SJPII Family Handbook
2026- 2027

St. John Paul II Catholic School

2922 Camp Easter Road
Southern Pines, North Carolina 28387
910.692.6241 phone
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https://www.jp2catholicschool.org

There are forms at the end of this handbook that must be signed and returned to the SJPII office by September 15, 2026.
If the signed acknowledgment forms required in the Family Handbooks are not received by September 15 of each school year; It will be understood that families have reviewed the handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures it contains. Continued enrollment affirms acceptance of the Family Handbook's terms and expectations. (10.14.2025)

Right to Amend
St. John Paul II Catholic School reserves the right to modify or update the contents of this handbook at any time. Should any changes be made, parents and guardians will be notified.



CONTENTS

Introduction & School Identity…….…….….2-4

Admissions and Financial Information ……...……..…….4-8

Academic Life …….…….……8-13

School Policies and Expectations…….. 13-18

Parent Involvement and Communication……...……..18-23

Daily Operations & Procedures……..……23-28

Safety, Health & Medical Information…….…..28-32

Technology Use…....…….…..….. 32-34

Uniform Guidelines……...……...…….. 34-37

Policy Addendums……..38-58

Forms and Signature Pages……59-63

St. John Paul II Catholic School 2922 Camp Easter Road Southern Pines, NC 28387 910.692.6241

"Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you."
— St. Augustine

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to St. John Paul II Catholic School! We are grateful that you have chosen to join our school family. Your decision reflects a shared commitment to the mission of Catholic education, and we are honored to partner with you in your child's formation.

At St. John Paul II Catholic School, we are committed to academic excellence and faith formation rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church. We believe education nurtures the whole child through spiritual, intellectual, and moral growth.

Our mission is to proclaim the Gospel, build a faith-filled community, and serve others with love. Through rigorous academics, Catholic values, prayer, and service, students are prepared to become faithful disciples and responsible leaders.

We look forward to partnering with your family as we support your child's growth in faith, knowledge, and character.

In Christ's Peace,

The Faculty and Staff
St. John Paul II Catholic School

About Our School
St. John Paul II Catholic School serves students from Pre-Kindergarten (ages 3- 4) through 8th grade and operates under the direction of the Diocese of Raleigh Catholic Schools. We are dedicated to providing a strong academic foundation within a nurturing, Christ-centered environment where each child is respected, supported, and encouraged to grow in faith and knowledge.

Inspired by the 1972 pastoral message of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops to "teach as Jesus did," our school community integrates faith and learning through daily prayer, meaningful liturgical celebrations, and the practice of Christian values in everyday life.

We follow the diocesan curriculum guidelines, which align with North Carolina state standards across all subject areas. Instruction emphasizes deep understanding, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Students benefit from a diverse program that includes multiple reading sources, integrated technology, and a variety of instructional methods designed to meet a range of learning styles.

At SJPII, we strive to educate the whole child—spiritually, academically, and morally—preparing students to lead lives of purpose, service, and integrity.

Our Patron: St. John Paul II

St. John Paul II, born Karol Józef Wojtyła on May 18, 1920, in Wadowice, Poland, is the beloved patron of our school. The youngest of three children, he experienced deep personal loss early in life—his mother died when he was nine, his brother Edmund in 1932, and his father in 1941. His sister, Olga, died in infancy.

Baptized shortly after birth, he received his First Holy Communion at age nine and was confirmed at eighteen. An avid student, he initially studied drama before feeling called to the priesthood during World War II. He began seminary studies in secret under Nazi occupation and was ordained a priest on November 1, 1946. He earned a doctorate in theology in Rome and served in parishes in Krakow, eventually being named auxiliary bishop in 1958, archbishop in 1964, and cardinal in 1967.

On October 16, 1978, Cardinal Wojtyła was elected the 264th Pope of the Catholic Church, taking the name John Paul II. His nearly 27-year pontificate was one of the longest in Church history. It included 104 international pastoral visits, the founding of World Youth Day, and the promotion of interfaith dialogue and family life. He was a guiding presence during a transformative era in the Church and world history.

Pope John Paul II died on April 2, 2005, and was canonized on April 27, 2014. His feast day is celebrated each year on October 22. His life and witness continue to inspire our mission of faith, formation, and service.

Diocesan Schools Mission Statement
The mission of the Diocese of Raleigh is to engage our school/preschool communities in creating a quality education within a Catholic environment that fosters the current and future development of the whole child.

Our Mission
St. John Paul II Catholic School is dedicated to preparing the hearts and minds of our students for spiritual growth, academic excellence, personal responsibility, and service to others, all in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic faith.

Vision & Beliefs
At St. John Paul II Catholic School, we strive to foster an environment that is available, accessible, and affordable for children and their families with a shared commitment to the following beliefs:

- God creates each person, and each person deserves love and respect.
- A Catholic education exemplifies and is faithful to the Magisterium of the Church.
- Faith formation encourages a continuous collaboration between school, family, and community.
- Students bear witness to the global community by serving others' spiritual and social needs.
- Instruction and assessment address the diverse needs and abilities of all students by teaching the mind, body, and spirit.
- Faculty must engage in continuous professional and spiritual development through ongoing education and implementation of best practices.

St. John Paul II Catholic School is a traditional Catholic school that aims to instill moral and intellectual virtues in a safe, nurturing environment for all students, and we dedicate ourselves to these principles:

- God is the beginning and end of human existence.
- Education is essentially a moral endeavor.
- The subject of education is the student.
- Teaching is an intimate communication between souls.
- Parents bear the primary responsibility for their children's education.

St. John Paul II Catholic School is proud to be the first and only school in North Carolina to be recognized as a **Newman Guide Recommended School** by The Cardinal Newman Society. This distinction is awarded to Catholic schools that demonstrate excellence in faithful Catholic education and fully integrate the teachings of the Catholic Church into every aspect of school life. This recognition reflects our commitment to forming students in faith, academic excellence, and virtue.

Accreditation
St. John Paul II Catholic School has been accredited by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA CASI), the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC), and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI). **The three listed regional agencies provide our institution with a highly regarded, worldwide-recognized accreditation.**

Admissions & Financial Information

Nondiscriminatory Policy
St. John Paul II Catholic School welcomes students of all faiths, races, nationalities, and ethnic backgrounds. All students are entitled to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities available at the school. In keeping with our commitment to fairness and respect for all, we do not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, or ethnicity in the administration of educational policies, admissions procedures, athletics, or any other school-administered programs.

Admission Priorities
When enrollment space is limited, priority for admission is given in the following order:

1. Active, registered members of St. Anthony of Padua Parish and Sacred Heart Parish
2. Members of other Catholic parishes
3. Non-Catholic applicants

Age Requirements

- Pre-K-3 applicants must be three (3) years old by August 31 of the school year.
- Pre-K-4 applicants must be four (4) years old by August 31 of the school year.
- Kindergarten applicants must be five (5) years old by August 31 of the school year.

Application and Evaluation Process
All applicants are evaluated through a combination of the following:

- Current report cards
- Standardized test results (grades K–8)
- Teacher recommendations from the student's previous school
- Intake assessments in key academic areas
- Student observations during shadow visits or interviews

A parent-accompanied interview may be part of the admissions process. However, participation in an interview does not guarantee admission, nor does the absence of one imply denial.

Required Documentation
The following documents must be submitted during the application process:

- Verification of active parish affiliation and stewardship (if applicable)
- Health/immunization records
- Original birth certificate
- Baptismal certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- Most recent report card and standardized test scores
- Teacher recommendations
- Official documentation of an IEP or other learning plan, if applicable

Trial Period
All newly enrolled students are subject to a trial period to ensure that St. John Paul II Catholic School is the right fit for their academic and social-emotional development. During this period, if significant concerns arise regarding the student's well-being, ability to meet academic expectations, or impact on the learning environment, the school may require the student to withdraw.

Parent-School Partnership
A cooperative and respectful relationship between the school and parents/guardians is essential to student success. In rare circumstances where this partnership cannot be maintained, the school reserves the right to withdraw a student.

Non-Catholic Applicants
Non-Catholic students are welcome to apply and may be accepted on a space-available basis, provided their families support and respect the school's Catholic philosophy and values.

Admission for Students with Special Needs
St. John Paul II Catholic School, in alignment with the Diocese of Raleigh Catholic Schools, is committed to providing a supportive and inclusive learning environment that fosters each student's individual growth. We recognize and value the unique strengths and challenges of all learners and strive to help each child reach their fullest potential.

For students with diagnosed special needs, as documented by licensed medical professionals, reasonable accommodations may be offered within the general education setting. These accommodations depend on the availability of appropriate academic and staffing resources.

Please note that while we make every effort to support students within our educational framework, we do not modify academic standards or alter the core curriculum.

Wait Pool and Priority Enrollment
If the maximum number of available seats in a particular grade has been filled, prospective students may be placed in the **wait pool** at the request of their parents or guardians. Please note that the wait pool at St. John Paul II Catholic School is **neither** ranked nor first-come, first-served. Instead, it consists of applicants who have completed the admissions process and are awaiting an opening in their desired grade level.

When a seat becomes available, all students in the wait pool for that grade are reconsidered through our **priority enrollment** process. This process evaluates multiple factors, including but not limited to:

- Siblings currently enrolled at SJPII
- Assessment of the prospective student’s academic readiness
- The student’s educational support needs
- Admissions priorities outlined previously
- Returning student status
- Parent employment at the school

Due to the holistic nature of this process, SJPII cannot provide specific information regarding a student’s "place" in the wait pool. Furthermore, no statements made by school staff should be interpreted as a guarantee of admission or a definitive ranking within the wait pool.

Financial Obligations
Tuition Schedule | School Year 2026–2027
Pre-Kindergarten through 8th Grade
Annual Tuition per Student: $9,998

All families are strongly encouraged to apply for the **North Carolina Opportunity Scholarship**, which may significantly reduce tuition costs. Information and application details are available through the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (NCSEAA).

If additional financial support is needed beyond what is provided through the Opportunity Scholarship, families may also complete the **FACTS® Grant & Aid Application** for consideration of internal tuition assistance. Parish financial support may also be available and should be pursued through the family's parish.

Tuition Payment Options
St. John Paul II Catholic School partners with **FACTS® Tuition Management**. All families must enroll with FACTS® for secure, flexible tuition payment options.

FACTS® Payment Options:
- **One Payment:** Full tuition paid by **June 1**
- **Two Payments:** Half due in **June,** remainder in **November**
- **Eleven Monthly Payments:** June through April

For families receiving the North Carolina Opportunity Scholarship (NCOS), scholarship funds are applied to tuition in accordance with the state's disbursement schedule. Credits are applied to FACTS® accounts in **October** and **March** after the school receives funds.

FACTS® Requirements and Fees
- **Online Enrollment Required:** All families must enroll in FACTS® for tuition processing, regardless of the payment method (including cash or check).
- **Annual Administrative Fee (per family):**
    - $50 for monthly payment plans
    - $15 for two-payment plans
    - $5 for a full payment option

Additional Fees
- **Application Fee (new students):** $100 (non-refundable charge by FACTS®)
- **Initial Registration Fee:** $250 per student (non-refundable; due at registration)
    - *Covers registration materials only. Does not include field trips, clubs, athletics, aftercare, or other extracurricular activities.*
- **Returned Payment Fee:** $30 per returned payment (charged by FACTS®)
- **Chromebook Fee:** Each student in grades 6–8 will be charged a $100 Chromebook fee through their FACTS® account. This fee is required annually for the use of a school-issued Chromebook.

Please note: *All fees—including tuition, registration, aftercare, and extracurricular charges—are non-refundable.*

Withdrawal Policy and Related Costs
Families planning to withdraw a student from St. John Paul II Catholic School must notify both the **Director of Admissions** and the **Principal** in writing. The date the school receives this written notice will serve as the official withdrawal date and will be used to determine any financial obligations.

If your child is applying to another school and requires **teacher recommendation forms**, please contact the SJPII office in advance. Teachers should be informed to expect the request so that the forms can be completed in a timely and confidential manner.

Tuition Responsibility Based on Withdrawal Date:
- **Withdrawals between July 1 and July 15:** One-third of the annual tuition will be due
- **Withdrawals between July 16 and December 15:** One-half of the annual tuition will be due.
- **Withdrawals after December 15:** Families are responsible for the **full annual tuition**.

Exception:
This policy MAY be waived if written documentation is provided verifying that the withdrawal is due to a military transfer.

Outstanding Balances:
Student records, including report cards and transcripts, will not be released until all tuition and fees have been paid in full.

Transfer of Records
- Student records for those transferring to another school will be sent **directly** to the receiving institution via **U.S. Mail, fax, or secure digital transmission**.
- **Records will not be released to parents or guardians for personal delivery**, as doing so may compromise the validity of the transcripts.

Requesting Records
- All requests for **transcripts, student records, or recommendation forms** must be submitted **in writing** by the receiving school's Registrar to our Registrar.
- Please allow up to **five business days** for processing once all required forms have been received.
- Records will be delivered using a secure and appropriate method in accordance with legal guidelines.
- Requests requiring special mailing services may result in **additional postal fees**, which are the responsibility of the requesting family.

Parental Rights
Parents and legal guardians have the right to **inspect and review** their child's educational records. However, this **does not include the right to receive physical copies** of the records.

Office Records
To ensure timely communication and accurate documentation, parents/guardians are responsible for keeping their family's FACTS® account up to date. This includes promptly updating any changes in address, phone numbers (home, cell, or work), email addresses, and emergency contact information. Accurate records are essential for effective communication and student safety.

Academic Life

Curriculum
St. John Paul II Catholic School follows the **curriculum standards established by the Diocese of Raleigh**, which align with **North Carolina state guidelines** across all subject areas.

Families may view the full curriculum standards by visiting the Diocese of Raleigh's website:
https://dioceseofraleigh.org/catholic-schools/standards-and-instruction

Additionally, a summary of each grade level's **program of study** is available on the **school website** and upon request from the **main office**.

