



# **St. John Regional Catholic School**

## **STUDENT HANDBOOK 2011 - 2012**

\*The Diocese of Portland is in the process of updating the student handbook, which is almost complete. You will receive an updated copy as soon as it becomes available.

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## **1. MISSION STATEMENT OF MAINE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

The mission of the Catholic Schools in Maine is to strengthen the Catholic Church and to create an environment in which the faith is preserved, nourished, shaped and communicated to foster values that give meaningful direction to the growth, development and formation of the student by proclaiming the message, creating community, providing service and celebrating worship so that our students will become faith-filled Christians, creative and critical thinkers, life long learners and confident contributors.

### **St. John Regional Catholic School** *Mission Statement*

Our school offers a Catholic atmosphere to provide quality education and spiritual development to our students and their families.

## **VISION STATEMENT FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

### **Catholic Identity**

- Religious instruction and formation will be rooted in the Scriptures and teachings of the Catholic Church and the liturgical life of the parish.
- A distinctive Catholic environment of Gospel-inspired values will be integrated into all areas of curriculum and school life.

### **Educational Program**

- Catholic Schools will strive to be centers of educational excellence.
- Curriculums, programs, and methodologies will be evaluated on a regular basis and updated to produce students who are prepared for employment, self-actualization, and productive lives in society and for future education.
- State-of-the-art educational resources and up-to-date technology will be provided to support and integrate learning and instruction.
- In addition to a strong core curriculum, Catholic schools will offer extracurricular such as fine arts, music, athletics and clubs.
- Where there is a need, Catholic schools will provide a preschool, before and after school care, parenting classes for school parents, etc.
- Catholic schools will continue to encourage religious vocations and involvement of their students and graduates in parish life.

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN MAINE**

Schools in the Diocese of Portland are under the governing structure of a corporation sole. In this type of arrangement, all boards are consultative, and the pastor is the “CEO.” Each Catholic School is responsible for the operation and maintenance of its own elementary school.

At St. John, the pastor, in collaboration with a search team, hires the administrator and delegates education decisions to his/her leadership. St. John has a school board with members serving a term of three years. The board serves as a consultant to the pastor in matters of policy and procedure. The Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese is the consultant for all of Maine’s Catholic Schools.

## **2. ORGANIZATION OF ST. JOHN REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL (SJRCs)**

Pastor	Rev. Joseph E. Daniels
School Chaplain	Fr. Jack Dickinson
Principal	Claudette Massey
Business Manager	Mrs. Doris Smith
School Bookkeeper	Tessa Guerrette

### **School Board**

Sr. Rosemary Donahue Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
The Most Rev. Richard J. Malone, Th.D  
Bishop, Diocese of Portland

Chairman, Dan Veilleux

Claudette Massey, ex-officio	Bob Bizier	Ryan Loubier
Janice Souviney, ex-officio	Craig Day	Stephanie Thibodeau
Kerry Smart, ex-officio	Scott Giroux	Jeff Wrigley
	Brian Kelly	Melissa Caccamo

### **St. John Regional Catholic School Staff**

Principal	Claudette Massey
Assistant Principal	Sarah Sirois
Child Care Director	Janice Souviney
Kindergarten	Kristie Irza
Grade 1	Amanda Pollard
Grade 2	Lucille Nassar
Grade 3	Shari Kinney
Grade 4	Valerie Wheeler
Grade 5/6	Rhonda Kimball
Art Teacher	Hollie Hilton
Computer Teacher	
French Teacher	Sarah Sirois
Music	Sarah Sirois
Title I	Jeannie Poulin
Physical Education	Marie Cates
Library Assistant	Doreen White
Ed Techs	Tammey Quirion
Administrative Assistant	Karen MacLean
Maintenance	Louie Moniz, Jr.; Ernie Robinson; Steve Inman
Bookkeeper	Tessa Guerrette

### **Preschool**

Teacher/Director	Janice Souviney
Teacher	Lisa Grard, Andrea Daigle
Aides	Linda Cresci, Ruth Walsh, Andrea Diagle
Secretary (part-time)	Tessa Guerrette
After School Aides	Becky Owen and Andrea Lemieux (2 and 3 yr. old class also)

### **3. SCHOOL STUDENT ADMISSION POLICY**

Students shall be admitted to parish elementary schools according to the following guidelines. In considering applicants for acceptance, decisions are based on: records review, recommendations by the elementary school administrator and/or the applicant's pastor.

