

# Parent/Student Handbook

Saint James Academy

2010-2011

## PURPOSE OF PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK - RIGHT TO AMEND

This handbook is provided in order to inform families of St. James Academy about activities, programs, policies, procedures and rules of conduct. Parents are required to sign a statement indicating their agreement that they and their children will abide by the policies and rules in this handbook. While every attempt has been made to include pertinent information, the handbook may require amendment during the school year. The school and/or the principal retain the right to amend this handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

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# 1 Philosophy

St. James Academy strives to prepare students to live in the world as responsible citizens and as faithful stewards of creation in an ever-changing environment. In our commitment to excellence and in support of the parents who are recognized as the primary educators of their children, a student-centered, Catholic-based curriculum is provided which values cultural and intellectual diversity.

## 1.1 Mission Statement

Students at St. James Academy are part of a Catholic faith community. The faculty and staff integrate Christ’s message into a spiritual, moral, academic, social, cultural, and physical program to form and develop each student as a whole child.

## 1.2 St. James Academy Student Learning Expectations

A St. James Academy student is:

- A faithful Catholic/Christian who:
  - Has knowledge of the basic tenets of the Catholic faith.
  - Demonstrates a relationship with God through prayer.
  - Models Christian values.
  - Participates in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church.
- A learner who:
  - Strives to master the curricular academics as set forth by the Diocese and California State Standards
  - Employs critical thinking skills in problem solving
  - Utilizes a variety of technologies to access and apply knowledge
- A responsible individual who:
  - Is goal-oriented in establishing personal and group goals

- Is respectful of authority, self, and others
- Is aware of how decisions affect self or others
- An effective communicator who:
  - Articulates ideas creatively and appropriately
  - Expresses thoughts clearly by using proper writing techniques
  - Clearly delivers opinions and information
  - Listens actively, respecting thoughts and ideas of others
  - Evaluates information objectively
- A globally-aware citizen who:
  - Demonstrates awareness of current events and social justice issues.
  - Respects cultural differences.
  - Recognizes the need to conserve and preserve our earth’s natural resources.
  - Participates in outreach programs both locally and globally.

## **2 Catholic Education in the Diocese of San Diego**

The Diocese of San Diego affirms the rights and responsibilities of parents as the primary educators of their children and recognizes the Catholic school as an effective means of assisting parents in their educational task. Central to the character of elementary and secondary schools in the Diocese is their commitment to teach Catholic doctrine, build a community of faith, and serve one another.

“The Catholic school has had a clear identity, not only as a presence of the Church in society, but also as a genuine and proper instrument of the Church. The Catholic school finds its true justification in the mission of the Church; it is based on an educational philosophy in which faith, culture, and life are brought into harmony.” (Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, 1988)

Parents, in mutual respect and shared commitment, realize their role in the education of their children and recognize, affirm, and support the mission of Catholic schools by entrusting their children to the elementary and secondary schools in the Diocese of San Diego. (Handbook for Catholic Schools)

### **2.1 History of St. James Academy**

St. James Academy, founded in 1952 in Del Mar, was opened in a renovated public school building by three Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet. As the school population grew, a wing was added to the building in 1955. In 1972, the Academy relocated to its present site and became the first Catholic open-space school in the southwest.

In 1986, a Kindergarten class was opened in a portion of the former rectory. As part of the long-range building plans of the parish, other property improvements were made in 1993 and the Kindergarten was relocated to a portable unit. The remodeling and expansion of the building was completed in February, 2000.

The school’s mission is to serve the St. James Catholic Community and the greater Church by providing a Catholic education to students in grades Kindergarten through eighth. The current staff, which consists of sixteen full and part-time classroom and auxiliary teachers, nine full and part-time support staff, and one full-time principal, is dedicated to the school’s goal: “to further Catholic values and traditions in a strong academic environment, supported by a vibrant faith community.” The school’s tremendous success is further enhanced by the assistance of involved parents and a supportive pastor who clearly views the school as an integral part of the overall educational mission of the parish.

Today, in addition to St. James Academy, the Education Center is utilized by many parish groups. The School of Religion provides religious education to over 500 parish children on the weekends through both English and Spanish classes. Various groups in the parish and the community at large meet in the classrooms of the Education Center throughout the week.

## **3 Faculty and Staff**

### **3.1 Administration**

Pastor—Rev. John Howard  
Principal—Mrs. Kathy Dunn  
Secretary—Mrs. Luanne Sobieski  
Bookkeeper/Business Manager—Mrs. Janet Grimmer

### **3.2 Teaching Staff**

K—Miss Kelly Scaramella  
1—Mrs. Elizabeth Armao  
2—Mrs. Cathee Smith  
3—Mrs. Kacey Smith  
4/Assistant Principal—Mrs. Anna Marie Howard  
5/Assistant Principal—Mrs. LeeAnn Mott  
6—Mrs. Cindy Velasco/Mrs. Christine Lang  
7—Mrs. Pat Paluso  
8—Mrs. Leslie Beswick  
Library/Learning Center—Mrs. Elaine Kwasniewski  
Resource/Learning Center—Mrs. Cherine Tavassoli  
Computer Technology—Mr. Michael Powell  
Physical Education—Mr. Jordan Elbers  
Music—Mrs. Anne Marie Oldham  
Spanish—Mrs. Susan Clark  
Aide (K)—Mrs. Barbara Broccoli  
Aide (Grade 1)—Mrs. Jenna Gallo  
Aide (Grade 2)—Mrs. Sheila Grant  
Aide (Grades 3 – 4)—Mrs. Christina Reed  
Aide (Grades 5 – 6)—Mrs. Sarah Phillips  
Aide (Grades 7 – 8)—Ms. Christianne Cooney  
Algebra—Mrs. Jyll Curran

## **4 Parent Involvement**

### **4.1 Parental Role**

Parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children. It is the role of the school to support and complement this parental function. St. James Academy is a cooperative endeavor in which every family in the school has a vital role to play.

The school's primary expectation of the parents is two-fold: to support the SJA philosophy and to consistently support the religious formation that the school seeks to develop in the children. Parents can do this by:

- Talking to their children about God and their own faith;
- Praying together;
- Celebrating Mass on Sundays and special days;
- Being informed about the religious concepts the children are learning
- Continually developing and modeling faith-filled lives

The school has additional practical expectations of the parents. Tuition fees cover only the basic cost of education at St. James Academy. In order to provide a comprehensive program with enrichment opportunities and ongoing improvement, considerable additional funds are needed. The Parent Council conducts fundraising activities each year. Proceeds from these activities help provide capital improvements and program enhancements. All efforts and support of parents are very much needed and appreciated.

## **4.2 Parent Volunteers**

SJA encourages parents to participate in our school community. Thirty service hours are part of each family's tuition commitment. (See Tuition Policy)

There are many ways to help at school:

- Classroom or resource center assistant
- Library assistant
- Front office assistant
- Lunch time playground supervisor
- Athletic program assistant
- Chaperone or driver for field trips
- Computer lab assistant

Some work may be completed at home.

The Parent Council has various committees to provide much-needed support for activities at St. James Academy. Some activities for which volunteers are needed include:

- Helping with the Magazine/Cookie Dough Drive
- Assisting with events, e.g., Golf Tournament, Gala Dinner-Auction;
- Providing hospitality for events
- E-mailing parents from home

## **4.3 Visitors**

We welcome visitors to the academy. However, all persons entering the school must enter through the school office to obtain proper authorization. In order to maintain an academic environment, parents are asked not to interrupt classes. Parents who wish to observe classroom procedures must obtain permission from the principal. Parents should make an appointment to confer with teachers after school or at other appointed times so as not to interrupt class instruction.

The school office is a work area. Please be conscientious to office staff and conduct personal conversations in non-work areas, outside of the office.

#### **4.4 Advisory Board**

The SJA Advisory Board offers consultation and recommendation in the formation and implementation of policy in the following areas: curriculum, development, facilities, financing, fund raising, marketing, programs, and publicity. The board also assists in the implementation of the Academy's long-range plan.

If there is a particular issue or concern you would like addressed at the Advisory Board meeting, contact the principal by email or leaving a note at the school office.

