



ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL

Schererville, Indiana

St. Michael Catholic School

Parent and Student Handbook

2026~2027

St. Michael Catholic School
16 West Wilhelm Street
Schererville, IN 46375

School Office: 219-322-4531
Fax: 219-322-1710

www.stmichaelparish.life/school/

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Mission Statement

St. Michael School is a community of students and teachers that are committed to living their Catholic faith rooted in the worship of God by serving and respecting others while striving for academic excellence, resulting in Christ-like leaders within and beyond our community.

St. Michael School Song

We're all for the old red and white,
our team will really fight.
We'll win over all,
The greatest of all,
We'll win this game tonight.
Fight! Fight!
Our team will do their best,
and we will do the rest.
We'll win this game tonight,
Show them just how to fight.
Victory!
For the old red and white!



ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL

Schererville, Indiana

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COVID-19/Public Health and Safety

The COVID-19 pandemic has led Catholic schools to plan for continuing operations in cases of public health and safety emergencies and disastrous events. The schools will, where possible, follow State and local public health directives related to public health and safety emergencies, including severe weather events. As in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, schools may be closed as a social distancing practice recommended by government officials to interrupt the spread of a contagious disease. In the event of an outbreak or any circumstances determined to be a threat to the health or safety of students, students may be excluded from attending school and school-related activities (in some cases for an extended length of time). Or, a school building may be closed as a part of school, Diocesan or community response to a public health, safety or severe weather event. The school will then transition to its extended learning format to provide continuing education services to students who are impacted, whether that be a select number of students or an entire student body.

Academic Integrity and Grading during Extended Learning

Students will continue their respective academic exercises remotely, should that become necessary. The school's expectations of all students' academic integrity and performance will be upheld and enforced during periods of extended learning. Academic integrity includes honesty in citing sources, sharing work on assignments only with permission, and prohibits cheating of any kind on assignments and assessments. Academic integrity also charges us to demonstrate responsible stewardship of our gifts and a strong work ethic. Students and families who find challenges during extended learning periods must initiate communications about those challenges to the classroom teachers and school principals in a timely manner. The school grading policies and practices remain intact and continue during any extended learning period.

Tuition

In case of an extended learning period related to any public health and safety, or severe weather event, the school will provide continuous education services remotely for students. Tuition agreements, policies and practices, will remain in effect and binding.

Attendance

In the event of an extended learning period arising out of any public health and safety, or severe weather event, daily attendance for remote instructional days will be required. The principal will communicate how attendance will be taken. During such extended learning periods, current attendance policies will remain in effect and enforceable.

In the event a student's doctor recommends the student not return to the school building should his or her health be compromised related to a contagious disease event, the school may provide reasonable alternative accommodations for this student. The school shall determine the level and character of any such reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations may depend on various factors, including class size, grade level, staffing, financial concerns, etc.

New Students

All new students are on a 90 day probationary period. If they are not meeting academic or behavioral expectations they may be asked to leave.

Administration

Responsibilities

The Gary Diocesan Schools Office and its Director of Catholic Schools oversee and administer the policies of the Diocese of Gary in accordance with the State of Indiana and the values of the Roman Catholic Church. As the Bishop's appointed representative, the Pastor of the parish is the administrative head of the parish school. The Principal is appointed as the executive director of the parish school, responsible for the academic and daily activities of the school. In cooperation with the Parish Director of Faith Formation, the Principal takes immediate responsibility for overseeing the religious curriculum of the school.

Safe Environment Programs (SEP)

Churches, schools and youth organizations are required by law in most states to ensure that children and youth who worship, study, or participate in activities sponsored therein can do so in the safest and most secure setting possible. Parents and caretakers must have confidence in these institutions before they will allow their children to become involved with the "Safe Environment Programs" designed to assist institutions in instilling that confidence are encouraged by insurance and risk management companies as well.

The *Charter for the Protecting of Children and Youth* also requires that dioceses/eparchies establish "Safe Environment Programs." Article 12 of the Charter states:

"Diocese/eparchies will establish "Safe Environment Programs." They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Diocese/eparchies will make clear to clergy and members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in position of trust with regard to sexual abuse."

In addition, Article 13 states:

"Dioceses/eparchies will evaluate the background of all diocesan/eparchial and parish personnel who have regular contact with minors. Specifically, they will utilize the resources of law enforcement and other community agencies."

See Appendix A which contains the guidelines for establishment of safe environment programs. St. Michael Church and School follow these guidelines. This policy manual details the guidelines set forth in Appendix A.

Faculty

The faculty members are trained by the Diocese of Gary in the guidelines of the "Safe Environment Program" through the Virtus Training.

Communicating with the School/Teachers (SEP)

The school office phone has voicemail so parents can leave a message at all times. Every incoming message and call is logged daily. All messages are confidential. Be assured that each message is very important and will be handled promptly.

Messages to teachers are placed in their mailboxes. Teachers do not have individual phone extensions or individual voicemails.