- It is recommended that each applicant and his/her parents have a pre-admission interview with the administrator. In most cases, a pre-admission interview will be necessary before a final decision can be made regarding an applicant's admission.
- The acceptance of a transfer student shall be preceded by consultation with the previous principal and a review of the student's academic record.
- Students applying to Catholic elementary schools shall, if qualified, be accepted according to the following criteria, applied in sequence:
  - A. Catholic students from the parish sponsoring the school
  - B. Catholics who have brothers and sisters who are presently students at the school
  - C. Catholic students from other parishes in the Diocese of Portland
  - D. Catholic transfer students from parishes outside the Diocese of Portland
  - E. Non-Catholics who have brothers and sisters who are presently students at the school
  - F. Other Non-Catholics students
- The decision of the administrator on grade placement is final.
- At the Kindergarten level, applicants must be five years of age on or prior to October 15 for the year in which they are enrolling. This is a State of Maine law.

### **4. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with a disability will not be denied admission to Maine Catholic Schools on the basis of disability within the limits of state and federal law, provided the student meets the school's admission and eligibility requirements. Reasonable accommodations for a child with disabilities will be made depending on the child's needs.

Students with physical disabilities who are enrolled in a school of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland and who are eligible to participate in federally assisted programs and activities (Title I, Title II, Title IV, and Title VI) will be provided the opportunity to participate in these programs and activities at one of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland designated sites. These accessibility features will conform to the applicable standards of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (Rev. 4/1/88) (UFAs) or such other standards that provide for equivalent access specifically approved by Region 1, OCR, United States Department of Education.

A student with disability who is eligible to participate in a federally assisted program and who attends a Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland school shall not be denied access to these programs. Parental and guardian concerns related to this access and/or programs or activities, which surface and which are not resolved by the RCDP School, may be referred to the Superintendent of Schools of the Diocese of Portland who will hear the concern and offer a resolution.

### **5. NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Internal Revenue Service Required Notice on Non-Discrimination

The Diocesan non-discrimination policy must be published in the school handbook.

The policy of each school should reflect full participation in equitable solutions to the ethnic and cultural dimensions of American education.

Maine Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools within the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of their

educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

The above policy is in keeping with Internal Revenue Procedure 75-50, and is in accordance with Sections 0602 and 0603.

## **6. RELATIONS WITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Maine Catholic Schools share with the local public schools the common mission of providing the best possible educational opportunities for all children of the diocese. Acknowledging this common responsibility, local leadership should meet and communicate on a regular basis and collaborate by sharing information, exchanging best practices, offering mutual support, and maintaining a positive environment to foster ongoing relationships.

## **7. HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Immunization Requirements**

In accordance with Maine Law (Section 20-A Subsection 6352), the parents of each student shall be required to present proof of immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, hemophilus influenza (type B), before the student is allowed to attend the school. Only those exceptions noted in the law shall be permitted.

Schools shall observe the regulations of Maine State law regarding their required immunization of children for admission to school. (See Appendix G attached ).

### **B. Health Policy**

No child shall be sent to school if there are any symptoms of an illness present. Exclusion from school shall result when any of the following conditions are found to exist:

1. Existence of communicable disease.
2. Presence of nits, lice, or other parasites
3. Any contagious or infectious diseases of the skin, mouth or eyes.
4. Any suspicious rash, with or without accompanying symptoms.

Parents must be notified if a student is sent home.

The administrator has the authority to request a doctor's note at any time for a child to return to school after a prolonged absence.

Emergency cards, completed and signed by the parent, are kept in the office.

Parents sign a release for the school to act in emergency situations when they cannot be reached.

No student will be dismissed without notification to the school office. Minor first-aid is given as needed by a teacher, or other staff member, and is recorded in a book in the office.

**C. Medication cannot be dispensed to a child unless the school has written permission from the parent and the child's doctor. The medication must be in the original container and clearly labeled. (Medication form follows.)**

All medicine is given by the school administrator, assistant administrator or a person so authorized by the administrator.

When it appears to be in the best interest of the child, the school may call an ambulance. Responsibility for payment for the ambulance service rests with the parents.