#### **4.5 Parent Council**

The Parent Council seeks to involve parents in a supportive role in various aspects of the school. The Parent Council provides a forum enabling parents to give their input. Volunteers assist in the school, organize public relations, coordinate fundraising activities, assist with co-curricular activities and provide opportunities for parent education. Grade Representatives act as liaison between the parents/teachers and the Parent Council. All parents are encouraged to attend and participate in the monthly council meetings. Names of Parent Council officers, Committee Chairpersons, and Grade Representatives can be found in the Family Directory and on the St. James Academy Website at [www.saintjamesacademy.com](http://www.saintjamesacademy.com). Ideas or suggestions are welcomed at any time and may be submitted to the principal or president of the Parent Council who will contact the principal. For those parents unable to attend, the meeting minutes will be posted on the SJA website under 'Parent Council'.

#### **4.6 Non-Custodial Parent**

The school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

#### **4.7 Access to Student Records**

Access to records may include not only an oral description by the authorized school official, but also permission to read or take away a copy of the original record. Only the principal, as custodian of the record, authorizes the release of personal information about pupils. (Education Code 49069-from San Diego Diocesan Handbook for Catholic Schools)

If a parent wishes to view the official records of his/her child, the parent may send a note to the principal with this request. Within 24 hours the principal, or his/her designee, will contact the parent to set up a mutually convenient time for the parent to view the child's record in the school office.

### **5 Parent - School Communication**

The staff and faculty at St. James Academy believe that two-way communication is vital to providing a superior Catholic education.

#### **5.1 Wednesday Communication Envelope**

Every Wednesday, a newsletter from our Principal along with various information fliers will be posted on our school website at [www.saintjamesacademy.com](http://www.saintjamesacademy.com). We ask that you take a moment and read through all of this information on

Wednesdays, as the information may impact you or your child as early as the next day. A white 10x13 family communication envelope will also come home with your oldest child on the first Wednesday of the month. This envelope will contain communication, at times, strictly pertaining only to your children, or school wide communication. Please empty this envelope and return it with your child the following day. This envelope is also your vehicle to send communication, funds, etc. to the office. Please clearly label anything sent in so that it may be routed correctly. Electronic notification of Wednesday envelope materials may be received by registering your email address on our website and clicking on the 'News' link. Please record your volunteer hours on the back of this envelope. \$3.00 will be charged to replace a lost Wednesday Envelope.

## **5.2 Teacher Communication**

Each teacher has a system for communicating specific class information. This is typically done using a weekly folder, the teacher's website, email, or a combination of these methods.

Additionally, teachers will communicate individual student progress via:

- Quarterly report cards;
- Conferences scheduled annually in November and when necessary;
- Reports regarding student academic or behavioral progress;
- Grade link (4th – 8th grade)

## **5.3 Communicating with Your Child's Teachers**

Please contact your child's teacher directly with questions or to set up a conference. Teachers may be contacted via their email address (found in the school directory) or on the teacher's website. The teacher will make every effort to contact the parent within one school day to discuss the issue.

Parents at St. James are encouraged to share with their child's teacher any information that may affect the student's academic performance or emotional well-being.

## **5.4 Procedure for Problem Resolution (Principle of Subsidiary)**

If a problem arises, the child should first contact the teacher. If the problem is not resolved the parent should request a parent teacher conference. The purpose of the "Principle of Subsidiary" is to secure, at the lowest possible level, equitable solutions to problems that may arise possibly affecting the welfare of students, teachers or parents.

If an agreeable solution cannot be reached at this level, a conference may be arranged including the principal. These procedures will be kept as informal and confidential as may be appropriate in order to facilitate reconciliation, communication, and the strengthening of the school community. If the problem still remains unresolved, the principal and/or pastor may make a resolution she/he deems appropriate.

## **5.5 Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Conferences are conducted annually during the month of November for parents to discuss academic progress, behavior, attitudes, and interests with your child's teacher. Students in fourth through eighth grades are expected to attend the conference with their parent(s). To accommodate the schedules of working parents, conference times are available in the evening and before school on a first-come, first-served basis. Sign-up sheets are available approximately ten days prior to conferences.

## **5.6 School Family Directory**

The Family Directory is published each year to help families communicate with each other and the school. All families are listed in the directory with addresses, emails, cell and home telephone numbers (unless requested otherwise). Directory information is to be used for school-related activities only. Directories are usually distributed to families in the beginning of October. One directory will be provided to each family free of charge. Additional directories are available for \$5.00 per copy

## **5.7 Back-to-School Night**

Each September the school hosts its annual Back-to-School Night, which all parents are expected to attend. It is an opportunity for parents to meet the entire faculty, hear about the school's goals for the year, find ways to become involved, and make new acquaintances.

Individual Class Orientations are also held this evening for teachers to explain basic curriculum and behavioral policies, events or activities taking place during the year, goals and classroom procedures for the year.

## **5.8 Telephone Privileges**

Office phones are for official school use only. Office phones are not for student use unless deemed necessary by school personnel. Telephone calls to arrange after school social activities, visits with other students, etc. will not be allowed. All students not picked up within fifteen minutes of dismissal will be sent to day care. Please make sure that your student is aware of this procedure. If they are aware of this procedure, they will easily adapt to this situation when it occurs. This should negate the parent having to call the office to forward a message to the student.

Students may not use cell phones on campus. The possession of a cell phone on campus is allowed only if it remains in the student's backpack or locker and is turned off during school hours. If this policy is not adhered to, the cell phone will be confiscated and will be released only to a parent.

# **6 Admission Procedures**

## **6.1 Nondiscrimination Policy**

The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of San Diego, mindful of their mission to be witnesses to the love of Christ for all, admit students of any race, color, national and/or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the schools. The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of San Diego do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national and/or ethnic origin, age, sex, or disability in the administration of educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. (California Catholic Conference, March 1994; revised January 1997)

## **6.2 Admission Policy for New Students**

Since the schools of the Diocese are established and maintained by the Diocesan community as religious schools, preference in admission shall be given to practicing members of the Diocesan Catholic community.

No person shall be admitted as a student in any Catholic school unless that person and his/her parents subscribe to the school's philosophy and agree to abide by the educational policies and regulations of the School and Diocese.

A student is admitted to the academy with the understanding that he/she has a reasonable, well-founded hope of successfully completing the school's program.

Applications for new students are available on our school website or through the front office.

Students must be five years old by September 1st in the year for which they are applying to begin Kindergarten; be six years old by September 1st in the year for which they are applying to begin first grade; and Students applying for second grade must be seven years old by September 1st in the year for which they are applying to begin second grade.

### **6.3 Order of Priority for Admitting Students**

- Families who have students already enrolled in and who are involved and actively support St. James Academy.
- Members of the St. James Parish who support the church through the weekly envelope.
- Catholic school transfers.
- Catholic families in other parishes.
- Other interested students who, by their behavior and attitude, demonstrate an acceptance of the St. James Academy philosophy.

### **6.4 Application Process for New Student**

- Procure an application form from the school office or the school website.
- Complete application form.
- Present a birth and/or baptismal certificate.
- Complete student screening – a \$30.00 screening fee is required.
- Provide a copy of most recent report card or progress report.
- Interview with the Principal.

### **6.5 New Student Screening Procedures**

Students who wish to attend St. James Academy need to spend time in the class in which they will be enrolled if possible. They will be assessed by the teacher who will indicate whether the student has a well-founded hope of successfully completing the school's program. Prospective Kindergarten students will meet individually or in small groups with the Kindergarten teacher for screening to determine the child's readiness for the Kindergarten program.

### **6.6 Re-Registration Process**

In order to be eligible for readmission, at least fifteen of the thirty parent service hours must be completed, student conduct and effort must be consistent with school expectations, and financial commitments must be filled as specified in the Tuition Policy.

## **7 Tuition Policy**

### **7.1 Introduction**

We believe that tuition payments are an investment in your child's education and religious formation. Therefore, the St. James Academy Advisory Board accepts responsibility for recommending policies to the pastor and principal concerning the amount of tuition, the manner of payment and, in general, the development of policy in this area.

All fees are for school year 2010-2011. These fees may change for subsequent years.

- Screening fee for new students: \$30.00 per student, non-refundable due at time of screening.
- Registration fee: \$400.00 per student, non-refundable due at time of registration.

## 7.2 Mandatory Service Hours

In addition to the annual tuition commitment, all families will complete thirty service hours per year for the school. Tuition, fees, and service hours are all part of the consideration that the parent gives to the school in return for student education.

In order to re-register children for the following school year, at least fifteen of the thirty service hours must be served unless specific plans have been made to complete this commitment. Registration for the following school year will be null and void if, by May 31st of the year of enrollment, the service hour commitment has not been met in full.