Instructional Support for Students with Learning Differences
St. John Paul II Catholic School is committed to supporting all students in reaching their academic potential. When a student demonstrates difficulty mastering core curriculum content, the following process may be initiated:

- A **classroom observation** will be conducted to gather data on the students' academic performance and behavior.
- Based on these observations, **educational evaluation may be recommended** to determine whether specialized instructional support is needed.
- The school will review the **observation data and evaluation results** to determine appropriate next steps for classroom instructional support.

Enrollment of Students with Documented Learning Needs
Parents of students with previously identified learning differences are expected to submit **current documentation**, which may include:

- An **Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**
- A **psychological or educational evaluation**
- Other formal documentation of instructional support services provided in the prior academic year

The SJPII administration and faculty will collaborate with parents/guardians to determine how best to support the student's learning needs within the school's available resources.

Program Limitations
While every effort is made to accommodate a range of learning needs, if it is determined that a student's educational requirements **cannot be fully met** within the structure of SJPII's program, the school will work closely with the family to recommend alternative placements in the student's **best interest**.

Please note that **dual enrollment** is not available at SJPII due to scheduling limitations.

Promotion and Retention Policy
At St. John Paul II Catholic School, student advancement is determined through a comprehensive review of academic performance, attendance, assessment data, and teacher recommendations. Promotion to the next grade is based on the student's demonstrated ability to successfully meet the expectations of a more advanced level of study.

To be promoted, students must show **satisfactory progress in all core subject areas**. In situations where a student is not meeting grade-level expectations, the school administration—after consultation with the teacher(s) and parents—may recommend:

- **Retention** in the current grade
- **Tutoring**
- **Summer school**
- **Supplemental assignments**

These measures are intended to ensure that each student is academically and emotionally prepared for future success.

Decisions regarding promotion or retention are made carefully and in the student's best interest, with an eye toward overall growth and development.

Academic Probation
Students whose academic performance reflects **significant deficiencies** may be placed on **academic probation**. This status serves as a formal warning and provides a period of focused support and intervention to help the student improve.

While on academic probation, a student's eligibility to participate in **extracurricular activities and athletic programs** may be **limited or suspended**, based on individual circumstances and administrative discretion.

The goal of academic probation is to ensure that students remain committed to their academic responsibilities and receive the support they need to succeed.

Homework
Homework is assigned to help students develop **self-discipline, independence, and responsibility**. Assignments are designed to:

- Reinforce daily instruction
- Enrich and extend classroom learning
- Prepare students for upcoming lessons through independent practice or experiences

Time Expectations
Homework expectations vary based on **grade level, subject, and individual student abilities**. While it is difficult to assign a specific time requirement for every child, students should not consistently spend excessive time on homework. **If your child appears overwhelmed or is regularly struggling to complete assignments, please contact the classroom teacher.**

Homework Schedule

- Homework may be assigned **Monday through Thursday**.
- In general, **homework will not be assigned on Fridays**, except for **7th- and 8th-grade students enrolled in advanced coursework**, for whom weekend preparation may occasionally be necessary.

Make-Up Work Due to Absence
Students who are absent due to illness are typically allowed **one school day for each day missed** to complete assignments, quizzes, and tests. For example, a student absent for three days would be given three school days to complete the missed work.

- Students are expected to complete **missed work alongside current assignments**.
- The time required to complete one should not be used as an excuse for turning in the other **late, incomplete, or poorly done**.
- For planned or known absences, **teachers will not pre-assign classwork or prepare assignments in advance.** Students are responsible for obtaining missed assignments upon their return and completing them within the established timeline.

Maintaining a healthy balance between school responsibilities and personal well-being is essential. Teachers and parents are encouraged to work together to support students in managing their workload effectively.

Report Cards and Progress Reports
Report cards provide an official record of each student's academic progress and serve as an important means of communication between home and school.

Report cards are issued four times each year at the end of every academic quarter. A printed copy will be sent home with students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8, and an electronic copy will also be emailed to parents.

Parents of students in Grades 4 through 8 may monitor grades, assignments, and academic progress throughout the school year by accessing the FACTS® Family Portal.

Parent/Teacher Conferences
A dedicated Parent-Teacher Conference Day is scheduled each fall, during which school is not in session. This allows teachers to meet with families individually and provide focused, meaningful communication about student progress. Grade 8 student-led conferences occur in the spring. These conferences offer students the opportunity to take an active role in discussing their academic achievements and setting goals for the remainder of the school year.

Conference schedules are organized and distributed **well in advance** to ensure that all families have the opportunity to participate.

Parents who wish to schedule additional conferences at any point during the school year are encouraged to **contact the teacher directly** to arrange a convenient time for discussion.

Honor Roll Recognition
Students in **Grades 6 through 8** who earn an **A or B in every subject** are recognized on the **Honor Roll** at the end of each academic quarter.

At the conclusion of the school year, students in these grades who maintain a **final average of A or B in all subjects** will receive **Honor Roll pins** to acknowledge their consistent academic achievement.

This recognition celebrates students' hard work, discipline, and commitment to excellence throughout the year.

Testing & Assessment Procedures
Assessment is an essential part of the learning process and provides valuable feedback to students, parents, and teachers on academic progress and content mastery.

Retake Policy
Students may be allowed to **retake certain quizzes or tests** at the teacher's discretion to demonstrate improved understanding and mastery of skills or concepts.

Middle School Testing Guidelines (Grades 6–8)
- A maximum of **three quizzes or tests may be administered per day** to prevent student overload.
- Students may be required to take **quarterly or semester exams** in core subject areas to assess cumulative learning.
- Students in **Grades 7 and 8** enrolled in **Integrated Mathematics I** will also be required to take the **North Carolina End-of-Course (EOC) Assessment** in the spring, as mandated by state guidelines.

i-Ready Diagnostic Assessments
In compliance with Diocese of Raleigh requirements, all students in **Grades K–8** will complete the **i-Ready diagnostic assessments three times per year**—fall, winter, and spring.

- These assessments help measure student growth and guide instruction.
- **Assessment results will be shared with parents** promptly following each testing window.

ARK Assessment of Religious Knowledge
Students in Grades 3 through 8 participate in the ARK Assessment of Religious Knowledge (ARK) each spring. This diocesan assessment measures students' knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, Sacred Scripture, Church teachings, and the diocesan religion curriculum. The results help guide religious instruction, monitor student growth, and support the school's mission of forming students in faith and knowledge.

Sacramental Program
The **sacramental life** of students practicing the Catholic faith is a vital part of the religious education at St. John Paul II Catholic School. Our religion curriculum includes formal **preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion**, typically in **Second Grade**.

While preparation takes place in the classroom, **students must receive the Sacraments through their registered home parish**, in accordance with diocesan guidelines.

Preparation for the **Sacrament of Confirmation** is also integrated into the upper-grade religion curriculum. However, per the directive of the **Bishop of the Diocese of Raleigh**, the Sacrament of Confirmation is received in **10th grade** through the student's home parish.

Parents are expected to be **actively involved partners** in the preparation process. The Sacraments of Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation are conferred only upon students who have been **baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition**.

Families of Catholic students who have not yet received the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, or First Holy Communion are encouraged to contact the school. St. John Paul II Catholic School can assist families with sacramental preparation in collaboration with Mr. O'Connell and the student's home parish. Please contact Mr. O'Connell for additional information and guidance.

Field Trips
Field trips at St. John Paul II Catholic School are designed to enhance classroom instruction and support curricular goals. These educational experiences are carefully planned to provide meaningful learning opportunities aligned with grade-level content.

- Field trips may be offered at various grade levels, though **not all grades will have the same number or type of trips** each year.
- Participation in a field trip is a **privilege, not a right**. Teachers, in consultation with administration, may **limit or deny participation** due to academic or behavioral concerns.
- Middle school students participate in a three-year educational travel rotation that includes an annual pilgrimage as an integral part of the curriculum. Specific destinations, dates, costs, and travel details are shared with families early in each school year.

Permission and Attendance

- Students must submit a **signed written permission slip** by the designated deadline to attend.
- **Verbal permission or phone calls cannot be accepted** in place of a signed form.
- If a student does not bring home a permission slip, parents may contact the school or access the form online.
- A field trip permission slip is the **only accepted documentation** allowing a student to leave school during instructional hours.
- If a parent chooses not to have their child participate in a field trip, this must be noted on the permission form. In such cases, the student will **remain at home** with a parent or guardian.

Transportation and Chaperones

- When available, **the school** will arrange commercial transportation.
- If commercial transportation is provided, **parents are not permitted to transport students** to or from the field trip location.
- If commercial transportation is **not** arranged, **parents are responsible** for transporting their own child and may coordinate carpools independently. The school does **not assume responsibility** for arranging transportation in these cases.
- **Only official chaperones** may attend field trips. Siblings are **not permitted** to accompany parent chaperones.
- Parents who are **not designated as chaperones** may not visit the field trip location during the event.

Additional Guidelines

- All **field trip fees are non-refundable**.
- **Cell phones are not allowed** on field trips unless explicitly permitted by the teacher or administration.
- Participation in a particular trip during previous years does not guarantee that the same trip will be repeated. There are **no "traditional" or guaranteed field trips**.

Sports Participation

Students who wish to participate in **athletic teams, athletic clubs, or interscholastic sports** must meet specific health and documentation requirements to ensure safety and compliance.

Required Documentation

- A **completed sports physical form** is required for all student-athletes.
    - The form is available on our school website:
      Sports Physical Form – St. John Paul II Catholic School
    - It can also be found on **FACTS®** under **Resource Documents**.
- A **current physical examination** must be on file in the school office before a student may participate in any organized athletic activity.

Athletics Handbook and Contract

- All student-athletes and their parents must review the **SJPII Athletics Handbook**.
- After reviewing the handbook, both the student and the parent must **sign and return the Athletics Contract** to acknowledge the expectations and guidelines outlined.
- **There is a $100 uniform deposit for each sport, held on FACTS and released upon the uniform's return to the Athletic Director by the specified due date.**

School Policies & Expectations

Attendance
Regular school attendance is essential to academic success. Frequent absences—whether excused or unexcused—can significantly impact a student's academic progress and classroom engagement.

Illness and Health Guidelines
To protect the health of all students and staff, please follow these important guidelines:

- **Do not send your child to school if they have a fever or have been vomiting.** Students must remain home until the **morning after they have been symptom-free and fever-free for a full 24 hours without medication.**
- **These same guidelines apply if your child becomes ill during the school day and is sent home.**
- While staff members routinely sanitize classrooms and shared workspaces, sending a sick child to school may still result in the spread of illness.

Students should not attend school if they feel unwell or are unable to fully participate in learning activities.

Reporting an Absence
When a student is absent, a parent or guardian should:

- **Email both the school office and the student's teacher(s) before 9:00 a.m. each day of the absence.**
- Alternatively, parents may call the school office to report the absence.
- If no communication is received, the school may contact the family to confirm the student's whereabouts for safety reasons.
- Upon return, a written note or email explaining the reason for the absence or tardiness may be submitted to the student's teacher.

If an absence is planned for reasons other than illness, a written note or email explaining the absence must be submitted in advance.

Family Travel and Extended Absences
The school calendar includes extended weekends and breaks to support family time. **Parents are strongly encouraged to schedule vacations and trips during these designated breaks** to minimize disruptions to learning.

- Teachers are **not required** to prepare make-up assignments, quizzes, or tests for students who miss school due to vacations or non-illness-related absences.
- **No assignments will be distributed in advance** of planned absences.
- Students are responsible for catching up on missed classwork and homework upon their return.

Make-Up Work Policy
Students are typically given **one day for each day absent** due to illness to complete missed assignments, quizzes, or tests (e.g., a student absent for three days has three school days to complete the work). However:

- Make-up work must be completed **in addition to current assignments**.
- Lack of time to finish missed work is not an acceptable excuse for incomplete or poor-quality submissions of current assignments.

Communication with Teachers

- Parents may email teachers to request homework or assignments when students are home sick.
- Middle school families should check **FACTS®** and **Google Classroom** for available lessons and updates.
- At the teacher's discretion, work may be sent home with a sibling or picked up from the school office during regular hours **only after arrangements have been made directly with the teacher**.
- For short absences, students are encouraged to seek missed class notes or instructions from classmates when appropriate.

Excessive Absences and Tardies

- A student who is absent **four or more times in a single quarter** may receive a notification reminding the family of the importance of regular attendance.
- **Excessive absences or tardies may result in retention** (repeating the current grade level), particularly when they hinder academic progress.

Participation in After-School Activities

Students who are absent for the **entire school day** are **not permitted to participate in any after-school programs or activities** that day, including athletics, clubs, and evening events.

Absence During the School Day

When a student must leave school during the day for a medical or other necessary appointment, we ask that families follow the procedures below to minimize disruption to the learning environment:

- **Advance notice** must be provided to both the school office and the child's teacher.
- Parents are required to **sign out** their child at the front office.
- If the student returns to school the same day, they must be **signed back in** at the office before returning to class.

Early Pick-Up Guidelines

The final portion of the school day includes important instruction, class routines, and end-of-day organization. To preserve the learning environment:

- **Parents are asked to avoid picking up students during the last 30 minutes of the school day.**
- **If early dismissal is necessary, students must be signed out before 2:30 p.m.**
- **After 2:30 p.m., students will not be called from class for early dismissal.**

Your cooperation helps ensure a smooth, respectful conclusion to the school day for all students and staff.

Student Conduct

In keeping with the philosophy of St. John Paul II Catholic School, which upholds the **dignity and uniqueness of every individual**, students are expected to treat others with **respect, kindness, and consideration** at all times.

All students are required to **uphold the school's spirit and policies**, which are designed to promote **maturity, integrity, and personal responsibility**. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Demonstrating **courtesy** in all relationships
- Showing **promptness** in fulfilling academic and behavioral responsibilities
- Exhibiting **respect for school property** and the surrounding environment
- Using **sound judgment** and a sense of appropriateness in behavior and interactions

The **principal reserves the right** to determine the appropriateness of any student action or behavior if questions arise.

