submit a compiled report to the Board on an annual basis.

Non-Retaliation/False Reports

Retaliation or false allegations against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying or aggressive behavior (as a witness or otherwise), or is the target of the bullying or aggressive behavior being investigated, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a complaint of bullying is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying/aggressive behavior.

Making intentionally false reports about bullying/aggressive behavior for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

Prevention/Training

The District shall provide, and all students shall undertake, annual training on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying, cyber bullying and other aggressive behavior.

Definitions

The following definitions are provided for guidance only. If a student or other individual believes there has been bullying, hazing, harassment or other aggressive behavior, regardless of whether it fits a particular definition, s/he should report it immediately and allow the administration to determine the appropriate course of action.

"Aggressive behavior" is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough, or serious enough, to negatively impact a student's educational, physical, or emotional well-being. Such behavior includes, for example, bullying, hazing, stalking, intimidation, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hitting/pushing/shoving.

"At School" is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. It also includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if either owned by or under the control of the District.

"Bullying" is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand held device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- A. substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students;
- B. adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
- C. having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; and/or
- D. causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

- A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling; taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.
- B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.
- C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails, social media postings, and graffiti.

"Harassment" includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socioeconomic status, or geographic location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

"Intimidation/Menacing" includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with person's property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person's movement without good reason.

"Staff" includes all school employees and Board members.

"Third parties" include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in District business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

29. Possession of a Firearm, Arson, and Criminal Sexual Conduct

In compliance with State law, the Board shall permanently expel any student who possesses a dangerous weapon in a weapon-free school zone or commits either arson or criminal sexual conduct in a District building or on District property, including school buses and other school transportation.

A dangerous weapon is defined as "a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over three (3) inches in length, pocket knife opened by a mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles" or other devices designed to or likely to inflict bodily harm, including, but not limited to, air guns and explosive devices.

Students shall be subject to disciplinary action (Suspension/Expulsion) as required by statute for such specified offenses as physical and verbal assault (see Policy 5610.01).

Students with disabilities under IDEA or Section 504 shall be expelled only in accordance with Board Policy 2461 and Federal due process rights appropriate to students with disabilities. A student who has been expelled under this policy may apply for reinstatement in accordance with guidelines which are available in the principal's office.

Criminal acts

Any student engaging in criminal acts at or related to the school will be reported to law enforcement officials as well as disciplined by the school. It is not considered double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime), when school rules and the law are violated.

Students should be aware that state law requires that school officials, teachers and appropriate law enforcement officials be notified when a student of this District is involved in crimes related to physical violence, gang related acts, illegal possession of a controlled substance, analogue or other intoxicants, trespassing, property crimes, including but not limited to theft and vandalism, occurring in the school as well as in the community.

Safety Concerns

Students should not use roller blades, bicycles, skateboards scooters, or any other form of personal transportation device in school hallways or District pedestrian traffic areas. Exceptions may be made to reasonably accommodate students with mobility impairments. Use of any means of travel within buildings and on grounds by other than generally accepted practices where appropriate is prohibited. Students violating this expectation will be subject to disciplinary action.

Profanity

Any behavior or language, which in the judgement of the staff or administration, is considered to be obscene, disrespectful, vulgar, profane and/or violates community held standards of good taste will be subject to disciplinary action.

DISCIPLINE

It is important to remember that the school's rules apply going to and from school, at school, on school property, at school-sponsored events, and on school transportation. In some cases, a student can be suspended from school transportation for infractions of school bus rules.

Ultimately, it is the principal's responsibility to keep things orderly. In all cases, the School shall attempt to make discipline prompt and equitable and to have the punishment match the severity of the incident.

Two types of discipline are possible, informal and formal.

Informal Discipline

Informal discipline takes place within the school. It includes:

- § writing assignments;
- § change of seating or location;
- § lunch-time, before-school, or after-school detention;
- § in-school restriction;

Detentions

A student may be detained after school or asked to come to school early by a teacher, after giving the student and his/her parents one (1) day's notice. The student or his/her parents are responsible for transportation.

Formal Discipline

Formal discipline removes the student from school. It includes emergency removal for up to seventy-two (72) hours, suspension for up to ten (10) school days, and expulsion from school. Suspensions and expulsions may carry over into the next school year. Removal for less than one (1) school day without the possibility of suspension or expulsion may not be appealed. Suspension and expulsion can be appealed.

Students being considered for suspension or expulsion are entitled to an informal hearing with the building administrator, prior to removal, at which time the student will be notified of the charges against him/her and given an opportunity to make a defense.