Each family is responsible for tracking their service hours. There are many and varied opportunities for fulfilling this part of the educational investment commitment. Each family is expected to contact teachers or committee chairs to arrange for volunteer projects.

## 7.3 Tuition Plan Designation

Plan I – Supporting Parishioner (defined as “a registered family who contributes a minimum of \$500.00 per year to St. James Parish via the weekly envelope or on-line through the parish”)

Plan II - Non-supporting parishioner or non-parishioner

	Plan I - Supporting Parishioner	Plan II - Non-Supporting Parishioner or Non-Parishioner
1 child	\$5,155.00	\$5,655.00
2 children	\$9,657.00	\$10,157.00
3 children	\$13,401.00	\$13,901.00

## 7.4 Method of Payment

All families are expected to make tuition payments according to one of the following payment preferences. Each family’s preferred manner of payment must be submitted each year at the time of student registration. Payment preferences include:

1. Full Payment- Under this plan, the entire amount of tuition is paid by cash or check on or before July 1. A tuition reduction of 2% off the total amount will be applied.
2. Semester Payment- Under this plan, the entire amount of tuition is paid by check or cash in two equal installments, due on July 1 and December 1.
3. Monthly Payments – Under this plan, the entire amount of tuition is apportioned over twelve monthly payments, beginning in July, through the FACTS Tuition Management Plan. This plan is an automatic payment plan made through the family’s checking or savings account. Those choosing this plan will authorize their bank to make automatic monthly payments to FACTS on either the 5th or the 20th of each month. Families who choose this option will pay a \$35.00 annual processing fee which will be automatically deducted from the family’s bank account.

## 7.5 Late Registration

Families registering after July 1st shall be expected to fulfill their tuition obligation according to the tuition policy stated above.

## **7.6 Late Payments/Delinquencies**

It shall be the responsibility of each school family to keep the Principal or Bookkeeper informed of its need to make any changes in the preferred tuition payment plan or adjustments in the amount of tuition expected to be paid.

Without such information, the following policy will apply when tuition payments are received late:

1. **Full Payment:** If payment is not received on or before July 1st, the discounted rate of tuition will not apply. When full payment has not been made by July 1st, the bookkeeper will contact the family within five days concerning the missed payment date and alternative tuition payment options will be offered. If funds are not received according to a new agreement, all tuition payments shall be made through the FACTS Tuition Management Plan.
2. **Semester Payments:** If a semester payment has not been made by July 1st or December 1st, the family will be contacted within five days by the Bookkeeper concerning the missed payment date and alternative tuition payment options will be offered. If funds are not received according to a new agreement, all tuition payments shall be made through the FACTS Tuition Management Plan.
3. **Monthly Payments:** School families, who choose the 12-month payment plan and miss a monthly payment due to insufficient funds, will be automatically charged a \$20.00 missed payment fee by FACTS and may incur a similar penalty from their own banking institution. FACTS will re-attempt to collect the tuition payment approximately 15 days after the missed payment. St. James Academy will not be responsible for any fees assessed by the family's bank resulting from insufficient funds.

School families who have missed two monthly payments, or have not kept the terms of the agreement and have not made suitable arrangements with the Principal or Pastor within fourteen calendar days of the second missed payment (therefore not honoring the terms of the agreement with St. James Academy), will be informed that their child/children will not be re-admitted at the beginning of the following semester.

If a family should experience an unexpected financial crisis and wishes to adjust their tuition payment responsibility, they must contact the school no later than five working days prior to the payment due date. The FACTS Plan can be adjusted for that month to accommodate the family's needs.

All delinquent fees must be paid before report cards will be sent home or before a student's final transcripts will be sent to another school, including high schools. Fees may include, but are not limited to: tuition, day care fee, overdue library book, replacement of damaged or lost text book, excessive tardy fine, or sports fee.

## **7.7 Tuition Assistance**

At St. James Academy, a limited amount of financial aid is available. All families requesting tuition assistance must apply through the Tuition Assistance Data Service (TADS) in spring of the year preceding the requested assistance. Financial aid information is available during the months of February and March from the office. Since financial difficulties often are unpredictable, a family should not hesitate to inform the Principal or Pastor of its need whenever a crisis or other financial emergency may arise during the year.

## **7.8 Consequences of Tuition Delinquency**

Failure to pay tuition according to the agreement that they have made with the school, or who are unwilling to make suitable alternative arrangements with the school, will be informed that they must withdraw their children at the end of the quarter. Student transcripts will not be transferred until all financial obligations to the academy are met.

Service hours are considered part of the investment a family makes in exchange for an education. Therefore, completion of service hours (or payment at a rate of \$10.00 per hour not served) is required before a child will be re-registered.

## **7.9 Tuition Refund**

If a student is withdrawn prior to the first day of school from a full class there will be no tuition refund when paying monthly. If paying with the semester or full payment option the refund will be pro-rated. After the first day of school, tuition refunds shall be discussed with the Principal and the Pastor.

St. James Academy may withhold student records until all tuition and fees are paid.

## **7.10 Tuition: Catholic Schools Office Policy Handbook**

### **#313 Tuition Agreement**

Every parent or guardian who enrolls a student in a school shall sign a written agreement to pay specified tuition and fees to comply with all diocesan and school policies and regulations, including those governing tuition delinquencies. The agreement must detail what the school will do if a delinquency occurs. Terms of the agreement shall terminate at the end of the school year.

### **#314 Tuition Delinquencies**

Students transferring from one Catholic school to another within the San Diego Diocese must meet all previous obligations before being enrolled at the new school. Principals accepting students from another Catholic school shall contact the principal from the previous school regarding delinquent tuition and fee payment.

# **8 Instructional Program**

## **8.1 Curriculum**

Curriculum may be defined as “all the guided experiences of the child under the direction of the school.” It includes the content of courses of study and also embraces the development of the whole child that is within the scope of the school. In keeping with our school philosophy and objectives, we enable the students of St. James Academy to grow in knowledge and love of God and of themselves.

Instruction in academic areas follows both the directives from the California State Frameworks as well as the Course Objectives from the Diocese of San Diego. All textbooks used are on the “approved list” for the State of California. Time allotments for each subject area are set by the Diocese of San Diego. Instructional methodologies include a variety of teaching strategies designed for optimum student learning.

Instructional areas include:

- Religion
- Fine Arts
- Language Arts
- Technology
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Science
- Family Life
- Social Studies
- Music
- Spanish

## **8.2 Resource Assistance**

The faculty and staff at St. James Academy endeavor to provide a quality education for all students. Curriculum differentiation addresses the needs of each student within the scope of our program. This may include re-teaching and enriching curriculum where appropriate. Students are admitted to St. James Academy with the understanding that they have a reasonable, well-founded hope of successfully completing the school's program.

Students identified as needing additional assistance may receive help from the resource teacher. These efforts are coordinated between the parent, the classroom teacher and the resource teacher.

## **8.3 Religion Program**

The educational mission of the Church requires that the Catholic school be distinguished by an atmosphere and a formal program which relates religious beliefs and practices with the moral development and education of children. Regular religious instruction is an integral part of the educational program for all students at all grade levels.

In addition to the daily lessons, prayers and integration of Catholic values throughout the day, we also offer the following religious experiences:

- Friday Masses planned by classes at 8:00 AM Parish Mass;
- Weekly assembly for the student body which includes flag salute, community prayer, and announcements;
- Holy Week retreat for students during the school day;
- Separate retreat for Junior High students during the year;
- School-wide Reconciliation opportunity during Advent and Lent.

## **8.4 Mission Outreach**

Outreach activities that support and develop social consciousness and bring life to the Gospel message of service are part of religious instruction. Throughout the year, teachers supervise school-wide and individual grade level outreach programs.

Some of these programs include:

- Support of Mission Circle
- Baby Shower to benefit mothers in various programs
- Visits to local nursing homes/assisted living centers
- Support of the Holy Childhood Association
- Support of Catholic Relief Services

## **8.5 Family Life**

Family Life education is taught in grades Kindergarten through eighth. The goal of the program is to help students prepare for a safe, informed Christian life in our society. Parents are notified of Family Life course prior to starting this instruction. Family Life textbooks and materials are available for preview by parents. Through instruction we help our students:

- Respect the family, its sacramental foundations, and its mission of teaching and transmitting values;
- Develop values and an attitude of respect for their bodies;
- Nurture and deepen their appreciation of God's gift of life; and
- Develop a gradual, open and wholesome understanding of sexuality and its place in Christian life.