Distractions and Prohibited Items
Any item that distracts from the **learning environment** is **not permitted at school**. Examples may include, but are not limited to, toys, gadgets, or personal electronic devices not authorized for academic use.

- Items deemed disruptive will be **confiscated** and may be returned to a **parent or guardian** at the principal's discretion.
- The school administration, in accordance with **state laws and diocesan guidelines**, will determine appropriate disciplinary action when such items are brought to school.

Students are expected to contribute to a school culture that is **safe, respectful, and focused on learning**.

Detention
Lunch/recess detention may be assigned to students who violate **classroom or school rules**. Parents will receive notification detailing the reason for the detention.

Timely attendance at assigned detention is expected as part of the student's responsibility and accountability.

Suspension
A student assigned in-school or out-of-school suspension is expected to **complete all missed classwork, assignments, and assessments**.

It is the student's responsibility to communicate with teachers to ensure all work is completed promptly. Academic expectations remain in place during a suspension, and missed work will be assessed accordingly.

A student assigned an **out-of-school suspension** is **not permitted on campus** during the suspension period.

Suspension is considered a serious consequence and may be issued for significant or repeated violations of school policies.

Expulsion
Expulsion is a **serious disciplinary action** reserved for cases involving significant behavioral violations. A student may be expelled from St. John Paul II Catholic School if their actions pose a **threat to their own or others' safety, well-being, or moral integrity** within the school community.

Students who have been expelled are **not permitted to return to campus** or attend school-sponsored events unless they have **prior written permission** from both the **principal and the pastor**.

All cases of expulsion are handled with great care and consideration, and in alignment with diocesan policies.

Cheating and Plagiarism
St. John Paul II Catholic School is committed to fostering a culture of **honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility**. Cheating, plagiarism, or any form of academic dishonesty is **strictly prohibited**.

Students who engage in cheating or plagiarism may be subject to serious consequences, including but not limited to:

- A **failing grade** on the assignment or assessment
- **Detention** or other disciplinary action
- **Suspension**
- In severe or repeated cases, **Expulsion**

The administration will review all incidents and take appropriate action in accordance with school policies.

Off-Campus Conduct
St. John Paul II Catholic School holds its students to high standards of behavior both on and off campus. The administration reserves the right to address and discipline **off-campus conduct** that is deemed inconsistent with the **values, expectations, and standards** upheld during the school day.

This includes behavior that may negatively affect the school's reputation, others' well-being, or the integrity of the school community.

Students are expected to represent the values of **respect, responsibility, and integrity** at all times, whether on school grounds or in the broader community.

School Safety and Anti-Harassment Policy
St. John Paul II Catholic School is committed to maintaining a **safe, respectful, and Christ-centered environment** for all students, staff, and community members. Any behavior—verbal, written, visual, or digital—that threatens another individual's **physical or emotional well-being** will be taken **very seriously**.

This includes threats or harmful language made **in person, online, or through any form of communication**, whether **intentional or in jest**.

Consequences
Students who engage in **threatening, harassing, or bullying behavior** may face:

- **Detention**
- **Suspension**
- **Expulsion**

Harassment and Bullying
Harassment of any kind—including verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual—is strictly prohibited. This includes repeated behavior that causes distress, discomfort, or harm to another student.

All reports of harassment or bullying will be **promptly reviewed**. Age-appropriate disciplinary action will be taken based on the severity and nature of the behavior.

St. John Paul II Catholic School expects all students to uphold the virtues of **kindness, respect, and responsibility**, fostering a school culture in which all individuals feel safe and valued.

Digital Misconduct and Cyberbullying
St. John Paul II Catholic School expects all members of the school community—including **students and parents/guardians**—to uphold standards of **respect, integrity, and responsibility** in all forms of communication, including digital platforms.

Electronic Communication
Electronic communication includes—but is not limited to—**emails, text messages, chats, social media posts, blogs, screensavers, video conferencing, and communication through apps or websites**. Misuse of these tools can have serious consequences, especially when such behavior undermines the dignity and safety of others.

Online Misconduct
Inappropriate online behavior by adults or students may include:

- **Bullying, hazing, or harassment** (including discriminatory or sexual harassment)
- **Stalking or retaliation**
- **Spreading rumors, false information, or threats**
- **Mocking, teasing, exclusion, or intimidation**
- **Manipulation, blackmail, or social isolation**

These actions, whether **subtle or overt**, violate Catholic values and are strictly prohibited, whether they occur **during or outside of school hours**.

Guidelines for Responsible Digital Behavior
Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to follow the **"Think, Type, Post"** approach when using any electronic communication:

- **Think** about the impact of your message and its potential audience.
- **Type** communications that reflect Catholic values and personal integrity.
- **Post** only messages that demonstrate **dignity and respect** for yourself and others.

Reporting and Consequences
Any instance of cyberbullying or digital misconduct—**even if it occurs off campus or outside school hours**—must be reported to the school administration. If the behavior affects the **well-being, reputation, or safety** of members of our school community, disciplinary action may include:

- **Loss of technology privileges**
- **Detention or suspension**
- **Expulsion**, in serious or repeated cases

St. John Paul II Catholic School is committed to maintaining a **safe and respectful learning environment**—both on campus and online.

Child Abuse Reporting
St. John Paul II Catholic School strictly adheres to **North Carolina state laws**, which require that **all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect** be reported to the appropriate law enforcement or child protection authorities.

All faculty and staff members at SJPII complete the **Diocese of Raleigh's Safe Environment Training** and annual renewal requirements. This training equips employees to **recognize, respond to, and report** signs of abuse or neglect in accordance with diocesan policies and all applicable legal requirements.

Parents and guardians are also encouraged to participate in Safe Environment Training. Parents and guardians **must** complete the Safe Environment Training if they are supervising children. Information and registration for upcoming sessions are available at https://dioceseofraleigh.safeenvironment.org.

The safety and well-being of every child is a shared responsibility, and we remain committed to fostering a secure, supportive, and faith-filled environment for all students.

Drugs and Alcohol
St. John Paul II Catholic School maintains a **zero-tolerance policy** regarding the **possession, use, or distribution of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping, or controlled substances by students** on school property or at **any school-related function**.

Students found in possession of or under the influence of drugs or alcohol—on campus or at any school-sponsored event—will face **serious disciplinary consequences**, including **suspension and/or expulsion.**

Parent Involvement & Communication

The Parents' Role in Education
At St. John Paul II Catholic School, we are honored to partner with parents in the sacred responsibility of educating their children. We recognize parents as the primary educators and believe that your example, involvement, and support are essential to your child's development—spiritually, academically, emotionally, physically, and socially.

By choosing our school, you affirm your desire to raise your child in a community that values faith, character, and academic excellence. We ask for your continued collaboration in fostering a learning environment rooted in mutual respect and shared responsibility.

A strong partnership between home and school is vital. When parents and educators work together consistently and with trust, students thrive. Undermining the authority of either the home or the school sends conflicting messages and can hinder a child's moral development. If concerns arise, we encourage parents to communicate openly and respectfully with teachers and administrators to work toward a positive resolution.

Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning—including completing assignments, preparing for tests, and staying current with missed work during absences. A strong partnership with parents helps reinforce this accountability.

Let us move forward this year with a shared commitment to helping every child become the person God created them to be.

Parents as Educational Partners
As active partners in your child's education at SJPII, we ask that parents establish clear expectations at home and support the school's policies and goals. This includes:

At Home:
- Enforce consistent and early bedtimes on school nights
- **Ensure punctual arrival and timely pick-up each day**
- Help your child follow the school dress code and uniform guidelines
- Support your child in completing homework and long-term assignments on time and with integrity

At School:
- Attend school events such as parent-teacher conferences and PTO meetings.
- **Create and use a *Track It Forward* account to log required volunteer hours and view opportunities.**
- Pay for any damage to school property caused by student carelessness or neglect.
- Notify the homeroom teacher and office in writing (by note or email) for all absences or tardies.
- Update the school office and FACTS® with any changes in address, phone number, or emergency contact.
- Meet all financial obligations promptly.
- Inform the school of any relevant changes in your child's health, safety, or emotional well-being.

- Keep sick children home until they have been symptom-free and fever-free for 24 hours *without medication*
- Read all school communications, including newsletters and notices
- Return requested forms or documents promptly
- Take an active interest in your child's overall education
- Support the religious and academic goals of the school
- Cooperate with the school's discipline policies
- Treat all faculty and staff with respect and courtesy—in person, via email, and in all public settings, including social media.

Together, through mutual respect and collaboration, we create a Christ-centered environment where students can flourish in faith and learning.

Home–School Communication
Consistent communication between home and school is essential to student success and community engagement. St. John Paul II Catholic School uses a variety of platforms to keep families informed and connected.

Primary Communication Tools
- **Email and FACTS® Family Portal:** Teachers, staff, and administration communicate regularly through email and the FACTS® Family Portal. If you do not have internet access, please notify the school office so alternative arrangements can be made.
- **SJPII Mobile App:** Families are encouraged to download the SJPII mobile app to access the latest newsletters, school news, calendars, important announcements, forms, and quick links to frequently used resources.
- **Parent Alert® System:** For time-sensitive or urgent announcements, the school uses the Parent Alert® phone and text messaging system. Please save **31706** and **31-706** in your phone contacts to help ensure alerts are not missed.

Weekly Updates: Eagle News
- Our school newsletter, **Eagle News**, is emailed weekly and includes **important announcements, reminders, and updates**.
- To ensure delivery, please add *@jp2catholicschool.org* to your email's safe sender list.
- Eagle News is also posted on our **social media platforms and in our app**.

Online Resources
- **School Website:**
  www.jp2catholicschool.org
  The website is regularly updated with school news, the events calendar, contact information, and links to teachers' and staff members' email addresses.

- **Stay Connected on Social Media**
  - **Facebook (School):** SJPII Catholic School
  - **Instagram:** @sjp2_catholic_school
  - **Facebook (PTO):** SJPII PTO

FACTS® Family Directory Use
The FACTS® Family Directory is provided to foster community and parent-to-parent collaboration regarding **school-related activities**, such as class parties or field trips.

- It **should not be used** for mass emails regarding meetings, grievances, or unrelated matters.

Volunteer Hour Requirements
Parent involvement is a cornerstone of Catholic education and plays an essential role in the life of St. John Paul II Catholic School. Your time and talents not only help **offset operational costs** but also **enhance the learning environment** and strengthen our **school community**. Students benefit greatly from seeing their parents actively engaged in school life.

To support this shared commitment, each family is required to complete **25 hours of verified volunteer service** related to **St. John Paul II Catholic School activities** by the **last day of the school year**. Families who have not completed their 25 required hours by **the last day of school** will be charged **$25 per unfulfilled hour**, billed through their **FACTS® account**.

Volunteer opportunities are communicated throughout the year and can be tracked using our designated system. Families who are unable to fulfill the requirement may be asked to make a financial contribution instead of service hours.

We deeply value your partnership in creating a vibrant, faith-filled school community.

Online Volunteer Hour Tracking
At St. John Paul II Catholic School, family involvement is essential to the life and success of our school community. Each family is required to complete **25 hours of volunteer service** annually. All volunteer hours must be **recorded and submitted through Track It Forward®**, our official volunteer tracking system.

How to Set Up a Track It Forward® Account

1. Visit www.trackitforward.com
2. Click **"Find Existing Site"**
3. In the search box, type:
   St John Paul II Catholic School, Southern Pines, NC
4. When prompted for an email or username, scroll down and click:
   "Don't have an account yet? Click here to register."
5. Enter your email and create a password to complete registration.

An easy-to-use **Track It Forward® mobile app** is also available for download.

Volunteer Hour Policies

- **All families MUST have an active Track It Forward account**.
- **All volunteers must complete Safe Environment Training (SET)** and participate in a **volunteer orientation** (in person or online). The school publishes training dates, which are also available on the Diocese of Raleigh website.
- All submitted hours will be **reviewed and approved monthly** by the SJPII Volunteer Coordinator.
    - If your hours are not approved or require clarification, please contact the front office.
- **Unfulfilled hours:** Families who have not completed their 25 required 25 hours by **the last day of school** will be charged **$25 per unfulfilled hour**, billed through their **FACTS® account**.

Volunteer Opportunities

There are many fun and flexible ways to earn service hours, including evening and weekend options. Examples include:

- School events (Festifall, Field Day, Gala, etc.)
- Hot lunch sorting and distribution
- Recess or lunch duty (at the school's discretion)
- Weekend campus beautification projects
- Grade level parent (check with your child's teacher)
- Office/administrative assistance
- Used uniform sales
- Coaching sports teams
- Assisting with extracurricular activities (e.g., LEGO Robotics)
- PTO committees (Box Tops, fundraising support—many tasks can be completed at home)
- Catholic Schools Week
- Teacher Appreciation Week
- Providing transportation or moving large items for events
- Donations toward **pre-approved** school purchase requisitions or donations (ie, sports uniforms, fundraiser donations, etc.). A donation/purchase of $25 is equivalent to 1 hour of volunteer service.

Important Reminders

- **Dependability matters.** If you sign up for a volunteer role, please honor your commitment. If you are unable to attend, kindly arrange for a substitute.
- **Extra hours may be donated** to families who have not yet met their volunteer requirement.
- **Volunteering enriches the entire school community.** Your involvement strengthens our programs and enhances your child's learning experience.

For questions about volunteer opportunities or your Track It Forward account, please contact the school office at **910-692-6241 or the PTO volunteer coordinator**.

We thank you for your time, talent, and generosity—SJPII thrives because of dedicated families like yours.

Confidentiality

Volunteers at St. John Paul II Catholic School serve in a position of **trust and responsibility**. As such, maintaining **confidentiality** is essential.

Any personal or sensitive information regarding students, families, faculty, or staff that volunteers may observe or hear while on campus must be treated with the utmost discretion and not shared outside of the school environment.

This includes—but is not limited to—student behavior, academic progress, classroom concerns, or conversations between parents, teachers, and students.