When a student is being considered for expulsion, a formal hearing is scheduled with the Board of Education and the parents will be given written notice of the hearing and will be expected to attend. The Superintendent then takes testimony and determines if a recommendation to expel is to be made to the Board of Education. This decision may also be appealed. In the case of expulsion, the student remains out of school during the appeal period. Work missed during an expulsion cannot be made up and usually results in a loss of credit.

If a student commits a crime while at school or a school-related event, s/he may be subject to school disciplinary action as well as to action by the community's legal system. These are separate jurisdictions and do not constitute double jeopardy (being tried twice for the same crime)

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.), or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

DUE PROCESS RIGHTS

Before a student may be suspended or expelled from school, there are specific procedures that must be followed.

Suspension from School

When a student is being considered for a suspension of ten (10) days or less, the administrator in charge will notify the student of the charges. The student will then be given an opportunity to explain his/her side and the administrator will then provide the student the evidence supporting the charges. After that informal hearing, the principal will make a decision whether or not to suspend. If a student is suspended, s/he and his/her parents will be notified in writing of the reason for and the length of the suspension.

When a student is suspended, s/he may make-up work missed while on suspension.

Any learning that cannot be made up such as labs, field trips, skill-practices, or any learning that the student chooses not to make-up may be reflected in the grades earned.

A student being considered for suspension of more than ten (10) days will be given due process as described in the expulsion section below.

Long-term suspension or expulsion from school

When a student is being considered for long-term suspension (more than ten (10) days) or expulsion, the student will receive a formal letter of notification addressed to the parents which will contain:

- § the charge and related evidence;
- § the time and place of the Board meeting;
- § the length of the recommended suspension or a recommendation for expulsion;
- § a brief description of the hearing procedure;
- § a statement that the student may bring parents, guardians, and counsel;
- § a statement that the student and/or parent may bring a translator or request a transfer for hearing impaired students or parents;
- § a statement that the student may give testimony, present evidence, and provide a defense;

§ a statement that the student may request attendance of school personnel who were party to the action or accused the student of the infraction;

§ the ability of the student and/or parent to request, potentially at their own cost, a transcript of the hearing, if Board/hearing officer approved.

Students being considered for long-term suspension or expulsion may or may not be immediately removed from school. A formal hearing is scheduled with the Board of Education during which the student may be represented by his/her parents, legal counsel, and/or by a person of his/her choice.

After notification of long-term suspension or expulsion, the long-term suspension or expulsion may be appealed, in writing, to the Superintendent. The appeal will also be formal in nature with sworn testimony before official(s) designated by the Board of Education. The appeal will be heard in an open session unless the student or the student's parent or guardian requests a closed session. Again, the right to representation is available. All opportunity to earn grades or credit ends when a student is expelled.

St. Joseph Public Schools makes a sincere effort to have disciplinary actions take place that will allow the student to remain in school. If a disciplinary action does not result in removal from school, it is not appealable. Should a student or parent have questions regarding the propriety of an in-school disciplinary action, they should contact the building principal.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are entitled to the rights and procedures afforded by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (A.D.A.).

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Search of a student and his/her possessions, including vehicles, may be conducted at any time the student is under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, if there is a reasonable suspicion that the student is in violation of law or school rules. A search may also be conducted to protect the health and safety of others. All searches may be conducted with or without a student's consent.

Students are provided lockers, desks, and other equipment in which to store materials. It should be clearly understood that this equipment is the property of the school and may be searched at any time if there is reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the law or school rules. Locks are to prevent theft, not to prevent searches. If student lockers require student-provided locks, each student must provide the lock's combination or key to the principal.

Anything that is found in the course of a search that may be evidence of a violation of school rules or the law may be taken and held or turned over to the police. The school reserves the

right not to return items which have been confiscated. In the course of any search, students' privacy rights will be respected regarding any items that are not illegal or against school policy.

All computers located in classrooms, labs and offices of the District are the District's property and are to be used by students, where appropriate, solely for educational purposes. The District retains the right to access and review all electronic, computer files, databases, and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the District's computer system, and electronic mail. Students should have no expectation that any information contained on such systems is confidential or private.

Review of such information may be done by the District with or without the student's knowledge or permission. The use of passwords does not guarantee confidentiality, and the District retains the right to access information in spite of a password. All passwords or security codes must be registered with the instructor. A student's refusal to permit such access may be grounds for disciplinary action.