## **8.6 Sacramental Preparation**

At St. James Catholic Community, we celebrate First Reconciliation and First Eucharist as a Parish community. Sacramental preparation for children is the primary responsibility of the parents. During the year when children receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of Eucharist (usually in grade 2), parents attend classes to help them to prepare their children. At St. James Academy, in addition to the instruction received from parents, preparation for sacraments becomes a part of the ongoing religious education program in the classroom. The Sacrament of Confirmation, in the Diocese of San Diego, is generally conferred in high school.

## **8.7 Physical Education**

All students in grades K - 8 are required to participate in the Physical Education program. In order to be exempt from these classes, students must present a written statement from their doctor or parent to the classroom teacher and the P. E. instructor, describing the physical activity restrictions and the length of time the restriction is required. Students who have been absent due to flu, colds, or any other illness will be exempt only if the parent sends a written note requesting such exemption. Students must be in proper attire on the days scheduled for P. E. Failure to comply with the regulation will affect the report card grade, and may include Principal's detention after school. A student's P. E. grade will be based on participation and conduct. Students are not permitted to call home for forgotten P. E. clothes.

The P. E. program has been designed with the following goals in mind for all grade levels:

- Foster health and physical fitness;
- Increase the overall strength of the child while improving flexibility/agility;
- Increase endurance at a constant rate throughout the year;
- Create an environment where good sportsmanship is practiced and encouraged: and
- Learning rules and procedures for grade appropriate organized games.

## **8.8 Library**

St. James Academy's library is staffed by a full-time teacher/librarian. Classes visit the library weekly to learn basic library/research skills and to receive support in curricular areas being studied in the classroom. Students in grades one through eight may check out books from the library during library periods. Fees for library books that have been lost or severely damaged must be paid by the end of the year. The library includes use of computers for research and writing, as well as multimedia opportunities and monitored Internet access.

## **8.9 Testing**

Standardized tests adopted by the Diocesan Office for Schools will be administered during the school year. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (grades 2 - 8) and the Cognitive Abilities Test (grades 3, 5 and 7) are the tests currently used by all schools in the diocese. These tests are given in the fall. Each parent/guardian will receive a copy of the test results for their child, charting the child's achievements and areas of strength and weakness.

It is important that each child is present during these testing days to determine an accurate record of his/her achievement. These national testing programs are not tests that are recorded as pass or fail, nor are they used for grading procedures or for comparative studies in the Diocese of San Diego. The test scores are used to measure a student's individual progress and to evaluate and refine the educational programs by school personnel.

The Assessment for Catholic Religious Education (ACRE) for grades 5 and 8 is given during the second semester. Other tests may be used for interim testing of classes, small groups, and individual students to ascertain an individual student's achievements and difficulties.

## **8.10 Homework**

Homework reinforces and or extends materials and skills covered in the classroom. Long-term projects such as compositions, book reports, research projects, and oral presentations may also be assigned. Although the work should be completed without outside help, parents are asked to see that the work is completed and returned to school. In the event a family chooses to take a child out of school for a vacation, class work or homework assignments should not be expected to be given out ahead of time. It is recommended that students continue “free reading” during vacation time. All missed work must be completed within one week of return.

These allotments are approximate and homework may, on some days require more or less time. Individual students may require more or less time on a given day, depending on their individual skills and capabilities.

- Kindergarten—15 minutes
- 1st and 2nd Grade—30 minutes
- 3rd Grade—45 minutes
- 4th & 5th Grade—60 minutes
- 6th Grade—90 minutes
- 7th & 8th Grade—120 minutes

## **8.11 Promotion**

Only those students who complete the work of a particular grade in the basic skill areas will be promoted to the next grade. Credit for courses is not given solely on the basis of “seat-time” alone.

## **8.12 Retention**

Retention is a possibility when a student’s performance or attitude is well below expected standards. Each case will be reviewed individually. Decisions concerning non-promotion are made after careful study of a student’s emotional, intellectual, social and physical growth. Data collected throughout the year serves to document and support such an outcome. At times it may be necessary to recognize that our school is not equipped to meet the needs of certain students, and a transfer may be recommended. Parents will be kept informed of the student’s progress or possibility of retention.

## **8.13 Report Cards**

Report cards are issued quarterly. Students are graded for academic progress and social growth.

Emphasis should be placed on effort, conduct, and home study as reasons for success or lack of success in school subjects. Avoid comparing work with that of other students. Only your child and his/her teacher can answer your questions. Please make an appointment with the teacher whenever you desire more information about your child’s progress.

## **8.14 Grading Policy**

In Kindergarten through third grade grades are given quarterly for both academic achievement and effort.

The following grading scale is used:

**VG** = Very Good

**G** = Good

**S** = Satisfactory

**NI** = Needs Improvement

**LE** = Limited Effort

**NE** = Not Evaluated

In fourth through eighth grade, percentage and/or letter grades are given quarterly for both academic achievement and effort.

**A** = 93-100

**A-** = 90-92

**B+** = 87-89

**B** = 83-86

**B-** = 80-82

**C+** = 77-79

**C** = 73-76

**C-** = 70-72

**D+** = 67-69

**D** = 63-66

**D-** = 60-62

**F** = 59 and below

### **8.15 Progress reports/Grade link**

Progress reports are sent to parents in Kindergarten through third grade as needed. For fourth through eighth grade, parents and students may access their grades and missing assignments on-line. Students and parents are expected to monitor their progress through [Gradelink](#).

### **8.16 Honor Roll**

Honor Roll Awards are given to recognize high student achievement in seventh and eighth grades. An Honor Roll assembly attended by all students is held at the end of each quarter, at which time students receive their awards.

The following criteria are used in presenting these awards:

- First Honors
  - A grade of at least 90% in all subjects
  - A conduct grade no lower than 90%
- Second Honors
  - A grade of at least 83% in all subjects
  - A conduct grade no lower than 83%

## **8.17 Peacemaker Award**

Each quarter the teachers and staff of St James Academy honor an outstanding student from each grade level with a Peacemaker Award. A Peacemaker is one who continually and unconditionally demonstrates the values of Jesus in their thoughts, words and actions. They model a high standard of Christian discipleship in everything they do. They use the gifts of the Holy Spirit: love, patience, kindness, goodness, self-control, joy, peace, gentleness and faithfulness in ways that support and exemplify our school theme of being Christ to others.

## **8.18 Field Trips**

Occasionally, field trips are planned in order to support the instructional program. A nominal fee may apply to cover the expenses incurred for the trip. No child will be allowed to participate in a school-sponsored field trip unless the official permission slip is returned and signed by a parent or guardian. Verbal permission is not legal and cannot be accepted. Student participation in field trips is a privilege and may be withheld. Students will wear their school uniform unless otherwise specified.

Transportation is provided by either charter bus or volunteer parent drivers. If traveling by car, all students must wear seat belts and all drivers must have their completed Live Scan on file with the diocese.

All children fewer than 60 pounds, no matter their age, must be in a California approved safety seat and not be seated in the front seat of the car.

Prior to the date of the field trip, parent drivers must have on file in the school office:

1. A copy of a valid, current California driver's license;
2. Current vehicle/driver insurance information. Diocesan policy states that the minimum acceptable liability limit for privately owned vehicles is \$100,000.00/\$300,000.00.
3. Have proof of Life-Scan fingerprints on file with the diocese; contact the school office regarding Live Scan.
4. Drivers are only authorized to drive students to the field trip destination and back to the academy, making no stops along the way.

## **8.19 Overnight Field Trips**

Students in grades four through eight annually attend camp programs that supplement and enhance the curriculum. Typically, these camp programs are: California Camp in 4th grade, Star of India Overnight in 5th grade, Astro Camp in 6th grade, and a two-night retreat for Jr. High. Details, including the cost for each camp experience, will be sent out by the classroom teacher. Parent volunteers are needed to help with supervision and transportation. Guidelines for Field Trips apply (see above).

# **9 Daily Schedule**

## **9.1 Arrival - Dismissal**

A warning bell will ring at 7:55 AM Students will be expected to be in line, ready to begin the school day at 8:00 AM. Grades K-6th will be dismissed at 2:45; Jr. High will be dismissed at 2:55. There is no supervision on the playground before 7:45 AM or after 3:00 PM For the safety of your child, students who are dropped off before 7:45 AM and/or not picked up by 3:00 PM must go to Extended Day Care. Parents are charged separately for this service.