If a volunteer has a concern or observes something that warrants attention, it should be referred directly to the principal or appropriate school administrator. Protecting the dignity and privacy of our school community is a shared responsibility and vital to a safe, respectful environment.

Volunteer Requirements
To ensure the safety and well-being of all students, **school volunteers must meet specific requirements** based on the nature of their involvement.

Safe Environment and Background Checks
Volunteers who have direct or regular contact with students may be required to:

- Complete the **Diocese of Raleigh Safe Environment Training**
- Undergo a **diocesan-mandated background check**

Please **contact the school office** to determine what is required for your volunteer role.

Sign-In Procedures
All volunteers must:

- **Sign in and out at the front office** each time you visit the school
- Clearly indicate the **purpose of their visit**

This process supports our efforts to maintain a **safe and secure campus**.

Dress Code for Volunteers
Volunteers are expected to dress **modestly, neatly, and appropriately** for a school setting. Attire should reflect the respectful and professional environment of our Catholic school.

Non-SJPII Children on Campus
To maintain a safe and focused environment during the school day, non-SJPII students should not accompany parent volunteers unless school personnel have given prior approval.

School Visitors
To maintain a safe and secure learning environment, all visitors, including parents, volunteers, contractors, and guests, must follow the procedures below:

- **Students are not permitted to open doors for any visitor at any time.**
- All visitors must enter through the **main entrance** and ring the doorbell to request access.
- All visitors, including contractors and adults not recognized by school personnel, will be screened at the school's secure building entrance system before being admitted.
- Upon entry, visitors must **sign in at the school office** and wear a **designated visitor or volunteer nametag** obtained from the front desk.
- Before leaving campus, all visitors must **sign out** in the school office and return the visitor nametag.

These procedures are in place to ensure the safety of all students and staff. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Daily Operations & Procedures

Arrival Procedures
At St. John Paul II Catholic School, we value the partnership between home and school in supporting each child's growth as an independent learner. To foster this independence, students are encouraged to enter the school building on their own each morning, whenever possible. Opportunities for parent involvement and classroom visitation are offered at various times throughout the year.

Arrival Time:

- Students may arrive on campus beginning at **7:30 a.m.**
- **Morning announcements begin at 7:55 a.m.**
- Students must be in their classrooms and prepared for the day by **7:55 a.m.**
- Any student not in class by this time will be marked **tardy**.

Tardy Procedures:
Tardy students must be accompanied to the main office and checked in by a parent or guardian before proceeding to class.

Safety Reminder:
For the safety of all students, **no student may be dropped off curbside unless a staff member is present** in the designated drop-off area. If no adult is on duty, the student **must be escorted into the building** by a parent or guardian and signed in at the front office—**regardless of the student's age.**

Dismissal Procedures
Afternoon announcements will begin at **2:55 p.m.**, followed by dismissal for all students in **Pre-K through 8th grade**.

- **Pick-Up Time:** Students should be picked up **by 3:15 p.m.**
- **Late Pick-Up Protocol:**
    - Students not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be taken to the **main office**, and parents will be contacted.
    - Starting at **3:30 p.m.**, a **late pick-up fee of $25 per child, per hour** may be charged.
    - Any student remaining after **4:00 p.m.** will be escorted to **Aftercare**, and corresponding fees will apply.

Parents are responsible for ensuring their child arrives at school on time and is picked up promptly at dismissal. If a student remains at school past **5:00 p.m.** without prior arrangements or communication from a parent, the **Southern Pines Police Department** may be contacted to ensure the child's safety.

After-School Activities:
Students remaining on campus for after-school events in which they are **not active participants** must be signed out to a **designated adult**, as communicated in writing to both the front office and the student's homeroom teacher.

The safety and supervision of every student is of utmost importance. We thank you for your cooperation in following these procedures to ensure a secure and orderly dismissal each day.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures
To ensure the safety and efficiency of student arrival and dismissal, St. John Paul II Catholic School follows the procedures outlined below. Your cooperation in adhering to these guidelines helps us maintain a safe and orderly environment for all students.

Location
Both morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up take place at the five-cone area located on the far side of the main building, directly in front of the Pre-K playground.

Morning Drop-Off

- Drop-off begins at **7:30 a.m. -** Students should wait in cars.
- Parents should pull forward in the carpool line, where staff members and student safety patrols will assist.
- Students must exit the vehicle **from the passenger side only**, holding all belongings.
- Backpacks and supplies **must not be retrieved from the trunk**. Opening trunks creates a safety hazard by placing students in the path of moving vehicles.
- Students will proceed directly to their classroom or designated area under staff supervision.
- **Parents must remain in their vehicles** while in the carpool line.

Important: Under no circumstances may a student be dropped off when school staff is not present. If no staff member is on duty, the student must be escorted to the main office by a parent or guardian.

Afternoon Pick-Up

- Pick-up begins immediately after the **2:55 p.m. announcements**.
- Students must be picked up no later than **3:15 p.m.**
- For safety, **two carline placards** will be issued per family. These must be **clearly displayed** on your dashboard or held up as you walk up.
    - **Placards are required for all pick-ups**—car or walk-up.
    - **No substitutions or handwritten notes** will be accepted.

Early arrival: We kindly request that families **do not arrive for pick-up before 2:45 p.m.**, unless otherwise directed.

Traffic Flow

- **Enter** campus through the **WEST entrance** near the traffic circle.
- Follow the carpool line:
    - The line begins at the cones near the Pre-K playground.
    - It stretches through the section of the lot farthest from the school buildings, loops around the paved bend, and returns toward the traffic circle.
    - The line is **single file (**unless instructed otherwise by school personnel**)**.
    - Drivers should leave **two open gaps** in the line at crossing points to allow non-carpool traffic through.
- After students are safely loaded or unloaded, vehicles must **exit immediately** through the **EAST exit (T-intersection)**.
- If a child is not ready at pick-up, vehicles will be directed to pull forward to a **waiting area**.

General Reminders

- **Parents must remain in their vehicles** at all times during drop-off and pick-up.
- Use **courtesy and caution** when driving on school grounds.
- **Follow all directions** from SJPII staff. These procedures are in place to protect the safety of all children.
- Moore County does not permit traffic backups on **Camp Easter Road**. Please follow staff instructions to avoid traffic congestion.
- For the safety of everyone on campus, drivers **must not use cell phones** or other handheld electronic devices while in the student drop-off or pick-up line. Drivers should remain attentive to traffic, school personnel, and pedestrians at all times.

After Pick-Up

Once students are released at dismissal, supervision becomes the responsibility of the parent or guardian. Please supervise your child closely to ensure safe behavior while on campus. Children should not be allowed to run, play unsupervised, or act disruptively after dismissal.

Lunch Guidelines
To ensure a safe, respectful, and efficient lunch environment, the following guidelines apply to all students and families:

Lunch from Home
- Students **may not** bring **glass containers** or **soft drinks** to school.
- Lunches **must not** require heating or reheating.
- **Outside food deliveries** (including fast food, restaurant carry-out, or third-party delivery services) are **not permitted** during school hours.

Hot Lunch Program
- A **hot lunch option** is available on Tuesday and Friday and must be **ordered in advance**.
- Orders plac**ed** after **Friday at 4:00 p.m.** for the following week are non-refundable.
- If a student is absent due to illness, parents may contact the school office **that morning** to arrange **same-day pickup** of the pre-ordered lunch. Lunches cannot be saved or distributed on another day.

Behavior Expectations
- Students are expected to display **courtesy, cleanliness, and respect** during lunch.
- The same standards of behavior that apply in the classroom apply in the lunchroom.
- **Cooperation with lunch monitors** and respectful interactions with peers are required at all times.

Classroom Parties and Snacks
Classroom parties may be held throughout the year at the **discretion of the teacher and school administration**. These celebrations may include **All Saints' Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas**. Parties will take place **during the school day** at a time designated by the classroom teacher and approved by the principal.

Grade Level Parents may assist in planning and organizing these events in collaboration with the teacher and with the principal's approval.

Snacks and Treats
When providing classroom snacks or treats:
- Parents must **contact the homeroom teacher in advance** to discuss any **student allergies or dietary restrictions**.
- All food brought to school should be **clearly labeled** and comply with any classroom-specific guidelines.

Aftercare Program
St. John Paul II Catholic School offers a structured and safe **Aftercare Program** for students in **Pre-K through 5th grade**. To ensure consistent staffing and quality programming, we can only guarantee placement for students who are **registered for the full school year**.

Eligibility and Registration
- Aftercare is available to students in **Pre-K through 5th grade**.
- Families must complete and submit both the **SJPII Aftercare Placement Agreement** and the **SJPII Medical Release Form** before a student may attend.
- **No drop-in care is permitted.** Only students registered for the full year are eligible to participate.

Cost and Payment

- The annual flat-rate fee is **$2,500 per child**.
- This fee is **non-refundable** and covers the full academic year.
- Families will be billed through their **FACTS® account** in two installments:
    - **50%** charged on the **first day of school**
    - **50%** charged on the **first day of the second semester**

Important Notes

- Space in the aftercare program is limited and cannot be held without completed documentation and approval of payment.
- Students without full registration and submitted forms may be **denied access** to the program.
- Aftercare is not offered on certain days (see Early Release section for exceptions). Aftercare will **not** be offered on the **day before Christmas break** or on the **last day of school**.

Your cooperation helps us maintain a safe, organized, and enriching after-school environment for all students.

Early Release Days

On scheduled early release days, **all students will be dismissed at 12:00 p.m.** Please note the following guidelines:

- **Lunch is not provided** on early release days.
- **Aftercare** is available from **12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.** for students **already registered** in the program.
    - Students staying for aftercare must bring a **packed lunch**.
    - Availability and times may vary and are subject to **administrative approval**.

Parents are encouraged to plan accordingly. Updates regarding aftercare availability or schedule changes will be communicated in advance when applicable.

School Office Hours

The school office is open on all regular school days from **7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** Parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the office during these hours for assistance, information, or to schedule appointments.

Lost & Found

Items found on campus will be placed in the **Lost & Found located in the activity center**, where they will be held for **30 days**. After this period, unclaimed items may be donated or discarded. To avoid confusion or loss, please **label all personal belongings**, including jackets, lunch boxes, and water bottles, with your **family name**.

Students are expected to take proper care of their school-issued **Chromebooks** and ensure they are kept safe at all times. Any lost, stolen, or damaged devices must be reported to the school office immediately. Families will be responsible for the **full replacement cost of $370 in the event of loss or damage.**

Students who lose a school-issued resource (e.g., textbook, workbook, novel**)** must pay the replacement cost (plus shipping, if applicable) before receiving a new one.

School Property
Students are expected to treat all school property—including buildings, furniture, equipment, instructional materials, and others' belongings—with care and respect. Any student who carelessly or intentionally damages or destroys school property or another student's personal property may face disciplinary action.

Parents/guardians are financially responsible for the full cost of repairing or replacing any damaged or destroyed property, including labor and, if applicable, professional installation. If the school administration deems a repair unreasonable or not cost-effective, the full replacement cost will be required.

All textbooks must be kept free of writing or damage. Families will be charged for any lost or damaged textbooks, Chromebooks, or other instructional materials. Final report cards, transcripts, and diplomas may be withheld until all fees are paid in full.

Gifts and Invitations
To promote inclusivity and avoid hurt feelings, **students should not exchange individual gifts at school**.

Invitations to birthday parties, sleepovers, or other private events **should be distributed outside of school**, either by **mail or email**, unless **every student in the entire grade** is invited. This helps maintain a respectful and welcoming environment for all students.

Holy Week
In recognition of the **solemnity of Holy Week** and the **Passion of Our Lord**, all extracurricular activities and classroom celebrations should be **minimized or avoided** during this sacred time, in alignment with our Catholic identity.

Memory Books
If parents would like teachers to complete a memory book for their child, the book must be **submitted to the school office by May 1**. Please include a **note** with the following information:

- The **student's name**
- A list of **teachers** you would like to sign the book
- A **parent's contact number**

Memory books will be available for **pickup on May 31**. Please plan accordingly, as late submissions may not be accommodated.

Photographs and Media Use
Throughout the school year, students at St. John Paul II Catholic School may be photographed or videotaped during school-related activities, events, or classroom experiences. These images may be used in **school publications, on the school website, in newspapers, and on official social media platforms** to highlight student life and promote school events.

If you **do not wish your child's image to be used**, **it is your responsibility to notify the school in writing each year**. A **Media Release Form** is provided at the end of this handbook for you to indicate your preferences.

Failure to submit this form will be considered consent to use your child's image for school-related purposes.

Yearbooks

A school yearbook is published annually and is available for purchase. Information regarding ordering, pricing, and deadlines will be shared with families during the school year.

At the end of the school year, students participate in a special Yearbook Signing Day, providing an opportunity to celebrate friendships and reflect on the memories made throughout the year.

Safety, Health & Medical Procedures

Crisis Plan

St. John Paul II Catholic School has a comprehensive crisis response plan in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all students and staff during emergencies. The plan includes clearly defined procedures for lockdowns, secure mode, evacuations, and emergency communication.

To ensure preparedness, crisis drills are conducted regularly. All faculty and staff are thoroughly trained in these procedures and are prepared to act quickly and effectively to protect students.

In the event of an emergency, and if deemed safe to do so, students may be evacuated from the building and relocated to a secure off-site location. Parents will be notified as promptly as possible through the Parent Alert® communication system with updates and further instructions.

The safety of our school community remains our highest priority.

Emergency Drills

In compliance with state law and to ensure the safety of all students and staff, St. John Paul II Catholic School conducts regular emergency drills, including fire and other safety drills.

These procedures are in place to ensure a calm, efficient response in the event of an emergency. Your child's safety is our top priority.

Weather Emergencies

If school must close, delay opening, or dismiss early due to inclement weather or other emergencies, families will be notified through the **Parent Alert®** phone and text messaging system, school email, the SJPII mobile app, and the **FACTS®** Family Portal. Updates will also be posted on the school's Facebook and Instagram pages. Please ensure your contact information is up to date in **FACTS®,** so you receive all notifications promptly.