\* If a child is suspected of having a contagious disease, parents will be notified.

### **SCHOOL MEDICATION POLICY**

It is the general policy of the St. John Regional Catholic School Committee to discourage dispensing of medications on school premises. With few exceptions, school employees are not trained medical or nursing personnel and are not authorized to dispense medication on a regular basis. Whenever possible, the schedule of drug administration should be altered to allow a student to receive all prescribed doses at home. Where medication during the day is necessary, it may be administered in accordance with this policy.

#### **Self-Administered Medication**

Students who have a valid medical need for medication at school will be requested to self-administer the medication under the supervision of school personnel, if the following conditions are met.

1. The child is, in the parent's opinion, physically and mentally capable of assuming that responsibility and has been adequately instructed at home.
2. Neither parent is available during school hours to administer the medication.
3. The medication is necessary to the child's health and must be taken during school hours.
4. Supervision will be by the administrator and his/her designee.
5. The parent has represented in writing that the child has the parent's permission to self-administer the medication.

#### **Self-Administered medications will fall into two (2) categories:**

1. Medication prescribed for a short time (5 days or less) for an acute condition (ear or throat infection, respiratory infection, congestion, cough etc.). A Student will be in a non-contagious phase of that condition and will return to school only upon the advice of the family physician.
2. Medication prescribed for chronic or permanent condition (behavioral disorder, seizure disorder, asthma, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, heart or kidney condition, etc.).

#### **Medication Administered by School Personnel**

In the case of a child too young or otherwise unable to self-administer a vital medication, and when the parent is unavailable, the administrator, assistant administrator or his/her designee, will review the circumstances with the parent and the family physician to determine whether a non-medical school employee may administer the medication.

1. In such situations, the parents will sign an informed consent form acknowledging that they are aware that non-medical personnel (or unlicensed) personnel will be administering the medication.
2. All other requirements of the base protocol will be implemented.

### **Medications in Emergencies**

In the case of students prone to suffer an acute and life threatening allergic reaction to insect stings:

1. Appropriate school personnel will be made aware of the student's condition.
2. Medication as provided by the parent will be kept in a pre-determined place at SJRCS and personnel involved with the child will know its location.
3. A clear emergency procedure will be outlined on the child's health record. All teachers will be informed of the procedure.
4. At least two staff members at that school will be instructed in the administration of said medication.
5. The student will be required to wear a medic-alert emblem indicating his/her condition.

### **Base Protocol for Medication**

Any time medication is to be taken or administered at school, the following conditions must be met:

- A. Medication will be sent to school in clearly labeled container, preferably an original prescription bottle, with the name of the child and medication on it. Only the dosage to be administered during the school day should be sent with the child.
- B. The informed consent form must also be signed by the prescribing physician and will include:
  1. Name of Child
  2. Name of Medication
  3. Reason of Medication
  4. Dosage
  5. Specific area of application if medication is a topical nature
  6. Time to be administered
  7. Termination date of administering the medication (not to exceed school year)
  8. A certification by the physician that the medication is necessary to the child's health and must be taken during school hours.
- C. The parents provide an informed consent form where medication is to be administered by school personnel.
- D. For long-term situations, the medication certification and request to dispense

expires at the end of each school year, unless terminated earlier by either the family physician or the parents. The certification and request can be renewed each year.

- E. The parent will assume the responsibility for informing the school in writing of any change in the child's health or change in medication.
- F. The responsibility for seeing a physician on a regular basis and following the physician's instructions rest with the parent. Failure to comply with the recommended protocol will be grounds for the school to discontinue the administration of the medication in question.
- G. St. John Catholic School retains the discretion to reject any or all requests for the administration of medications.
- H. A copy of this policy and any required forms will be provided to parents who request the administration of medication in school.

**The administrator or his/her designee will:**

- A. Inform the appropriate school personnel of medication.
- B. Inform parent(s) of any difficulty with the medication or circumstances which were responsible for the child's not receiving the medication.
- C. See that the medication is kept in a place inaccessible to other students.
- D. Observe the child as he/she takes the medication.
- E. Keep a record of the administration of medication on a designated log.