## **9.2 Morning Recess**

(Parents may send a nutritional snack to be eaten at recess time, before playing.)

- Grades K-3: 9:30 AM–9:45 AM
- Grades 4-8: 10:25 AM–10:40 AM

## **9.3 Lunch Schedule**

- Grades K-3 11:50 AM–12:30 PM
  - 11:50 AM Seated for lunch
  - 12:10 PM Dismissal to play
- Grades 4-6 12:10 PM–12:50 PM
  - 12:10 PM Seated for lunch
  - 12:30 PM Dismissal to play
- Grades 7-8 12:30 PM–1:10 PM
  - 12:30 PM Seated for lunch
  - 12:50 PM Dismissal to play

## **9.4 Parent Volunteer Lunch Supervision**

Lunch duty is rotational between classes beginning in August/September with grade eight. Parents or their approved adult surrogate are expected to cover a minimum of 1-2 days for each student enrolled. All adults must have successfully completed Live Scan. Any lunch duty time is counted toward your service hours.

## **9.5 Dismissal**

In order to ensure the safe dismissal of our students, parents may either collect their child directly at their child's classroom door or by queuing in the pick-up line. When remaining at school after pick-up, it is the parent's responsibility to supervise their child on campus. St. James academy will not be held liable for injuries or damages resulting from inadequate parental supervision after dismissal.

## **9.6 Safety during Drop-off and Pick-up**

Please follow drop-off and pick-up procedures. If you're dropping your child off by the church you must park your vehicle and walk your student on to the school grounds. A hazard is created when parishioners attempt to park in order to attend morning Mass.

## **9.7 Permission to Walk Home**

Permission to Walk Home forms may be found on our web site under 'Forms/docs'. This form must be signed by a child's parent/guardian and on file in the school office in order for a student to walk home after dismissal.

## **10 Day Care**

The main purpose for the extended day care program is to provide safe, nurturing, and guided supervision before and after-school in a Christian atmosphere. Children will be given an opportunity to have quiet study time, and also to have some relaxation time through board games, books, puzzles or outside playtime activities.

### **10.1 Hours:**

Before school: 7:00-7:45

- The morning program is run by Mrs. Howard and is held in the 4th grade classroom.

After school: 3:00-5:30

- The after school program is run by Coach Jordan Elbers and is held on our campus.

### **10.2 Calendar:**

Extended day care is available only on days St. James Academy is in session except for the Friday before Christmas break, Holy Thursday and the last day of school. Refer to the school calendar for a list of holidays.

### **10.3 Rates:**

These are self-supporting programs; therefore, fees will be charged in addition to regular tuition. Checks for morning or after school day care should be made payable to St. James Academy. However, the checks for morning day care must be separate from the checks for afternoon day care. Delinquent payments and returned checks will be handled in the same manner as that of tuition payments. Payment will be made monthly and are due within 10 days of receipt of the bill. The bill will be sent home via the Wednesday envelope; payment may be returned in the same manner. If your child is in Extended Care, you are responsible for the payment regardless of car pool arrangements.

- Morning Day Care: \$3.00 per child
- After School Day Care: \$6.00 an hour per child

Any children dropped off in the morning before 7:45a.m. must be checked into day care. There is no yard supervision before 7:45a.m. or after 3:00p.m. Children who are left unattended on school grounds will be signed into day care automatically and the parents will be billed accordingly. Jr. High may check into their classrooms at 7:30 but may not go to their lockers until 7:45

Students will be signed into day care following sports practices, games or any other extracurricular activity if parents do not pick children up on time.

### **10.4 Day Care Discipline Policy**

Students are expected to follow all school rules at all times. Discipline procedures and consequences used in the school will be followed in day care. Parents will be notified if behavior has become a problem. Students whose behavior problems are not corrected will not be allowed in daycare.

## **11 Health, Attendance and Emergency Procedures**

### **11.1 Medications**

Except for Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen, medications are not furnished to students by the school. School personnel cannot dispense medications of any kind without written permission from the parent/guardian stating the student's name, name of the medication, and dosage and time to be dispensed. A note stating the dates that medicine is to be dispensed must be delivered to the office, dated and signed by the parent. All medications, both over the counter and prescription, must be clearly labeled and in the original container.

St. James Academy's procedures for dispensing medications are as follows:

- All medications must be labeled with child's name/name of medication and dosage;
- All medications (over the counter, temporary, or long-term, including cough drops) must be brought to the office;
- No medications may ever be left with the teacher, nor may they be left with the student-
- Do NOT put medication in your child's lunch for him/her to take at lunch time;
- Students must take medication in the presence of an adult who verifies that the student has the proper medication. Please make sure the correct dosage is in writing

### **11.2 Immunization and Health Screening Requirements**

California law requires specific health screening procedures for all children entering school for the first time. A CHDP, California Health and Disability Prevention, physical appraisal is required before entry to kindergarten and grade one. This includes updated immunizations, usually DPT and polio booster and measles re-vaccination, as needed. A copy of the yellow California Immunization Card must be on file in the school office or the child shall not be admitted to school without compliance. If the child's immunizations were documented by another state it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to have a licensed California physician document these onto the yellow California Immunization Card.

The California School Immunization Law allows a child to be exempted from the immunization requirements due to personal beliefs or medical reasons. Ask your childcare provider for details.

### **11.3 Rashes, Impetigo, Conjunctivitis Policy**

If a child has an unexplained rash or symptoms including red or swollen eye, parents will be called to remove the student from school immediately.

In case of bacterial infection, the child may return to school after documentation that a course of antibiotic treatment has been administered and the eye is clear of pink.

In the case of impetigo or other infectious rashes, the child may return to school after treatment has begun and, in the case of impetigo, the area infected by impetigo remains covered if the rash is still present.

### **11.4 Pediculosis Policy**

Though this happens infrequently, this policy is established to control and contain occasional head lice infestation. If a child is discovered to have head lice, that child will be sent home that day and re-admitted to school with a note to the teacher affirming the child has been treated with a lice killing product and all visible nits have been removed. Cooperation of parents is essential to control head lice infestation. It is imperative that parents notify the school immediately if their child has head lice.

## **11.5 Illness/Injury**

Should a student be injured or become ill, the parents will be contacted. No student will be permitted to go home before this contact is made through the school office. Every family will maintain updated emergency information in the school office indicating names and telephone numbers of persons to contact in the event of illness/injury or other emergency.

It is encouraged that your student be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Children with contagious diseases may not be in school.

## **11.6 Absence due to Illness**

Parents should email their child's teacher to report an absence. Communicable diseases must be reported immediately to the school. Illness and medical appointments are recognized as excused absences. For absences exceeding three days a note explaining the absence must be given to the classroom teacher when your child returns to school. A student absent six or more days during a quarter may not receive grades for that quarter.

On days a student is absent: Kindergarten through fifth grade homework may be picked up in your student's classroom after 3:00. Jr. High posts all home work on their website. Parents may get any necessary books from their student's locker. Please get the locker number and combination from your student. All missed homework should be completed by the time the student returns to school. Missed class work must be completed within one day per missed school day.

## **11.7 Tardiness**

Any student arriving after 8:00 AM is tardy and must fill out an alert in the front office. Medical excuses signed by a doctor will be considered an excused tardy. For every three tardies students will serve detention. Tardies will be recorded on Grade link for students in grades four through eight.

## **11.8 Appointments/ Leaving Campus**

Medical and dental appointments should be scheduled before or after school whenever possible. If a student must be absent for any part of the day, parents are requested to notify the classroom teacher by email or with a note, at least a day in advance of the appointment. This will facilitate the teacher in having homework, backpacks, etc., ready with far less distraction to the rest of the class. Students must be signed out at the school office when leaving campus for any reason. Students will not be sent to the office until parent/guardian has arrived. Phone calls requesting early dismissals are strongly discouraged.

Adults listed on your family emergency form are authorized to pick up students at dismissal or in case of an emergency only. Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds at anytime during the school day without being signed out by their parent or guardian. If it is necessary for your child to be picked up during school hours by someone other than the parent or guardian, you must send a note to your child's teacher stating the date and time this will take place, the reason, and the name of the adult picking up your student. The school assumes no liability if students leave the grounds in violation of the above policy.

## **11.9 Unexcused Absence/Vacations**

Neither the principal nor the teachers will give permission to any student to be excused from school for any length of time for vacation. The decision to leave school is the responsibility of the parent. Parents must notify the teacher if their child is going to miss three or more days of school at least one week prior to the departure date of vacation. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance for absent students. All tests and make-up work must be completed within one week of the student's return.