Medical Records and Medication
At the start of each school year—or upon a student's enrollment at St. John Paul II Catholic School—parents must submit up-to-date medical records to the school office.

Before any prescription medication can be administered at school, a **completed Parent Request and Physician's Order Form** must be on file. This form is available in the school office and on **FACTS®**. **Verbal permission is not sufficient** for medication distribution.

If a child requires **prescription medication** during the school day, the medication must be brought to the school office in the **original pharmacy-labeled container**, which must clearly include:

- The child's name
- The prescribing doctor's name
- The dosage
- The frequency of administration
- The date prescribed

All prescription medications must be renewed **annually** with updated documentation and **will be returned to parents/guardians at the end of the school year**.

Students are not permitted to carry or store any medication unless explicitly approved under SJPII school policy (e.g., inhalers or EpiPens with appropriate documentation).

Asthma Medication and Policy
St. John Paul II Catholic School acknowledges that asthma is a serious medical condition that affects many students. Our goal is to support students with asthma so they can fully participate in all aspects of school life. This policy is communicated to all faculty and staff, including special teachers and new hires.

Inhaler Access and Use
Immediate access to rescue inhalers is essential. Students with asthma are expected to carry their inhalers with them at all times, including during outdoor activities and physical education. Inhalers should be kept with the student and brought to PE along with their water bottle.

Students are encouraged to begin carrying their inhaler once the parent/guardian, physician, and classroom teacher agree that the child is developmentally ready.

Parents must also provide the school office with a **labeled backup rescue inhaler**, which will be stored securely for emergency use. All inhalers must be clearly labeled with the student's name. Please refer to the **Medical Records and Medication** section for additional requirements and procedures.

Creating a Supportive Environment
To promote a safe and accommodating school environment for students with asthma, SJPII makes every reasonable effort to:

- Limit the use of strong chemicals in science, art, and other subjects that may trigger asthma symptoms.
- Provide an alternate supervised space (such as the main office) for students who may need relief from environmental triggers.

Our staff is committed to recognizing symptoms, supporting appropriate inhaler use, and responding quickly to asthma-related emergencies.

Food Allergy Policy
St. John Paul II Catholic School recognizes that life-threatening food allergies are a serious medical concern affecting many children. To reduce the risk of exposure and ensure the safety of all students, the school maintains a system-wide procedure for managing severe allergic reactions.

An **Emergency Action Plan (EAP)** will be kept on file for any student whose parent/guardian and physician have submitted written documentation of a potentially life-threatening food allergy. The plan will include the specific allergens, symptoms of a reaction, and emergency procedures, including the use of epinephrine auto-injectors when applicable.

Faculty and staff will be informed of students' EAPs and trained to respond appropriately in the event of an allergic reaction. Parents are responsible for ensuring that all medications are properly labeled and up to date, and that the school has the necessary emergency supplies on hand.

By working in partnership with families, SJPII is committed to maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all students with food allergies.

Medications on School Field Trips
The safety and well-being of all students are top priorities when planning field trips. The school will assess each field trip to ensure it is appropriate and safe for students with life-threatening allergies or other medical conditions.

Any required medications, including epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPens), must accompany the student on the trip. A copy of the student's Emergency Health Care Plan or Emergency Action Plan will also be included. A designated adult will be responsible for carrying and administering the medication if needed. This individual will be introduced to the student and the other chaperones before departure.

At least one adult on the trip will carry a charged cell phone for emergencies.

Allergy Response Training
To help prevent life-threatening allergic reactions and to ensure a safe learning environment, St. John Paul II Catholic School provides annual training and education for all faculty and staff.

In collaboration with the student's parent/guardian, healthcare provider, and/or allergist, the school will maintain an individualized Emergency Action Plan for any student identified as having a potentially life-threatening allergy.

All school employees, including teachers, teacher assistants, and office personnel, will receive training that includes:

- An overview of severe allergies, including the most common allergens such as certain foods, medications, latex, and insect stings
- Recognition of the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis
- Instructions on the proper use of epinephrine auto-injectors (e.g., EpiPen)
- Step-by-step procedures to follow in the event of an allergic emergency
- Guidance on activating emergency medical services (calling 911)
- The location and accessibility of emergency epinephrine within the school
- Completion of a post-training evaluation to ensure understanding

This training will be conducted at the start of each school year and reviewed as necessary to maintain readiness and compliance.

Health & Allergy Notifications
Parents and guardians are responsible for notifying the main office of any life-threatening medical conditions or allergies their child may have. This information should be provided in writing and updated as needed to ensure student safety.

Once notified, the school will inform all appropriate personnel—including classroom teachers and relevant staff—of the student's condition. This communication will include:

- The severity of the health concern
- Recognizable signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction
- A list of allergens (e.g., specific foods, materials, or environmental triggers) to avoid

Maintaining accurate, timely information enables us to take the necessary precautions to support each student's well-being throughout the school day and during school-sponsored activities.

Classroom Allergy Awareness and Emergency Protocols
Teachers are required to be familiar with the Emergency Action Plans (EAPs) for any students in their classrooms who have known allergies or medical conditions. In the event of an allergic reaction, teachers must follow the steps outlined in the student's EAP without delay.

If a student exhibits signs of an allergic reaction without a prior diagnosis, the school's Emergency Response Plan will be activated, and emergency medical services will be contacted immediately.

Key procedures include:

- Student allergy information will be readily available in the classroom and in each substitute teacher's emergency folder.
- All teachers, teacher assistants, and substitute staff will receive education on food allergy risks and appropriate emergency responses.
- Parents/guardians of students with food allergies are responsible for providing all snacks and food items for their child. These items should be clearly labeled and stored in a separate snack box provided by the parent/guardian.
- Classroom surfaces will be thoroughly cleaned after any food-related activities.
- Students will be instructed in proper handwashing procedures and reminded to clean their hands before and after handling or consuming food.

These steps are essential to maintaining a safe learning environment for all students.

Technology Use

Technology Policy & Student Devices
St. John Paul II Catholic School provides access to educational technology to enhance student learning, promote digital responsibility, and support the development of 21st-century skills. To ensure effective use of school-issued devices and maintain a safe and focused learning environment, the following policies apply:

Chromebook Use and Deposit (Grades 6–8)

- Each student in grades 3–8 will be issued a school-managed Chromebook for educational use during the academic year.
- A **$100 Chromebook deposit** will be charged to each family's FACTS® account at the start of the school year.
- This deposit is held in trust for the duration of Chromebook use and may be rolled over to subsequent years if the device is returned in good condition.
- If a Chromebook is **lost or damaged**, the **family is responsible for the full replacement cost**, including market value, shipping, and professional setup.
- After the **third instance of a Chromebook being misplaced**, the **$100 deposit will be forfeited**, and a new deposit may be required to issue a replacement device.
- **Students are not permitted to bring personal portable battery packs or chargers** to school.

Technology Expectations

- Chromebooks are provided for academic use only and must be used in accordance with the school's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Students are expected to treat all devices with care and follow the teacher's directions regarding their use.
- Student devices may not be used before the morning announcements.
- Technology should be used only when appropriate for instruction and only for the educational purpose directed by the teacher. Personal, recreational, or noninstructional use is not permitted during the school day unless expressly approved.
- Unauthorized downloads, games, videos, messaging, or websites unrelated to learning are not permitted on school-issued devices.

GoGuardian Monitoring and Online Safety

St. John Paul II Catholic School utilizes GoGuardian services to help maintain a safe, focused, and productive online learning environment.

At SJPII, we use **GoGuardian Admin** and **GoGuardian Teacher** to:

- Filter and block access to harmful or inappropriate online content
- Support students in staying focused during online instruction
- Monitor academic progress during digital assignments
- Enhance teacher-student communication during class

GoGuardian monitoring is active only when a student is logged into their school-managed account on a school-provided or school-supported device. Protections are in place exclusively during school hours.

By implementing GoGuardian, SJPII demonstrates its commitment to digital safety and responsible technology use in support of student learning.

Cell Phones & Personal Electronic Devices
While we understand that families may wish for their children to carry personal communication devices for after-school use, the following rules are in place to ensure an environment focused on learning:

- **Cell phones, smartwatches, and other communication devices may not be used** during the school day.
- All such devices must remain **powered off** and **secured in backpacks (**or in an approved classroom location**)** from the time students arrive until they are dismissed.
- **Texting, recording, photography, and video capture** are strictly prohibited during school hours.
- **If a student needs to place an emergency call, they must report to the school office.**
- Devices used inappropriately will be **confiscated** and held in the school office until retrieved by a parent or guardian.
- Families (parents and students) must arrange any transportation or after-school plans with friends **before arriving on campus** and notify the office if those plans change.

By adhering to these policies, students help maintain a respectful and distraction-free learning environment. We appreciate the cooperation of students and families in upholding these expectations.

Distance Learning & Emergency Closures
St. John Paul II Catholic School maintains a proactive plan to transition to distance learning in the event of a natural disaster, public health emergency, or any situation deemed unsafe or imprudent for on-campus instruction.

The school administration will decide to initiate distance learning in consultation with the board of directors and the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Raleigh. The strategies and platforms used during distance learning will be developed by the administration and faculty, tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of each closure.

In the case of a public health emergency, guidance from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other relevant authorities will be incorporated into the school's health and safety protocols. These plans may be modified as necessary to ensure the well-being of our school community.

By enrolling their children at St. John Paul II Catholic School, parents acknowledge and accept the inherent risks involved in both on-campus and distance learning environments.

Office Telephones
Students must receive permission from both their teacher and the school office before using the office telephone. Because the office phone is designated for school business, student use is limited to true emergencies only. Forgotten items—such as homework, lunches, or athletic gear—do not qualify as emergencies. Similarly, phone calls to make or change social plans (e.g., visiting a friend after school) are not permitted.

Classroom telephones are for faculty and staff use only. Parents and students are encouraged to make any necessary arrangements for after-school activities before the start of the school day.

To support effective communication in case of an emergency, students should know at least one phone number for a parent or guardian.

Right to Amend
St. John Paul II Catholic School reserves the right to modify or update the contents of this handbook at any time. Should any changes be made, parents and guardians will be notified through email and/or parent alert communications.

Uniform Guidelines

Students are expected to wear the official school uniform each day, as outlined in the Uniform Guidelines/Dress Code section of this handbook. PE uniforms may be worn all day on scheduled PE days, and Mass uniforms are required on all school Mass days.

All uniform pieces, including PE uniforms, must be clearly labeled with the student's name to help prevent loss and ensure items can be returned if misplaced.

Uniform guidelines are available on the school website, in FACTS®, and as hard copies from the school office.

If a student borrows a Mass tie from the office for a third time, a replacement fee will be charged to the family's FACTS® account.

In the event of a uniform infraction, parents will be contacted. Repeated violations may result in age-appropriate disciplinary consequences. All uniform regulations and guidelines are subject to the principal's discretion.

Please note: Spirit Wear is not considered part of the regular school uniform. Any days when Spirit Wear may be worn in place of the official uniform will be announced in advance.

Modified Uniform Guidelines

From time to time, the principal may allow students to wear a modified uniform. Students may be permitted to accessorize their uniform or wear spirit wear with uniform bottoms. All dress code guidelines intended to prevent distractions in the learning environment will remain in effect.

Students who come to school in attire deemed inappropriate will be asked to call a parent to bring more suitable clothing. As supplies permit, students who display a uniform infraction may be provided with suitable, temporary clothing by the school. Students, please use good judgment. Be sure you are presentable for the school day. Do not be a distraction to yourself or others. Exercise the virtues of moderation, purity, and modesty. **If you think something may not be appropriate, it likely isn't. Don't wear it.**

Families can purchase used uniforms during PTO-sponsored Used Uniform Sales, held throughout the school year.

Branding & Logos: The SJPII logo is controlled by St. John Paul II School. Embroidered and logoed items must be purchased from Flynn O'Hara, Tommy Hilfiger, and/or Lands' End. **Any use of the St. John Paul II name (in all variations), logos, or effort to represent the school will require written approval.** This includes apparel, signage, merchandise, and any other product at the discretion of the administration.

St. John Paul II Catholic School
UNIFORM GUIDELINES
ALL GRADES

To support a respectful and focused learning environment, all students at SJPII are expected to follow the dress code outlined below:

- Uniforms must be clean, pressed, with all buttons and hems intact; shirts tucked in (except pre-K/kindergarten elastic-waist styles).
- Skirts, shorts, skorts, and jumpers must be fingertip length. We encourage girls to wear shorts under skirts and jumpers.
- Girls can wear solid navy blue or white leggings or tights under skirts and jumpers.
- Socks must be solid navy, white, or black - matching, logo-free, and visible above the shoe.
- Shoes must be solid black dress shoes or solid black athletic shoes on non-PE days.
- Sandals, open-toe shoes, boots, hi-tops, and heels over 1 inch are not permitted.
- Girls: Neat hair with bangs above eyebrows; long hair tied back on PE days.
- Boys: Hair must remain above the collar, ears, and eyebrows and may extend no more than two finger-widths above the top of the head. Shaved designs, patterns, lines, or symbols in the hair are not permitted.
- Hair accessories must be worn in the hair, not on wrists
- For both boys and girls, hair color must be natural. Dyed, bleached, or otherwise artificially colored hair is not permitted.
- No cosmetics, colored lip products, nail polish, or artificial nails.
- Fingernail polish is prohibited; parents will be contacted to either come to the school to remove the polish or give permission for a staff member to do so.
- No visible tattoos or body piercings (except girls' single pierced ears).
- Girls: One pair of small stud earrings (dime-size or smaller).
- Boys: No earrings allowed.
- Jewelry: Limit to one watch, one ring, two simple bracelets, and one simple or fine necklace (cross or holy medal).
- Smart Watches or any devices that connect to the internet for texting are not permitted during school hours. Watches with a beeping device should be silenced or left at home during the school day
- Distracting jewelry or accessories will be removed and sent home.
- Hooded sweatshirts and sweaters are not allowed inside the classroom. Non-SJPII outerwear may be worn outdoors only (arrival, dismissal, recess). Hats are allowed during outdoor recess or PE.