STUDENT RIGHTS OF EXPRESSION

The School recognizes the right of students to express themselves. With the right of expression comes the responsibility to do it appropriately. Students may distribute or display, at appropriate times, nonsponsored, noncommercial written material and petitions; buttons, badges, or other insignia; clothing, insignia, and banners; and audio and video materials. All items must meet the following school guidelines:

- A. A material cannot be displayed if it:
 - 1. is obscene to minors, libelous, indecent and pervasively or vulgar,
 - 2. advertises any product or service not permitted to minors by law,
 - 3. intends to be insulting or harassing,
 - 4. intends to incite fighting or presents a likelihood of disrupting school or a school event.
 - 5. Presents a clear and present likelihood that, either because of its content or manner of distribution or display, it causes or is likely to cause a material and substantial disruption of school or school activities, a violation of school regulations, or the commission of an unlawful act.

- B. Materials may not be displayed or distributed during class periods, or during passing times between classes. Permission may be granted for display or distribution during lunch periods and after school in designated locations, as long as exits are not blocked and there is proper access and egress to the building.

Students who are unsure whether or not materials they wish to display meet school guidelines may present them to the building principal twenty-four (24) hours prior to display.

STUDENT CONCERNS, SUGGESTIONS, AND GRIEVANCES

The school is here for the benefit of the students. The staff is here to assist each student in becoming a responsible adult. If a student has suggestions that could improve the school, s/he should feel free to offer them. Written suggestions may be presented directly to the principal or to the student government.

When concerns or grievances arise, the best way to resolve the issue is through communication. No student will be harassed by any staff member or need fear reprisal for the proper expression of a legitimate concern. Any suggestions, concerns, and grievances may be directed to the principal or to the student government.

A student may have the right to a hearing if the student believes s/he has been improperly denied participation in a school activity or has been subjected to an illegal rule or standard. A student may not petition to have a change in grade.

SECTION V - TRANSPORTATION

BUS TRANSPORTATION TO SCHOOL

The school provides transportation for all students who live farther than one mile from school. The transportation schedule and routes are available by contacting the Sandra Kroening at (269) 926-3900.

Students may only ride assigned school buses and must board and depart from the bus at assigned bus stops. Students will not be permitted to ride unassigned buses for any reason other than an emergency, except as approved by the principal.

The building principal may approve a change in a student's regular assigned bus stop to address a special need, upon the principal's approval of a note from parent stating the reason for the request and the duration of the requested change.

BUS CONDUCT

Students who are riding to and from school on transportation provided by the school are required to follow all basic safety rules. This applies to school-owned buses as well as any contracted transportation.

The driver may assign seating or direct students in any reasonable manner to maintain that transportation safety.

Students must comply with the following basic safety rules:

Previous to loading (on the road and at school)

Each student shall:

- be on time at the designated loading zone (five minutes prior to scheduled stop);
- stay off the road at all times while walking to and waiting for the school transportation;
- line up single file off the roadway to enter;
- wait until the school transportation is completely stopped before moving forward to enter;
- refrain from crossing a highway until the driver signals it is safe to cross;
- go immediately to a seat and be seated.

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the bus driver when their child will not be aboard school transportation. The bus will not wait. Drivers will not wait for students who are not at their designated stops on time.

During the trip

Each student shall:

- § remain seated while the school transportation is in motion;
- § keep head, hands, arms, and legs inside the school vehicle at all times;
- § not litter in the school vehicle or throw anything from the vehicle;
- § keep books, packages, coats, and all other objects out of the aisle;
- § be courteous to the driver and to other riders;
- § not eat or play games, cards, etc.;
- § not tamper with the school vehicle or any of its equipment.

Leaving the bus

Each student shall:

- § remain seated until the vehicle has stopped;
- § cross the road, when necessary, at least ten (10) feet in front of the vehicle, but only after the driver signals that it is safe;
- § be alert to a possible danger signal from the driver.

The driver will not discharge students at places other than their regular stop at home or at school unless s/he has proper authorization from school officials.

VIDEOTAPES ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Board of Education has installed video cameras on school buses to monitor student behavior. Actual videotaping of the students on any particular bus will be done on a random-selection basis.

If a student misbehaves on a bus and his/her actions are recorded on a videotape, the tape will be submitted to the principal and may be used as evidence of the misbehavior. Since these tapes are considered part of a student's record, they can be viewed only in accordance with Federal law.

PENALTIES FOR INFRACTIONS

A student who misbehaves on the bus shall be disciplined in accordance with the Student Discipline Code and may lose the privilege of riding on the bus.