## **11.10 Child Abuse Reporting Obligations**

In accord with Diocesan policy and California law, school staff is obligated under penalty of fine and jail term to report the reasonable suspicion of physical abuse, emotional abuse, emotional deprivation, physical neglect, inadequate supervision, or sexual abuse and exploitation. In this very serious and legally narrow area, the school will not contact parents in advance of making a report to legal authorities which would be the procedure followed in most other legal matters. The clear intent of the law, based on the seriousness of the crimes listed above, is to make such reports in the best interests of the affected child. Once reasonable suspicion is established, the staff does not have any legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation and review.

## **11.11 Smoke-Free Environment**

- Schools are smoke-free environments. (Assembly Bill #13 County Health Department - Commission on Tobacco)
- The San Diego Schools strictly enforce smoke-free environments in their schools. (Legal Office for the County Office of Education)

## **11.12 Emergency Text Message System**

In case of an emergency all families will be contacted through an emergency text message. To register your cell phone number, please go to our website and click on 'News'.

## **11.13 Emergency Evacuation Procedures**

Each month, students and staff practice fire drills and/or emergency evacuation procedures. In the event of an earthquake or other emergency while school is in session, parents are requested to follow the following procedures:

- DO remain calm and know your child is being well cared for.
- DO NOT phone the school. Lines must be kept free for emergencies.
- DO come to school to pick up your child; or send one of the authorized adults to come to pick up your child. The authorized adult has been specified by you on your emergency form that you filled out at the beginning of the school year.
- Students and teachers will assemble on the school grounds. All students will remain at school regardless of the time, until a parent or authorized adult comes for them, or until further direction is given by authorities to the school personnel.
- Parents will present themselves at the Control Center. Parents will be asked for each child's name and grade. Parents, or other adult authorized by the parent, must sign a release for each child.

# **12 Discipline**

## **12.1 Diocesan Discipline Policy**

Discipline in the Catholic school is as an aspect of moral guidance, not a form of punishment.

The purpose of discipline is:

1. To provide a classroom situation conducive to learning;
2. To educate students to appreciate the importance of developing personal responsibility and self-control;
3. To help build a sense of community.

## **12.2 St. James Academy Behavior Policy**

In addition to the preceding Diocesan Discipline Policy, St. James Academy will adhere to the School Behavior Policy in order to build a sense of community, to reinforce positive behavior, and to increase respect for authority.

A student enrolled at St. James Academy assumes responsibility for his/her conduct. As a member of this faith community, each student is obliged to be considerate of fellow students and respectful to teachers and all adults. Each student is expected to accept this opportunity and obligation to become an integral part of the school community. This fosters the convictions of Christianity and the love of neighbor. Conduct whether inside or outside the school which is detrimental to the reputation of the school can result in discipline.

Character training is primarily the responsibility of the parents. The school and the parents are partners in the education of their children. If, in the opinion of the administration, that partnership is no longer viable, the school reserves the right to require the parent to withdraw the student from the school.

## **12.3 School-wide Rules**

These rules are applicable to all school-sponsored activities, on or off campus, including Extended Care and field trips, and are in addition to classroom rules.

- Show courtesy and respect to all people
  - Follow all rules and procedures.
  - Use courteous and attentive behavior in all classrooms, during assemblies, and on the playground.
  - Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.
  - Follow directions of all in authority.
  - Use appropriate language and actions.
  - Use good manners.
  - While on school grounds, remain in view of adult supervisors in designated areas.
  - Enter school building, hall, or church only if accompanied by an authorized adult.
  - Adhere to school uniform policy and guidelines.
- Respect property
  - Show proper care of school property.
  - Use materials correctly.
  - Ask before using other's property.
  - Do not chew gum on campus.

## **12.4 School-wide Consequences**

The following consequences for discipline infraction will occur after the classroom discipline plan has been followed. Classroom consequences may include:

- Conference with student;
- Denial of privileges;
- Assignment of special tasks;
- Conference with parents;

- Detention/time out.

At each level; Primary, Intermediate, Junior High, consequences may reflect the development of that grade:

- Step 1 – Removal from classroom activity or school affiliated extracurricular activity, and/or a note sent home requiring parental signature, and/or phone call to parents;
- Step 2 – Conference with parent, teacher, and principal;
- Steps 3-5 – Probation, suspension, and/or expulsion.

## 12.5 Detention

Detention is a consequence to a variety of discipline issues. Detention is given after each 3rd discipline alert slip issued for general infractions such as tardy, dress code or organizational issue. It can also be an immediate consequence for a more serious infraction such as disrespectful, unkind or disruptive behavior. Detention is served Thursday after school for 30 minutes for the first infraction and 60 minutes for ensuing infractions. Failure to serve assigned detention will result in a doubled detention time the following week or possible suspension.

## 12.6 Probation/Suspension

“A student may be placed on probation for a relatively serious offense, for continuing serious academic deficiency, or for continued misconduct after a warning, when the misconduct does not require more serious action.

A student may be placed on suspension for serious misconduct, on or off campus, during school related activities, or for continued misconduct after having been placed on Probation.

Suspension may be imposed without a prior conference in cases constituting a clear and present danger to the lives, safety, or health of students or school personnel.” (Diocese of San Diego Handbook for Catholic Schools)

Students who seriously or habitually disrupt the learning environment or interfere with the learning process of others are subject to serious disciplinary action. This action may result in suspension (physical removal of the student from the classroom and/or school for a specified period of time).

Due to the seriousness of expulsion or suspension, these consequences will be used after concerted efforts have been made to address inappropriate behavior. These efforts will include written documentation of the procedures used by the school, including parent-teacher-administrative conferences, which explain both the nature of the undesirable behavior as well as the actions taken to modify the student’s behavior.

Serious misconduct resulting in or leading to probation, suspension, or expulsion may include, but not be limited to:

- Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of the students;
- Repeated or persistent violation of school regulations;
- Open, persistent defiance of authority;
- Disruptive behavior that impedes the progress of the rest of the class;
- Profane or obscene language, gestures, or innuendo;
- Verbal or nonverbal behaviors that threaten another’s sense of safety.

During the period of Suspension:

- All missed school work will be made up;
- Student may not participate in any school-sponsored activities.

Students may be suspended or expelled without benefit of the above outlined procedure for certain offenses that have an immediate and severe impact on the school, staff or other students.

The kind(s) of behaviors that constitute this kind of action may include, but not be limited to:

1. Physical abuse of another person (Education Code 48903);
2. Possession or use of controlled or illegal substances such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, firecrackers, etc. (Education Code 48904);
3. Possession of any device that may be used as a weapon (Education Code 48903);
4. Theft;
5. Damage to property;
6. Indecent or obscene conduct or language while at school or at a school sponsored event;
7. Leaving the campus during the day without permission or habitual truancy;
8. Dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism;
9. Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students;
10. Disruptive or incorrigible behavior which impedes the progress of other students;
11. Threatening another student.

## **12.7 Expulsion**

A student may be expelled from school for misconduct of a very serious nature calling for immediate dismissal without suspension or for the repetition of conduct for which the student has been suspended one or more times. Grounds for expulsion are not to be applied automatically. There are, nevertheless, acts which constitute good cause for suspension or expulsion from school when the conduct is committed by a student while under the jurisdiction of the school or when the conduct is directly related to school activity or school attendance.

Reasons for expulsion are, but are not limited to, the following offenses committed by pupils:

- Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students (EC44806, CCR Title V, EC48900 “k” Sec. 5530);
- Incorrigible or disruptive behavior which impedes the progress of the rest of the class;
- Damage to, or theft of school or private property;
- Infliction of, or threatened physical injury to another person;
- Possession or sale of weapons;
- Possession or sales of drugs, including controlled substances or prescription/non-prescription;
- Possession or sales of intoxicants;
- Possession or use of tobacco;
- Commission of obscene act(s) or engagement in habitual profanity or vulgarity (EC487900 “I”);

- Disruption of school activities;
- Defiance of school authorities;
- Habitual truancy;
- Hazing.

No student, or other person in attendance at any public, private, parochial, or military school, community college, college, or other educational institution, shall conspire to engage in hazing, participate in hazing, or commit any act that causes or is likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to any fellow student or person attending the institution.