St. John Paul II Catholic School
DRESS CODE

Physical Education Uniform All students (grades PK3-8th) wear PE Uniforms on designated PE days. Socks must be solid navy, white, or black—matching, logo-free, and visible above the shoe. Any color sneakers are permitted.	
Standard PE Uniform	Gray t-shirt with SJPII logo Navy shorts
Winter PE Uniform (can also be worn when the student is cold)	Gray t-shirt with SJPII logo Navy sweatshirt with SJPII logo or track jacket with SJPII logo Navy sweatpants

Mass Uniform The Mass Uniform is worn on all Mass days and on designated special occasions; it may also be worn on any school day, except PE days. Shoes and socks are the same as everyday wear. **<u>PreK and Kindergarten wear the Everyday Uniform to Mass.</u>**		
	Girls	**Boys**
Grades 1-3	White collared blouse with SJPII logo Plaid jumper or navy skirt Navy cross tie (with either option)	White Oxford shirt with the SJPII logo Navy shorts or navy slacks SJPII striped tie Navy, black, or brown belt (optional)
Grades 4 – 8	White collared blouse with SJPII logo Plaid or navy skirt Navy cross tie Navy long tie (6-8 only)	White Oxford shirt with the SJPII logo Navy shorts or navy slacks SJPII striped tie Navy, black, or brown belt

Everyday Uniform

Socks must be solid navy, white, or black—matching, logo-free, and visible above the shoe. Shoes must be **solid** black: either dress shoes or athletic shoes.

A navy SJPII-logoed sweater, vest, fleece, track jacket, or sweatshirt is permitted in the classroom.

	Girls	**Boys**
PK3 - Kindergarten	Light blue polo with SJPII logo Navy blue skort, skirt, or pants Navy polo dress with SJPII logo	Light blue polo with SJPII logo Navy blue shorts or pants
Grades 1-3	White or maroon polo shirt with SJPII logo Navy skort, skirt, or slacks Navy polo dress with SJPII logo	White or maroon polo shirt with SJPII logo Navy shorts or navy slacks Navy, black, or brown belt (optional)
Grades 4 – 8	White or maroon polo shirt with SJPII logo Plaid or navy skirt, or navy slacks Navy polo dress with SJPII logo (Grades 4 and 5 only)	White or maroon polo shirt with SJPII logo Navy shorts or navy slacks Navy, black, or brown belt

Policy on Human Sexuality and the Dignity of the Human Person

(Informed by The Cardinal Newman Society guidance and the teaching of the Catholic Church)

1. Purpose

St. John Paul II Catholic School exists to educate and form students in the truth of Jesus Christ and the Gospel. Central to our mission is the **integral formation** of each student's mind, heart, and body in truth and holiness.

Because the wider culture often presents confusion about human identity, the meaning of the body, and human sexuality, SJPII establishes this policy to:

- Safeguard a Catholic environment of evangelization and learning;
- Clearly articulate expectations for members of the school community;
- Ensure practices consistent with **Catholic teaching, natural law, and a sound Christian anthropology**; and
- Respond pastorally with charity and truth.

2. Statement of Catholic Belief

SJPII proclaims that:

- God creates each person, **made in His image**, who possesses inherent dignity.
- The human person is a **unity of body and soul**; the body is not disposable or interchangeable.
- God created the human person **male and female**, equal in dignity and complementary.
- Sexuality is a gift from God, ordered toward love and life, and is properly expressed in the **marriage of one man and one woman**.
- All persons are called to holiness and virtue, including **chastity,** according to one's state in life.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the SJPII community:

- Students (including enrolled and prospective students),
- Parents/guardians,
- Faculty, staff, administrators,
- Coaches, volunteers,
- Contractors and third-party vendors,
- Visitors and guests at SJPII-sponsored events.

This policy is operative:

- On campus and on school property;
- At all school-sponsored events (on or off campus);
- In school communications and publications, and
- In the use of school technology, platforms, and social media when representing SJPII.

4. Definitions

For purposes of SJPII policy:

- **Sex**: the biological reality of being male or female, present at birth (including biological indicators).
- **Chastity**: the virtue by which a person integrates sexuality within the whole person, practicing self-control and purity according to vocation and state in life.
- **Marriage**: the lifelong union of one man and one woman, ordered for the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children; for baptized persons, elevated by Christ to the status of a sacrament.
- **Gender**: the socio-cultural expression of sex; gender may be distinguished but is not separable from biological sex.
- **Gender dysphoria**: distress or conflict experienced when one's feelings about identity are not aligned with one's biological sex.

5. Guiding Commitments

SJPII commits to:

1. **Charity and dignity**: every student will be treated with respect, compassion, and care.
2. **Truth and integrity**: school language, policies, and practices will reflect Catholic truth about the human person.
3. **Partnership with parents**: parents/guardians are the primary educators; SJPII works with them in matters affecting their child's formation and well-being.
4. **Safety and order**: SJPII maintains an environment conducive to learning and moral formation.

6. Expectations for Conduct

All members of the SJPII community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Catholic morality and the school's mission. This includes:

- Modest speech, dress, and behavior;
- Respect for others' dignity;
- Avoidance of vulgar, sexually suggestive, promiscuous, or scandalous behavior;
- Refraining from advocacy or celebration of sexual activity or relationships contrary to Catholic teaching.

Public Displays of Affection (Students)

To maintain a professional learning environment, romantic displays of affection (including kissing, hugging, and similar behaviors) are not permitted at school or at school events. Age-appropriate friendship and respectful conduct are expected.

7. Student Identity, Names, and Pronouns

SJPII will interact with students according to their **biological sex**.

- **Official records**: School records will reflect the student's legal name and biological sex.
- **Names**: Students will be called by the name provided at registration (or a common derivative of that name), consistent with the student's biological sex.
- **Pronouns**: Faculty, staff, and students are expected to use pronouns that align with their biological sex.

SJPII recognizes that some students may experience confusion or distress. The school will respond with pastoral sensitivity, while maintaining the integrity of Catholic teaching and the school's witness.

8. Facilities, Overnight Trips, and Privacy

To protect student privacy and uphold modesty:

- **Restrooms/locker rooms/changing areas** are used according to biological sex.
- SJPII will make reasonable efforts to accommodate requests for increased privacy (e.g., access to a single-user facility when available), provided that accommodations do not undermine Catholic teaching or create confusion/scandal within the school community.
- **Overnight accommodations** on school trips (rooms, cabins, etc.) are assigned according to biological sex, with supervision and expectations promoting chastity and modesty.

9. Dress Code and Uniforms

Students must follow the SJPII dress code/uniform expectations as designated for their **biological sex**. Uniform policies are meant to support:

- modesty,
- consistency,
- and dignity appropriate to a Catholic school.

10. Athletics and Single-Sex Activities

- Participation in athletic teams and in single-sex activities is based on **biological sex**.
- This supports fairness, safety, and appropriate boundaries.

11. Curriculum, Instructional Materials, Speakers, and Vendors

SJPII ensures that all instruction and resources related to human sexuality and the human person are:

- Faithful to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church,
- Age-appropriate and respectful of childhood development,
- Presented with modesty and discretion,
- Delivered by qualified personnel aligned with the school's mission.

All materials, outside speakers, programs, counseling services, and vendors must be approved by the administration. They must not promote concepts or behaviors contrary to Catholic teaching (including separating gender identity from biological sex or normalizing sexual activity outside marriage).

Parents/guardians will be informed in advance of any formal instruction in human sexuality, and SJPII will honor lawful parental options consistent with diocesan/school guidelines.

12. Student Clubs, Activities, and Communications

Student organizations, events, and communications (including posters, clothing messages, presentations, and online content associated with school activities) may not:

- Advocate or celebrate sexual behavior contrary to Catholic teaching,
- Promote "gender transitioning" or the separation of gender from biological sex,
- Display symbols or slogans that contradict the Catholic moral vision.

SJPII supports clubs and activities that build friendship, virtue, service, leadership, prayer, and authentic belonging.

13. Parent/Guardian Partnership and Communication

Because parents/guardians are primary educators, SJPII will ordinarily communicate with them regarding concerns affecting a child's well-being, including social, emotional, spiritual, and physical matters, unless prohibited by law or advised by appropriate authorities.

Families are expected to support the school's Catholic identity and to refrain from actions that publicly undermine the school's mission, teachings, and policies.

14. Bullying, Harassment, and Respect

SJPII prohibits bullying, harassment, and hateful conduct of any kind. Every person must be treated with Christian charity and respect.

At the same time, respectful disagreement or faithful articulation of Catholic teaching is not bullying. SJPII will address:

- Cruelty, ridicule, threats, exclusion, or harassment; and
- Any behavior that targets a person's dignity.

15. Employment, Volunteers, and Adult Witness

Because witness and modeling are essential to Catholic education:

- Employees and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Catholic moral teaching and SJPII's mission, including sexual morality.
- Public behavior or advocacy that contradicts Catholic teaching and causes scandal or undermines the integrity of the mission may result in corrective action, up to and including separation from employment or volunteer service, in a manner consistent with diocesan policy and applicable law.
- All faculty, staff, and parent volunteers must complete Safe Environment training and background screening provided by the Diocese of Raleigh before working with students or volunteering in school activities.
- This training equips adults to recognize, prevent, and appropriately respond to situations that may threaten children's safety or well-being.
- Compliance with diocesan Safe Environment requirements, including maintaining current certification and background checks, is required for continued employment or volunteer service.

16. Admissions and Enrollment

SJPII welcomes families seeking an authentically Catholic education. Admission and continued enrollment require a willingness to respect and support SJPII's mission, teachings, and policies.

A student experiencing distress or confusion regarding identity is not automatically denied admission; however, enrollment may be contingent upon the family's cooperation with school policy and the school's ability to serve the child without undermining mission integrity or creating confusion/scandal within the community.

17. Compliance, Corrective Action, and Discipline

Violations of this policy will be addressed with pastoral prudence, age-appropriate correction, and a focus on the student's formation and the common good.

Depending on severity and pattern of behavior, responses may include:

- Parent conference and written plan of support,
- Restrictions on activities,
- Disciplinary consequences per the school handbook,
- Up to and including withdrawal/expulsion when a student or family persistently and publicly rejects essential policies or causes serious disruption/scandal.

18. Questions, Requests, and Case-by-Case Decisions

Some situations require careful discernment. When requests arise (e.g., privacy accommodations, safety concerns), SJPII will consider:

1. What specifically is being requested?
2. Is it consistent with Catholic teaching and school policy?
3. Can SJPII reasonably accommodate it without confusion, disruption, or scandal?
4. What best supports the student's welfare and the community's formation?

19. Policy Review and Authority

This policy is administered by the Principal (in consultation with the Pastor, the Board of Directors, and, where applicable, diocesan guidance). SJPII reserves the right to interpret and apply this policy in a manner consistent with Catholic teaching and the school's mission. The school recommends periodic legal review of handbook language to ensure clarity, appropriate compliance with applicable law, and protection of religious freedom and mission integrity.

Policy on Human Sexuality Instruction and Programs

1. Purpose

An important part of the mission of St. John Paul II Catholic School is the **integral formation of each student: body, mind, and spirit**, in harmony with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Because the human person is a unity of body and soul, the Church recognizes that human sexuality is an important aspect of personal identity and moral development.

SJPII approaches this topic with prudence, modesty, and fidelity to Catholic teaching. This policy reflects the guidance of the Church and principles articulated by the Cardinal Newman Society regarding sexuality programs in Catholic education.

2. Primary Role of Parents

SJPII affirms that **parents and guardians are the original and primary educators of their children**, particularly in matters related to human sexuality.

For this reason:
• SJPII **does not offer a stand-alone human sexuality program**.
• **Instruction concerning sexual behavior or the marital act is left to parents and guardians.**
• The school supports families by reinforcing Catholic moral teaching and promoting the virtue of chastity.
• The school communicates with parents if sensitive issues arise that may require family guidance.

SJPII seeks to work **in partnership with parents**, respecting their primary role in guiding their children in matters of human sexuality.

3. Catholic Foundation and Christian Anthropology

All instruction related to the human person, identity, relationships, and moral development is grounded in **Christian anthropology and Catholic teaching**.

SJPII affirms the following principles:
• The human person is a **body and soul unity created by God**.
• Every person possesses inherent dignity as one created in the **image and likeness of God**.
• God created human beings **male and female**, two distinct and complementary ways of being human. • The human body is a gift from God and should be treated with honor and respect.
• Human sexuality is ordered toward **love, marriage, and the creation of new life**.
• All people are called to live the **virtue of chastity according to their state in life**.

Instruction and school culture reflect the Church’s moral teaching regarding marriage, family life, and sexual integrity.

4. Where Related Content Occurs in the SJPII Curriculum

SJPII addresses age-appropriate, standards-based content only in limited ways within the curriculum.

Religion Curriculum
• Eighth-grade students study **Theology of the Body** as part of the religion curriculum.
• Instruction presents the Church's teaching on the dignity of the human person, the meaning of love, and the vocation to chastity.

Science Curriculum
• The **human reproductive system is taught in science** as required by diocesan standards.
• Instruction focuses on **human anatomy and physiology**.
• Teachers present this material using respectful and appropriate language consistent with Catholic teaching.
• Instruction does not include sexually explicit materials or content contrary to Catholic moral teaching.

5. Standards for Supplementary Programs or Presentations

If SJPII ever considers a presentation, outside speaker, or supplemental resource related to human sexuality, the school will ensure that it meets the following standards:
• Content is faithful to **Catholic teaching and Christian anthropology**.
• Instruction is **age-appropriate and respectful of student modesty**.
• Materials should avoid sexually explicit content or graphic descriptions.
• Instruction does not promote moral relativism or ideas contrary to Catholic moral teaching.
• Presenters are qualified and respectful of the Catholic mission of the school.
• Parents are informed in advance and involved in the process.