## 8. ATTENDANCE / DISMISSAL

**SCHOOL STARTS AT 7:30** (The warning bell is at 7:28).

### ARRIVALS-PARENT DROP OFF

- A. The drop off time for K-6 students is **between 7:15-7:30.**
- B. Parents are asked to drop off and separate from their child at the **PRESCHOOL ENTRANCE DOOR.**
- C. A staff member will be in attendance to greet your child.
- D. It is important that you separate from your child at this point. This allows your child to assume responsibility and independence for beginning their day, which is an important developmental skill.
- E. Arrival time is not a good time to have parent/teacher discussions as teachers are very busy with their responsibilities to the entire class and are expected to begin their day promptly at 7:30.

**TARDINESS:** K-6 Students are considered tardy after 7:30. Anybody arriving after 7:30 will need to enter through the main door (office hallway) and check in with the office to get a tardy slip.

**TARDY SLIPS:** A student who is late, must enter through the main door (office hallway) with accompanying adult and present the administrative assistant with a written note or explanation for tardiness, before proceeding to their respective classroom.

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:** Excusable absences are as follows: personal illness, appointments with health professionals that cannot be made outside of the school day, emergency family situations, and planned absences for personal or educational purposes.

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCE:** Five unexcused absences are considered truant and will be reported to the state as such.

**FAMILY VACATIONS DURING SCHOOL:** Although family vacations are discouraged during the time when school is in session, we understand that there is value in travel. Modified student work will be made up upon the return of the student. **Teachers will not prepare packets for children prior to vacation.**

**ILLNESS DURING SCHOOL:** Students who become ill during school must report to the office. A parent or guardian must authorize a dismissal.

### DISMISSAL/ END OF DAY PARENT PICK-UP

- A. Dismissal time is 1:50 pm
- B. It is important that you make alternate arrangements for pick-up, if you expect to be late.
- C. Parents picking up their children are asked to wait in the marked area outside the preschool door, **not at their child's classroom door.**
- D. Non-bus students will be lined up by the outside playground for dismissal to responsible adult.
- E. In the event of inclement weather, students will be lined up in the hallway by the cafeteria and exit through the preschool door.
- F. Please see the duty teacher to dismiss your child.
- G. If you have had a change in pick-up/bus plans, please inform the office with a note or call ASAP.

*Bus students are dismissed from the school office area at 1:50 p.m.*

## 9. STUDENT RELEASE DURING THE DAY

- A. A student will not be released from school during the school day without the written request or consent of the parent or guardian.
- B. Students will be release only to parents/guardians or to the person authorized by them.
- C. Students must pick up a dismissal slip from the office
- D. When a student is ill, a parent/guardian or authorized person will be called to pick up the student.
- E. Each school is expected to have an emergency information form on file for each student.

## 11. DISCIPLINE POLICY

Teachers, administrators, and students in a Catholic school are guided in their behavior by the teachings of Jesus Christ who summarized all of the law in two commandments: to love God and love thy neighbor. The maintenance of proper discipline in a Catholic school will mean not merely external conformity to behavioral patterns imposed by others, but wholehearted internal assent to this Christian ideal of love. In routine cases of discipline problems, the teacher will handle the situation. In cases of flagrant violations of school regulations, the infringement of rights of others and the destruction of property, referrals will be made to the Administrator, and in rare cases to the Pastor. (Diocesan Policy Book)

A teacher may restrain a child if the child appears to be potentially harmful to others or oneself.

- **ATMOSPHERE OF DISCIPLINE:** An important aim of Catholic education is the Christian development of the person. Discipline is necessary for that development. It is important that students learn to get along with others and to respect one another. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not interfere with rights, privileges and safety of others.

The immediate goal of discipline is to create a favorable atmosphere for learning. Students are encouraged to develop good habits such as courtesy, respect, kindness, helpfulness, cooperation, responsibility and sound study habits. Self-discipline is the goal of each student. The ideal of self-discipline is to move from externally imposed discipline to self-discipline. Self-discipline is an indication that one is capable of responsibility.

Since gum can deface property and result in unnecessary maintenance work, gum chewing is not allowed in school.

Students are expected to care for all textbooks, which have been assigned or given to them. Books must be covered. **Any books that are lost or damaged must be replaced by the student at the current price.**

The following behavior will warrant communication between the school and the parent.

- Fighting
- Swearing, obscenity
- Any form of harassment

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