The violation of this section is a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine not less than one hundred dollars (\$100.00), nor more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00), or imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year, or both. (Amended Stats. 1983, Ch. 1092.) (EC 32051)

In regard to offenses which take place on school premises and which constitute grounds for expulsion, the school must have evidence of the offense and establish a relationship with school discipline and the welfare of students.” (Diocese of San Diego Handbook for Catholic Schools)

**The final decision to expel a student rests with the principal and with the knowledge and consent of the pastor.**

## **12.8 Adhere to the Social Media Policy**

All students and parents are expected to adhere to our Social Media Policy found on our website under ‘Forms/Docs’.

## **12.9 Olweus Bullying Prevention Program**

Having a safe school experience is something that all students should be able to enjoy. Our philosophy states that we are preparing our students to live in the world as responsible citizens and faithful stewards of all creation. As part of a Catholic faith community our students are to model Christian values and to be respectful of self and others. In keeping with these values we have implemented the Olweus Bully Prevention Program. The program is for all students, not just those who being bullied or bullying others, and works to make relationships better among students.

## **12.10 Electronic Devices**

No electronic devices such as cell phones, pagers, I-Pods, or electronic toys may be used during school by students. The academy is not responsible for loss or damage to personal items.

## **12.11 Lockers**

Lockers are school property. A sixth, seventh, or eighth grade student assigned a locker has exclusive use but not proprietary rights versus the Academy. The principal reserves the right to search and inspect any locker on suspicion of a threat to health, welfare, or safety of other students. Lockers are to be locked when school is not in session; materials inside lockers are the student’s responsibility.

## **12.12 Student Threat Policy and Procedure**

1. Any and all student threats to self and others must be taken seriously
2. Whoever hears the threat will report it to the principal immediately.

3. The parent or guardian of the student who has made the threat will be notified immediately.
4. Police will be notified immediately.
5. The student will be kept in the Principal's office under supervision until the police/parents arrive.
6. The parent or guardian of any student who has been mentioned as a potential victim, as well as any adult who has been mentioned, either verbally or in writing, will be notified immediately.
7. The student will work from home and will not be considered for readmission to the classroom unless and until the following steps have been completed:
  - (a) The principal must receive a verbal or written report from the police which includes notification of whether the child will be charged with any crime and an assessment of the child's access to weapons.
  - (b) An independent psychiatrist or psychologist must conduct a comprehensive mental health evaluation and risk assessment. If a psychiatrist performs the primary evaluation, he or she will determine whether it is necessary to utilize a psychologist for psychological consultation or testing. If a psychologist performs the primary evaluation, he or she shall determine the need for psychiatric consultation.
  - (c) The principal will, after obtaining the permission of the parents, provide the mental health care professional with all relevant facts, including but not limited to: aggressive behavior, details of the threat as known to the principal, copies of any drawings or writings, disciplinary history of the student, behavioral concerns, and the names of any known victims or potential victims.
8. The principal will receive a written, comprehensive, detailed evaluation and report and documented treatment plan from the mental health care professional stating the basis (factual and risk factors and testing results) upon which it has been determined that the student does or does not pose a danger to self or others. The report must also address the concerns raised by the principal to the mental health care professional. The evaluation and report must be delivered to the principal.
9. If the psychiatrist or psychologist recommends re-admittance, and if the principal is satisfied with the report given, the principal will, after due consideration, including a conference with the parents, decide whether to re-admit the child. The outcome of the investigation, including police and mental health reports will be considered as determining factors in the decision whether to re-admit. This decision will not be finalized until after an initial meeting with the parents. The decision will not be made or announced at that meeting. Any decision on whether to re-admit will require consultation with the pastor.
10. Disciplinary action including suspension/expulsion will be administered as appropriate.
11. If the student is re-admitted to the school, the mental health care professional must at the principal or pastor's request provide a follow-up assessment of the student within 30 days. The principal must be provided with a copy of the follow-up assessment and evaluation and with any recommendation for therapy, counseling, or other treatment. Cooperation with recommendations for continuing care will be a condition of re-admittance and continued enrollment.
12. Counseling will be made available to children who are victims of the threatening behavior or who observed the threatening behavior if it is determined that such counseling is needed and parental permission is granted.
13. Documentation from the mental health care professional concerning the student is to be placed in a separate, confidential file and will not be a part of the student's academic or disciplinary file. Only the principal and/or pastor should have access to these files. This documentation will be kept for a period of one year beyond the time when the child leaves the school as a result of expulsion, withdrawal by parent/guardian, or graduation, before being destroyed.

This policy must be communicated clearly to all faculty, staff, volunteers, parents/guardians and students.

This policy will be reviewed periodically or as needed to accommodate changes, as mental health professional are continually addressing the area of risk assessment for violent or potentially violent behavior.

## **12.13 Policy for Student-to-Student Harassment**

The Diocese of San Diego affirms the Christian dignity of every student. It is the policy of the diocese to provide an educational environment in which all students are treated with respect. Harassment is unacceptable conduct. This policy addresses harassment occurring in a school environment when an individual is subjected to treatment which is hostile, offensive or intimidating because of the individual's race, creed, color, national origin, physical ability, gender or other personal characteristic.

A charge of harassment shall not, in and of itself, create the presumption of wrongdoing. However, acts of harassment will result in disciplinary action up to, and including expulsion. Students found to have filed knowingly false or frivolous charges will also be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including expulsion. Depending on the nature and extent of the charge, if reasonable suspicion of misconduct is determined, the parents of the alleged harasser will be called to take the student home pending conclusion of the investigation by the school.

Disciplinary action for Harassment will follow the Student Discipline Policies as stated in the Diocesan Handbook for Schools.

## **12.14 Harassment**

Harassment, in any form, is prohibited. Any person who believes that he/she has been the object of harassment or has witnessed such behavior should notify the Principal immediately. The Principal is directed to contact the Schools Office or the Office of Human Resources for Diocesan procedures on Harassment and Sexual Misconduct.

Harassment is any form of conduct that is not welcome, is personally offensive, and undermines the integrity of employment and professional relationships.

## **13 Uniform Policy**

The complete uniform code must be adhered to in order for your child to be in attendance at St. James Academy. This includes the P. E. uniform. On rare occasions or in an emergency situation when your child is unable to adhere to the uniform policy, an explanation to the teacher and principal is required. Parents may be called to bring proper clothing to school if students are out of uniform or do not follow the proper dress code. This may also result in the student losing the privilege of non-uniform dress the next time it is allowed. Uniforms are required for field trips unless otherwise specified by the teacher.

\*TRUE GRITS UNIFORM STORE: MIRA MESA  
9823 Pacific Heights Blvd. #K, San Diego, CA 92121  
Phone orders: 619-535-0022 or 800-556-3325  
<https://www.truegrits.com/store/school.cfm?schoolid=SJA041>

### **13.1 Uniform Guidelines**

- All uniform clothing must be neat, clean, well maintained, and free from tears and holes.
- All uniform clothing must be purchased through True Grits with these exceptions:
  - white or navy blue solid color polo style shirts with no logo
  - long navy blue twill, logo-free pants/shorts
  - (navy blue color must be consistent with uniform navy color)

- All uniform items must be labeled with the student's first and last name. We strongly suggest labeling items inside rather than embroidering name on the outside (except for outerwear). Embroidered items will not be re-sold through our recycle committee.
- No excessively loose fitting clothing or "sagging" styles are allowed at any time. Shorts and pants must be belted at the appropriate waistline.
- Non-uniform outer wear may not be worn on campus.

### **13.2 Shirts:**

Shirts must be solid white or solid navy blue (navy blue color must be consistent with uniform navy color) polo style, with no logo. They may be short or long sleeve. Shirts must be tucked in to pants or shorts at all times, except for P. E. Girl's shirts may be un-tucked when wearing a skirt but must be hip-length. Undershirts may be worn but NOT visible (i.e.: must be tucked in and no sleeve showing). Red and green polo shirts are alternate uniform shirts for Jr. High students. Red and green polo shirts must be purchased only through True Grits or the uniform recycle committee to maintain color consistency.

School year 2010-2011:

- Grade 7–green
- Grade 8–red

### **13.3 Jumpers/Skirts:**

Girls in Kindergarten through grade three must wear the SJA plaid jumper. Girls in fourth through sixth grades must wear the SJA plaid skirt. Girls in Jr. High also have the choice to wear the navy SJA skirt. Skirts are available in two different waist options. All jumpers and skirts must be purchased only through True Grits or the uniform recycle committee. Skirts must be no shorter than two inches above the knee. Girls do not have to tuck in their uniform shirt when wearing skirts.