6. Parent Communication and Rights

SJPII values transparent communication with families.

Parents will:
• Be informed when instruction includes the **human reproductive system in science**.
• Be informed when **Theology of the Body** is presented in eighth-grade religion.
• Have the opportunity to review materials or discuss concerns with administration or teachers.

If a special presentation or program is proposed beyond the regular curriculum, **advance communication with parents will be provided** in accordance with diocesan guidance.

7. Materials and Methods Safeguarding Modesty and Student Well-Being

SJPII carefully safeguards students' innocence and modesty.

The school does not permit:
• Sexually explicit images, videos, demonstrations, or erotic materials.
• Instruction that promotes sexual activity outside of marriage.
• Instruction presenting contraception, abortion, pornography, masturbation, or same sex sexual activity as morally acceptable.
• Instruction separating human identity from the God-given reality of male and female.
• Student activities requiring disclosure of personal sexual information.
• Role-playing, drawings, or demonstrations involving erotic or genital acts.

All instruction is presented in a manner that protects student dignity and supports moral development.

8. Responding to Student Questions or Incidents

Students may occasionally raise questions or encounter inappropriate material through media, peers, or cultural influences.

In such situations:
• Teachers respond **briefly and prudently** using age-appropriate language.
• Extended or detailed discussion of sexual matters is avoided in classroom settings.
• Situations that require further attention are referred to the **administration and parents**.

This approach ensures that families retain their primary role in guiding their children in sensitive matters.

9. Staff Expectations and Formation

All SJPII faculty and staff are expected to support the school's Catholic mission.

Staff members are expected to:
• Uphold Catholic teaching in word and witness.
• Communicate with students using professional and age-appropriate language.
• Follow diocesan standards and school guidance on sensitive topics.
• Refer questions beyond the scope of classroom instruction to administration and parents.

10. Review and Alignment

This policy is reviewed periodically by the school administration to ensure alignment with:
• The teachings of the Catholic Church
• Diocesan policies and curriculum standards
• Sound Catholic educational principles reflected in guidance such as that provided by the Cardinal Newman Society

SJPII remains committed to forming students in truth, virtue, and respect for the dignity of the human person while supporting parents in their essential role as the primary educators of their children.

Use of Secular Materials and Programs Policy

Purpose

St. John Paul II Catholic School is dedicated to preparing the hearts and minds of our students for spiritual growth, academic excellence, personal responsibility, and service to others, all in accordance with the teachings of the Roman Catholic faith.

In support of this mission, the school seeks to form students intellectually, morally, spiritually, and physically while helping them develop a relationship with Jesus Christ and an understanding of truth grounded in the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Catholic education serves both the common good of society and the eternal good of the student. Instructional materials and programs used within the school must support the integration of faith and reason and contribute to the formation of the whole human person.

While materials developed specifically within the Catholic tradition are preferred, St. John Paul II Catholic School recognizes that some secular materials and programs may provide valuable academic content, particularly in mathematics, science, social studies, literature, and the arts. These resources may be used when they support the school's educational mission and do not contradict Catholic teaching.

All secular materials and programs must therefore be carefully evaluated to ensure that their philosophy, content, and activities are consistent with the mission and Catholic identity of St. John Paul II Catholic School.

Guiding Principles

The use of secular materials and programs at St. John Paul II Catholic School is guided by principles drawn from the Church's teachings and by guidance from the Cardinal Newman Society.

Catholic education seeks to:
• Evangelize and form disciples of Jesus Christ
• Foster a Christian community rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church
• Promote the integral formation of the human person, including intellectual, moral, spiritual, emotional, and physical development
• Help students develop a Christian understanding of the world through the integration of faith and reason.

Standards for the Use of Secular Materials and Programs

When secular materials or programs are considered for use at St. John Paul II Catholic School, they must meet the following standards.

Secular materials must:
• Support the mission and Catholic identity of St. John Paul II Catholic School
• Remain consistent with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the Magisterium
• Avoid promoting ideologies or philosophies contrary to Catholic teaching, including atheism, agnosticism, moral relativism, materialism, or false understandings of the human person
• Respect and uphold the dignity of the human person created in the image and likeness of God
• Support the harmonious development of students' intellectual, moral, emotional, physical, and spiritual gifts
• Avoid causing confusion or scandal regarding Catholic teaching
• Allow teachers to integrate Catholic teaching and perspective into instruction
• Avoid diminishing the Catholic character of the school or displacing essential elements of Catholic formation, including theology instruction, prayer, sacramental life, and faith formation
• Avoid imposing excessive program requirements that would weaken the Catholic culture or mission of the school.

Review and Approval Process

All secular instructional materials and programs must be reviewed before adoption or implementation within the school.

The review process includes:
• Initial evaluation by the teacher or program sponsor to determine alignment with Catholic teaching and the mission of the school.
• Review by the principal or designated instructional leader
• Consultation with diocesan guidance when appropriate
• Adaptation or supplementation with Catholic resources when necessary.

The school reserves the right to require modifications or removal of materials that do not fully support the school's Catholic mission.

Adaptation and Integration of Catholic Teaching

When secular materials are used, teachers are responsible for integrating Catholic teaching and perspective into instruction so that students encounter knowledge within a Catholic worldview.

This may include:
• Incorporating Catholic social teaching when discussing historical or social issues
• Emphasizing the harmony between faith and science when teaching scientific concepts
• Highlighting the beauty, order, and wonder of creation in mathematics and science
• Exploring literature and the arts through the lens of human dignity and salvation history.

Instruction related to human sexuality must always reflect Catholic teaching and respect the role of parents as the primary educators of their children.

Responsibility of Faculty and Staff

All faculty and staff share responsibility for safeguarding St. John Paul II Catholic School's Catholic identity.

Faculty members are expected to:
• Evaluate instructional materials carefully before use.
• Ensure that classroom instruction reflects Catholic teaching
• Integrate faith and reason throughout the curriculum
• Model Christian values and professional conduct.

Authority

The principal retains final authority over the approval, modification, or removal of instructional materials and programs to ensure fidelity to the mission and Catholic identity of St. John Paul II Catholic School.

Consultation with the pastor, the Board of Directors, and the Diocese of Raleigh may occur when necessary.

Policy Standards on the Formation of the Human Person in Sports

St. John Paul II Catholic School

At St. John Paul II Catholic School, athletics are a vibrant and critical extension of the school's Catholic educational mission. As a Catholic community, we recognize sport as a valuable means of **integral formation for the human person**, fostering the development of mind, body, and spirit. Athletic programs support the school's commitment to forming students in virtue, discipline, teamwork, and service to others while promoting respect for the dignity of every person.

In harmony with guidance from the Cardinal Newman Society and the teachings of the Catholic Church on Christian anthropology, athletics at SJPII are intended to complement and strengthen the school's academic and spiritual life. Academic responsibilities and participation in the school's spiritual life take precedence over athletic competition. Student-athletes are held to the same expectations of academic performance, conduct, and personal responsibility as all students.

Athletic participation at SJPII encourages students to develop virtues central to both sport and the Christian life. These include justice through fair play and respect for opponents and officials; temperance through modesty and self-control; courage through perseverance in the face of challenges; humility in victory and defeat; and charity through support for teammates and concern for others' well-being. Coaches, athletes, and spectators are expected to demonstrate sportsmanship and respect before, during, and after all competitions. Bullying, hazing, mockery, profanity, or any form of unsportsmanlike conduct is strictly prohibited.

The school also recognizes athletics as an opportunity for spiritual growth. Teams incorporate prayer and are encouraged to reflect the school's faith-centered culture in their activities and competitions. Participation in athletics should help students understand their talents as gifts from God and encourage them to use those gifts responsibly and generously.

The safety and well-being of student-athletes are a priority. Policies and practices are designed to protect students from physical, psychological, and spiritual harm while promoting healthy development and respect for the human body as a gift from God.

To uphold dignity, modesty, fairness, and safety in athletic competition, participation on gender-specific teams and the use of locker rooms or similar facilities correspond to a student's biological gender. Reasonable accommodations may be provided when necessary to support student privacy.

All expectations, procedures, and participation guidelines for SJPII athletics are further outlined in the **SJPII Athletics Handbook (2024–2025)**, available at:
https://www.jp2catholicschool.org/editoruploads/files/SJP2%20Athletic%20Handbook%202024_2025(2).pdf

St. John Paul II Catholic School

Policy on Literature and the Arts

1. Purpose

St. John Paul II Catholic School (SJPII) selects and teaches literature and the arts to advance the mission of Catholic education. Catholic education brings human wisdom into an encounter with divine wisdom, cultivates students' intellectual, creative, and aesthetic faculties, transmits culture critically and systematically in the light of faith, and forms students for lives of virtue, service, and holiness.

Literature and the arts are essential tools of Catholic education because they explore the human condition and illuminate the nature of the human person, develop the imagination and aesthetic sense, open students to beauty and transcendence, and support a coherent Catholic worldview and a Christian vision of life, culture, and history.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all SJPII school sponsored or school provided literary and artistic content, including required and recommended reading for class, independent and summer reading, classroom collections, visual art, music, theater and drama, dance, film and video, digital media and online resources, guest presentations or performances involving artistic or literary content, and student performances and displays that are sponsored or publicly represented as school programming.

SJPII does not currently maintain a centralized school library. This policy governs all classroom and shared materials.

3. Guiding Principles

SJPII's selection and use of literature and the arts are guided by standards consistent with the Cardinal Newman Society's Policy Standards on Literature and the Arts in Catholic Education.

First, works should support human formation and truth by helping students understand the human person, our struggles and joys, and the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty.

Second, works are chosen and taught as part of a coherent program that interprets culture in the light of faith. SJPII does not treat literature and the arts as neutral content. Teachers provide guided instruction that helps students evaluate themes, characters, and artistic expression in light of Catholic teaching.

Third, SJPII protects mission integrity and students' innocence. Works must not become a proximate cause of sin, confusion, scandal, despair, or diminished faith, especially for younger students.

Fourth, teacher-guided critical engagement is essential. All works, including those that present moral complexity, must be presented with faithful and informed guidance so that students learn mature judgment and a Catholic understanding of reality.

4. Standards

To be appropriate for SJPII programs, literature and arts selections should advance Catholic formation by encouraging virtue, moral clarity, wonder, courage, compassion, gratitude, and reverence. They should demonstrate enduring educational and artistic value and be chosen for intellectual, moral, inspirational, and aesthetic weight rather than popularity or trendiness. They should be developmentally appropriate for the intended grade level in content, emotional intensity, and spiritual impact. They should support a Christian ordering of imagination and emotions and help students grow in wise and mature judgment. They should be teachable within a Catholic framework, allowing teachers to provide a coherent Catholic interpretation and to address cultural errors or counter-values clearly and responsibly.

5. Content Requirements and Prohibitions

SJPII will not assign, stock in classrooms, show, or sponsor works that are reasonably likely to harm students’ faith, innocence, or moral formation.

Works are not approved for SJPII use when they include explicit sexual content, including discussion, depiction, or description of sexual activity, sexual fantasy, pornography, or eroticized nudity. Works are not approved when they promote occult practices as desirable or as a pathway to power or identity without clear moral framing. Works are not approved when they include blasphemy or content that mocks God, the sacraments, or the Church in a way that is enticing, persuasive, or left unchallenged. Works are not approved if they include significant or shocking profanity, especially when it is frequent or used to normalize disrespectful speech. Works are not approved when they depict graphic violence that is sensationalized or gratuitous, or that exceeds the intended audience's developmental readiness. Works are not approved when they advance a provocatively anti-Christian worldview in an alluring or morally confusing manner without appropriate maturity and faithful instruction.

Some works may reference sin, suffering, or moral failure as part of the human experience. Such material may be used only when it is age-appropriate, educationally justified, and taught with clear Catholic moral framing.

6. Selection Criteria

When selecting a text, artwork, film, performance, or digital resource, SJPII considers mission alignment and the ways the selection supports Catholic formation. SJPII considers virtue and moral clarity, including whether good and evil are distinguishable and whether sin is clearly recognized. SJPII considers artistic or literary quality, including craft, beauty, depth, and enduring value. SJPII considers age and maturity fit, including emotional intensity and complexity. SJPII considers the risk of scandal or harm, including the likelihood of tempting students to sin, causing despair, or confusing basic human goods or Church teaching. SJPII considers instructional purposes, including curricular goals and integration with faith and culture. SJPII considers teacher readiness to guide discussion with

fidelity and wisdom. SJPII considers family partnership and whether parent awareness is needed for independent or summer reading.

7. Use of a Selection Rubric

SJPII uses a holistic rubric, modeled on The Cardinal Newman Society's guidance, to evaluate potential selections.

A rating of Excellent Choice indicates strong alignment with SJPII's mission and standards. A rating of Good Choice indicates solid alignment and suitability for classroom use. A rating of Fair Choice requires careful justification and additional safeguards. A rating of Poor Choice indicates the selection is not appropriate for SJPII use.

A selection that raises concerns or falls into the Fair Choice category requires a written instructional justification and a mitigation plan, such as using excerpts only, structured discussion plans, or parent communication. Administrative review will occur when concerns arise or when a teacher seeks guidance. A Poor Choice is not used in SJPII programs or classroom collections.

8. Implementation and Oversight

A. Curriculum

Teachers propose major texts and anchor works as part of curriculum planning. Teachers are expected to evaluate selections in light of this policy and to document their instructional purpose and grade-level suitability.

Principal approval is not required for routine selections that clearly align with this policy and established curriculum. However, administrative consultation and review are required when a proposed selection may present sensitive themes, raise questions under this policy, or be identified as a Fair Choice.

B. Classroom Collections

Classroom collections and shared materials are curated in accordance with SJPII's mission and this policy. Donated materials are reviewed before distribution or classroom placement. Works that do not meet this policy may be declined or removed.