### **13.4 Pants:**

Only solid navy, logo-free pants may be worn by girls or boys in all grades. Seventh and eighth grade boys also have the choice of solid, logo-free khaki pants. Khaki pants must be purchased through True Grits or the uniform recycle committee.

### **13.5 Shorts:**

Uniform shorts are allowed for all students except on dress uniform days. Uniform shorts must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee and no longer than the top of the knee. Seventh and eighth grade also have the choice of solid, logo-free khaki shorts. Uniform shorts must be purchased only through True Grits or the uniform recycle committee. If female students wish to wear bike shorts underneath their uniform jumper or skirt for modesty, the bike shorts must be navy blue or black. These shorts should not be visible beneath the uniform skirt or jumper. This will enable the girls, especially in younger grades, to play freely during recess.

### **13.6 Belts:**

Black, brown or navy belts are acceptable. Any student wearing uniform shorts/pants must wear a belt with their shirt tucked in to their shorts/pants.

### **13.7 Socks/tights:**

Solid white, navy blue or black socks/tights are acceptable. Socks must cover the ankle at all times.

### **13.8 Shoes:**

Athletic shoes are strongly recommended. White, black, navy blue, gray or brown shoes (or a combination of these colors) with appropriate matching laces (if shoe has laces) are acceptable. Shoes must be flat, non-platform, closed-toe and closed-heel with no flashing and no wheels.

### **13.9 Dress Uniform:**

Dress uniform consists of jumpers or skirts for the girls and long pants for the boys. Dress uniform must be worn on all Mass days, school picture days and other days as announced.

### **13.10 P.E. Uniform:**

Athletic shoes (same as colors mentioned above) must be worn on scheduled P.E. days. Grades Kindergarten through third wear their school uniform for P.E. Navy, mesh, gym shorts are to be worn for all P.E. classes in grades four through eight. Fourth through eighth grades must also wear the St. James Academy P.E. T-shirt with the SJA logo on it purchased only through True Grits or the uniform recycle committee.. P. E. shorts are to be worn only during P. E. class.

### **13.11 Outerwear:**

SJA logo sweatshirts, fleece, windbreaker and jackets may be worn on campus. These must be purchased only through True Grits or the uniform recycle committee.

### **13.12 Hair:**

Hair must be neat and clean. Hair color must be the student's natural color. Hair may not be unruly or obscure the student's vision. Boys' hair length may not be longer than three inches and must be cut above the eyebrows, collar, and mid-ears. Girls may wear hair accessories that are SJA plaid, navy, or white only.

### **13.13 Make-Up/Nails:**

Make-up, eye shadow, and lipstick are not acceptable. Only clear nail polish may be worn.

### **13.14 Jewelry:**

Earrings may be worn only by girls and must be small, stud type only (no dangling earrings). Crucifixes may be worn with permission from the principal. No other types of jewelry, including necklaces, may be worn.

### **13.15 Hats:**

SJA hats must be purchased through True Grits and are to only be worn outside.

### **13.16 Non-Uniform Dress Code:**

Scout uniforms may be worn on meeting days. St. James Academy regards non-uniform dress as a privilege and expects that students will dress appropriately on free dress days. Students may lose non-uniform dress privilege if they do not dress in the required uniform or if they dress inappropriately on non-uniform dress days. The principal will make final decisions regarding appropriate clothing. Clothing must be modest. Tank tops, halter-tops, bare midriffs, plunging necklines, cut-offs and short-shorts/skirts are not permitted. T-shirts are allowed unless otherwise stated. Any logos/symbols must be appropriate. Non-uniform days often have a theme and guidelines. If these are not followed, the child loses the non-uniform dress privilege for the next free dress day.

### **13.17 Uniform Recycle Program:**

SJA provides a uniform recycling program through which gently used uniform items may be exchanged or purchased, for a nominal fee. At the beginning and end of each school year the uniform committee holds a sale/exchange on campus. The committee may be contacted through the school year if needed.

### **13.18 Lost and Found**

All personal items, especially clothing, must be permanently labeled. All lost items will be placed in to the front office Lost and Found drawers. Unclaimed uniform items will be sent to the uniform recycle committee the last Friday of the month. All unclaimed lunch boxes will be disposed of every Friday.

## **14 Extracurricular Activities**

Extracurricular activities are an important part of the total educational curriculum. They are offered as opportunities to develop individual skills, team skills, sportsmanship, leadership skills, musical abilities, and school spirit. Student participation is a privilege and may be withheld with just cause. Students must maintain a grade of 70 or above in every subject including behavior, and promote Christian values through behavior and attitude. Students may not participate in after school activities (choir, sports, dances, etc) if they are not in attendance at school that day.

### **14.1 After School Sports Program**

In order to promote competition and good sportsmanship, St. James Academy participates in the North County Parochial League that offers junior varsity competition for fifth and sixth grades, and varsity competition for seventh and eighth grades. St. James Academy fields a team if:

1. a volunteer coach assumes responsibility for the team, and
2. a sufficient number of students participate.

The Athletic Director coordinates the sports program. All teachers will receive a schedule alerting them to away game dates so they are aware when students will be leaving at 2:30. Parent participation is essential in order to provide coaching, transportation to and from games, and to offer other support needed by the Athletic Director. A nominal fee of \$40.00 will be assessed per student, per sport, to help defer the costs of administering the league, including officials and facility rental.

All uniforms must be returned to the Athletic Director or the student's parent/guardian will be billed for a replacement. Any student who is absent from school on the day of a game may not play with the team that day. Students may not leave earlier than 2:30 p.m. for travel games without the principal's permission and are responsible for all missed class work.

A typical sports season is as follows:

Fall Sports	Winter Sports	Spring Sports
Volleyball (girls)	Soccer (girls)	Basketball (girls)
Football (boys)	Basketball (boys)	Soccer/Volleyball (boys)

## **14.2 Student Council**

The Student Council provides an opportunity for students in grades 6 - 8 to develop leadership skills while serving the school. Elections for officers are held in the spring for the following academic year. Appointments for other positions take place after elections. Participation may include before and after school hours. Students wishing to participate in Student Council should contact the Student Council faculty advisors.

Activities coordinated by the Student Council may include: the Halloween Carnival, mission outreach projects, spirit days, variety shows and other events that build community and encourage school spirit.

## **14.3 Altar Servers**

Students in grades 4-8 are invited to serve St. James Parish as Altar Servers. Parents with any questions may contact the parish altar service coordinator through the parish office.

## **14.4 St. James Catholic Community Music Ministry**

Students in f are invited to audition to sing or play an instrument in the appropriate St. James Catholic Community church music ministry youth ensembles. Rehearsals are scheduled outside of school hours by the church youth choir directors. Please contact the St. James church music ministry or St. James Academy music teacher for further information.

## **14.5 School Families**

Each student at St. James Academy is assigned to a “school family” comprised of one child per grade level. School families get together periodically for structured activities, planned by teachers, which may include multi-cultural education or community outreach. The Jr. High students in the family are the leaders of their school family and assist the younger students during the activity.

## **14.6 Hot Lunch Program**

The Monday-Thursday Hot Lunch program is run by Ki’s Restaurant. Ki’s provides a variety of nutritional menu choices daily. Each family that chooses Ki’s lunch must set up an account through their link on our website under ‘Lunch Program’. Orders are placed directly through Ki’s. The Jr. High holds a pizza fundraiser offered on full-day Fridays. The pizza order form comes home through the Wednesday envelope twice a year.

## **14.7 Graduation**

The 8th grade class celebrates graduation at a special Mass in June. A committee of parents works with the 8th grade teacher to plan and coordinate various graduation activities, which may include a special field trip, prayer service, awards ceremony and reception for family and friends.

## **14.8 Catholic Schools Week**

Catholic Schools Week is celebrated the last week of January. Parents are encouraged to participate in the school's Open House and other activities planned for the week.

## **14.9 School Pictures**

Class and individual pictures will be taken at school, by a professional photography studio, early in the school year. We make every effort to have the date placed in the current academic calendar. A reminder is given in advance in the newsletter. Children are to wear full uniform for school pictures.

## **14.10 Birthday Parties/Get Together**

When parents are planning parties for their students, they may pass out invitations at school only if all class members are invited (gender specific is OK). It is requested that no limos be allowed to pick up students on campus, please make other arrangements after the students have left school property.