C. Films, Video, and Digital Media

Media used during instructional time must serve a clear pedagogical purpose rather than entertainment. Teachers should use brief clips when possible and pause for analysis and discussion. Any offensive scenes must be skipped or blocked. Full-length films or materials containing sensitive themes should be reviewed with the administration if concerns arise. Digital resources must comply with this policy and with SJPII technology expectations.

D. Performances, Assemblies, and Guest Presenters

Scripts, songs, visuals, and performance content for school programs are reviewed for alignment with the mission and age appropriateness. SJPII reserves the right to edit, substitute, or decline any performance content that conflicts with this policy.

E. Summer Reading and Independent Assignments

Summer reading lists are published with brief content notes when relevant. Parents are partners in supervising independent reading, especially when themes require maturity. When a title may raise concerns, SJPII provides an approved alternate selection that meets the same instructional objectives.

9. Requests for Alternatives and Concerns

SJPII values parent partnership and recognizes that families may have prudential differences in readiness for certain themes. Families may request an alternative title when a selection conflicts with family formation concerns or when a student demonstrates concerns about emotional or spiritual readiness. Alternate selections must meet SJPII learning objectives and will be approved by the teacher, in consultation with the administration if needed.

When a concern is raised, the administration will first meet with the teacher to review the selection's purpose and instructional approach. If concerns remain, the principal will review the material in light of this policy and determine whether to retain, restrict, replace, or remove the item for SJPII use. The decision will be communicated clearly to the family.

10. Staff Responsibility

All faculty members share responsibility for upholding SJPII's Catholic mission in their selection and presentation of literature and the arts. Teachers are expected to model faithful Catholic judgment, provide thoughtful guidance, and avoid introducing unvetted content. Administrative support and consultation are available whenever questions arise.

11. Relationship to Other Policies

This policy aligns with SJPII policies on Catholic identity and mission, curriculum oversight, child safety and wellness, technology and internet use, and parent communication and partnership.

Appendix A: Quick Selection Checklist

A proposed selection should be mission-aligned and supportive of virtue. It should demonstrate high-quality and enduring educational or artistic value. It should be age-appropriate in theme, language, and emotional intensity. It should be free of explicit sexual content. It should be free of significant or shocking profanity. It should not promote occult practice or moral confusion. It should be teachable within a Catholic worldview with a clear instructional plan for discussion and formation. Parent communication should be included when needed, especially for summer reading.

St. John Paul II Catholic School Artificial Intelligence Policy

1. Purpose

At St. John Paul II Catholic School, artificial intelligence (AI) may facilitate learning. Still, it will never replace students' thinking, teachers' judgment, or the relationships at the heart of Catholic education. This policy sets out how students, faculty, staff, and families may use AI, and why.

Our patron, St. John Paul II, taught that every person is made in the image of God and called to seek the truth. We hold AI to that standard. A tool is welcome here when it helps a child grow in knowledge, virtue, and faith; it is set aside when it does the growing for them.

This policy applies to all AI use connected to school: in classrooms, on school devices and accounts, for homework and assessments, and in school communications. It works alongside the school's existing Acceptable Use of Technology Policy, Family Handbook, and Code of Conduct.

2. Guiding Sources

This policy rests on three sources of authority, read together: the teaching of the Holy Father, the direction of our diocese, and the Cardinal Newman Society's standards for faithful Catholic education.

Magnifica Humanitas (Pope Leo XIV, 2026)

Magnifica Humanitas: On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence is Pope Leo XIV's first encyclical, signed May 15, 2026, and published May 25, 2026. Its teaching shapes this policy in five ways:

- **Technology is a tool, not an enemy, but it is never neutral.** The Pope writes that technology is not inherently evil (MH 9), yet it takes on the character of those who design and use it. Our choices about AI are therefore moral.
- **AI is not a person.** AI can imitate human reasoning, but it has no conscience, empathy, or spiritual life (MH ch. 3). People remain responsible.
- **Schools must protect the desire to ask questions.** The Pope calls for a renewed educational alliance so that machines do not make human thought seem useless (MH 140), and for schools to be places where students learn to seek and love the truth (MH 147).
- **Users must be educated.** The encyclical calls for clear accountability, oversight, and user education at every stage (MH ch. 3), and for proper and critical use of digital tools (MH ch. 4).
- **Dignity, data, and fairness matter.** The Pope warns against profiling and mass data collection as a new form of power (MH 171) and asks that technology not widen the gap between those included and excluded (MH 67).

Pope Leo also asked Catholic schools, in the apostolic letter *Drawing New Maps of Hope* (October 2025), to educate in the wise use of technology and AI, placing the person before the algorithm, and to be discerning about digital platforms, data protection, and fair access for all students (Diocese of Raleigh coverage).

Diocese of Raleigh

As a school of the Diocese of Raleigh, St. John Paul II follows the direction of the Office of Education and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. As of this writing, the Diocese of Raleigh has not issued an AI policy. This policy is subordinate to diocesan technology, data-privacy, and safe-environment policies, and to any AI policy the diocese may issue in the future; where they differ, the diocesan policy governs.

The Cardinal Newman Society

St. John Paul II integrates the Cardinal Newman Society standards into its program: the *Principles of Catholic Identity in Education*, the *Catholic Curriculum Standards*, and the Society's *Policy Standards*.

St. John Paul II measures every AI decision against six principles drawn from these sources.

1. **Human dignity first.** Each student is a person made in the image of God, not a data point. AI must never reduce, label, or replace a person (MH 51–53).
2. **Formation over information.** The goal of school is a formed mind and heart, not a finished product. Students must do the thinking, writing, and struggling that growth requires.
3. **Truth and honesty.** AI output can be wrong, biased, or invented. Users check it, and they are honest about when they used it. Presenting AI work as one's own is a lie.
4. **Human responsibility.** A person is always accountable for any AI-assisted work or decision. AI never makes final decisions about grades, discipline, placement, or pastoral care.
5. **Relationship and presence.** AI does not replace the teacher, friend, parent, or priest. Prayer, confession of faith, and spiritual reflection are personal acts that no machine can perform for us.
6. **Justice and stewardship.** We protect children's privacy, give all students fair access to approved tools, and use AI with restraint, mindful of its creation cost (MH 101).

These principles also serve as a teaching framework. Teachers are encouraged to help students ask, before using any tool: ***Is this helping me learn, or doing my learning for me? Is it honest? Is it kind? Would I be comfortable telling my teacher and parents how I used it?***

4. Definitions

Term	Meaning in this policy
Artificial intelligence (AI)	Computer systems that perform tasks associated with human thinking, such as answering questions, writing, summarizing, translating, or recognizing images.
Generative AI	AI that creates new text, images, audio, or video from a prompt (for example, chatbots and image generators).
Approved tool	An AI tool the principal has reviewed and listed for school use under Section 8.

Term	Meaning in this policy
AI-assisted work	Work in which a student or employee used AI for any part of the process, such as brainstorming, drafting, editing, or research.
Personal information	Any information that identifies a student, family, or employee: names, photos, grades, health, behavior, or work samples with names attached.
Assessment	Any quiz, test, graded writing, project, or task used to measure what a student knows or can do.

5. Student Use

Students may use AI at school only with a teacher's permission, only with approved tools, and only in the ways the teacher describes for that assignment. **The default for any assignment is no AI unless the teacher says otherwise.**

By grade band

Grade band	What AI use looks like	Student accounts
K–2	Students learn *about* AI: what it is, that it is not a person, and that it can be wrong. Any AI use is teacher-led and whole-class, on the teacher's screen.	None
3–5	Teacher-led and teacher-supervised use only, for specific activities (for example, checking a science fact together, or comparing an AI summary to the text). Students learn to question and verify AI answers.	None, unless an approved tool is designed for this age
6–8	Supervised use of approved tools for defined tasks, with disclosure. Students practice evaluating output for accuracy, bias, and consistency with Catholic teaching.	Only on teacher-approved tools, with school-managed accounts

6. Academic Integrity

Honesty about AI use is a matter of the eighth commandment, not only a school rule. Work a student turns in must be the student's own thinking, and any AI help must be disclosed.

Detecting misuse

AI-detection software is unreliable and may not be the sole basis for any finding of dishonesty. Teachers instead rely on knowing their students' work, in-class writing samples, drafts, and conversations with the student. A student suspected of misuse is given the chance to explain and to show their thinking.

Responding to misuse

Misuse is handled under the Student Handbook's academic honesty and discipline policies, with attention to the student's age and growth. The first response for younger students is teaching, not punishment. Typical steps:

1. Conversation with the student about what happened and why honesty matters
2. Redoing the work without AI, often in class
3. Contact with parents
4. For repeated or serious misuse, consequences under the Code of Conduct

Review

AI changes quickly, and this policy is a living document. The principal and Leadership Committee will review it every year, and sooner if the diocese, the Holy See, or the Cardinal Newman Society issues new guidance.

7. References

Church documents

- Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas: On Safeguarding the Human Person in the Time of Artificial Intelligence*, May 15, 2026 (cited as MH with paragraph numbers)
- Vatican News, summary of Magnifica Humanitas by chapter, May 25, 2026
- Pope Leo XIV, *Drawing New Maps of Hope* (apostolic letter on Catholic education), October 2025, as reported by the Diocese of Raleigh
- USCCB resources on Magnifica Humanitas

Diocese of Raleigh

- Office of Catholic Schools, Standards and Instruction
- Information Technology Department

The Cardinal Newman Society

- Newman Guide Requirements for K–12 schools
- Cardinal Newman Society Policy Standards, including Policy Standards on Secular Academic Materials and Programs

TELECOMMUNICATIONS USE AGREEMENT

As a technology user at St. John Paul II Catholic School, I agree to follow the school's rules and code of ethics in all use of electronic devices, including Chromebooks, tablets, computers, and internet services:

1. Respect for Equipment and Learning Environment

- I will use school electronics for academic purposes only and treat all devices with care.
- I will keep my assigned workspace and device clean.
- I will not eat or drink while using any electronic device.
- I will not use personal portable chargers or battery packs while on campus.

2. Responsible and Safe Online Behavior

- I will only access websites and platforms assigned or approved by my teacher.
- I will not click on suspicious links, attachments, or pop-ups that may lead to inappropriate or unauthorized content.
- I will not access or use any form of social media during school hours.

3. Respect for Others' Privacy and Work

- I will not attempt to access or alter another student's files or accounts.
- I will not attempt to bypass network security or gain unauthorized access to any systems.
- I will not use electronic communication to bully, harass, or disrespect others.

4. Ethical Use of the Internet

- I will use the Internet only for school-related learning and research.
- I will not post or share personal information (such as names, addresses, or phone numbers) about myself or others.
- I will not engage in commercial, political, or personal online activity using school resources.
- I will not download or transmit copyrighted, offensive, or illegal material.

5. Accountability

- I understand that the use of technology is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use may result in loss of access, disciplinary action, or financial responsibility.
- I understand that school staff and administration reserve the right to monitor my device and online activity.
- I understand that school files may be periodically deleted with prior notice to preserve network function.

6. Damage and Replacement

- I understand that I am responsible for the care and appropriate use of my assigned Chromebook or tablet.
- I will be charged **$350.00** for any **lost, missing, or damaged Chromebook**.
- After the **third instance of a misplaced Chromebook**, my **$100 Chromebook deposit** (paid via FACTS) will be forfeited.
- The full replacement cost for any damaged or lost device will be **billed through FACTS** or payable by check.

All students and parents must sign a digital or hard copy of this agreement annually to be granted access to school-issued devices and networks.

_____

Parent Signature Date Student Signature Date

Family Signature Page (**ONE PER FAMILY**)

Please Print Family Name _____

I have read the *SJPII Family Handbook 2025-2026* and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as written. Parents at all grade levels must sign. Students in Grades 2-8 are required to sign.

Parent signature: Date:

Parent signature: Date:

Student signature: Date:

Student signature: Date:

Student signature: Date:

Student signature: Date:

Student signature Date

PLEASE RETURN SIGNED FORMS BY WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 29, 2026

Media Permission Form (ONE PER STUDENT)

Local Media

Local media frequently want to interview students to add a personal touch to stories. Students' comments may be used in newspapers, publications, web-based outlets, or broadcast on radio or TV. The school system monitors these presentations to ensure that they reflect positively on the children involved. You will be informed if the media interviews your child. This form allows you, as a parent or guardian, to choose whether your child may be interviewed.

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

❑ I permit the news media to interview my child. Further, I authorize its use without inspecting or approving the finished product or its specific use.

❑ I do not give my child permission to be interviewed by the news media.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

School Social Media

I understand that my child's photograph may be published on the SJPII website and on St. John Paul II Catholic School's social media accounts.

PLEASE CHECK ONE

❑ I give my permission for my child's photo to be used on SJPII social media

❑ I do not permit putting my child's photo on SJPII social media

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Distance Learning

I understand that if the need arises to return to distance learning, my child may be seen or heard during distance-learning activities at St. John Paul II Catholic School.

PLEASE CHECK ONE

❑ I give my permission for my child to participate in distance learning sessions

❑ I do not permit for my child to participate in distance learning sessions

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Student's Name _____

St. John Paul II Catholic School

2922 Camp Easter Rd. Southern Pines, NC 28387

Belle Meade Retirement Community
Walking Permission Form

From time to time, students will have the chance to visit Belle Meade Retirement Community. Belle Meade is a short walk through the cemetery behind the school. This is a wonderful opportunity for our students to interact with the residents and learn from one another.

This Permission Form must be filled out and signed by the parent or guardian for students to be allowed to participate in the trip to Belle Meade. Only one permission form per family is required.

Family's Last Name _____

Child (ren)'s Name and Grade

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

By signing my name below, I acknowledge that St. John Paul II Catholic School and any of its Employees are free from any liability for any harm arising to my child(ren) listed above as a result of the walking trip to Belle Meade Retirement Community.

In case of emergency, I permit my child to be taken to a physician or hospital by either a parent in charge or by school personnel. I understand that every effort will be made to contact me.

Parent Signature _____

Date _____