Advisory Committee

Any questions or concerns about the school can be addressed by the Advisory Committee, if placed in writing and sent to a member. Our Advisory Committee is a consultative group to the pastor/principal of St. Michael Catholic School. A list of current members is available through the school office, parish office, and H.S.A. members. St. Michael Catholic School believes strongly in the 'chain of command.' Teacher, Principal, and then Pastor.

Visitors

All persons entering the school are to register with the office and receive a pass written by the office staff. Visitors can only be allowed into the school building by a staff member of the school. Parents waiting for an appointment with a staff member of the school should sign in and wait till the office staff is available. In compliance with the FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) office phone conversations and other private conversations should be kept confidential. **Parents are not permitted to walk through the halls or into classrooms without getting a pass from the office.**

Litigation

If a disagreement between a parent and the school results in the parent seeking civil litigation, the student will be excluded from class until the civil decision has been made. In this way, the school cannot be accused of being prejudicial toward the student during litigation.

The pastor/principal has the right to change (and enforce) any handbook policy, rule, regulation and/or guideline as he/she deems necessary.

Financial Responsibilities

Tuition Payments

At the beginning of each school year, parents select a tuition payment option through FACTs family portal. Payments are set up for withdrawal on the 8th of each month starting in August and concluding in May.

Payments – Payments can be made in the following ways:

- Direct withdrawal from checking account
- Direct withdrawal from credit card
- Paid in full
- Paid by semester due on August 8th and January 8th.

Withdrawal

Families that withdraw their child/children during the school year will not receive a refund on monies already paid.

Family Service Hours Program

Families of students in Grades K-8 are required to complete the mandated **10 Hours of Service by May 1st**. The cost of incomplete Family Service Hours is **\$100 per hour**. Families are also required to purchase **at least one** adult ticket **for each** of our major fundraisers;. (Events deemed as major fundraisers for St. Michael Catholic School- Howl at Moon+ and Passport...etc).

Damaged Books

Students are required to respect the property of the school. At the beginning of each school year students will be given an assigned number per hardcover text issued to them. Students will be responsible for the condition of the book at the end of the school year. The student must notify his/her teacher of any damage or writing in the textbook at the time the textbook is issued to avoid any fines at the end of the year. The following are listed fines for damaged books:

Lost book – 100% replacement cost

Damaged unusable – 100% replacement cost

Financial Assistance

Families who may need financial assistance may apply for help from the Diocese of Gary by completing the online application (FACTS) made available in February of the previous school year.

Choice Scholarship Program

St. Michael Catholic School is an approved Choice Scholarship School. Parents are required to complete registration papers along with Choice Scholarship papers. Parents applying for this program must present the school with the state required paperwork and sign all the necessary assurances before admission to the school. The Indiana Department of Education website is the only site of approved information. For more information, refer to the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), click on Choice Scholarship. Parents are encouraged to apply directly with the school office. Please make an appointment to discuss and apply for Choice Scholarship.

HSA (Home and School Association)

St. Michael Home and School Association is a committee of volunteer parents who put on different events for the entire school throughout the year. Some of these events are as follows: Donuts in the Park, St. Michael Feast Day treat, Little Elves, Warrior Day. In order to put these events on there is a required fee from parents for HSA. **\$50 per student (K-8th) will be billed through incidental billing in early August.** You will receive an email notification as well as a notification through FACTs management.

Arrival/Dismissal

Arrival

Students in Grades Kindergarten ~ 8th are counted tardy if not in their classroom by 8:20 a.m.

Preschool, Kindergarten, Students in Grades 1st – 8th must report to the school office (Door B) when tardy.

Students in Grades Kindergarten ~ 8th are not allowed in the classroom prior to the official start of the school day (8:20 a.m.). **Students are not allowed back in their classroom following dismissal.**

8:00 a.m.	Arrival – Morning Drop-Off
8:20-8:30 a.m.	Homeroom
8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Half Day Preschool Program (4 & 5 year-olds)
8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Full Day Preschool Program (4 & 5 year-olds)
11:00 a.m. -12:45 p.m.	Lunch Time
12:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	EC Preschool Program (3 & 4 year-olds)
3:10 p.m.	Announcements & Prayer
3:15 p.m.	Dismissal Time

Arrival/Dismissal

The time for school arrival is 8:00 a.m. and dismissal is 3:15 p.m through Door A. for students in Grades Kindergarten ~ 8th Grade. Please review the arrival/dismissal guidelines that were sent out. Parents are not permitted to pick-up students at the main entrance (in front of the school) during regular dismissal.

If there is a change in the way your child/children will be going home, a parent needs to send a note to school in the morning detailing the change in dismissal. In case of an emergency situation only, you may call the office and request the change in dismissal. **Calls must be received prior to 3:00 p.m.** Pets are not allowed in the school building (this includes the school gym) at any time.

Teachers are responsible for the safety of all the students in their class; therefore, holding a conversation with a teacher during the school hours; especially at arrival and dismissal time is not allowed.

Arrival/Dismissal during Regular School Hours

The main entrance (door B) must be used for students who are entering or leaving the school during regular school hours. At these times, the parent or guardian must come into the school office to sign-out or sign-in their child/children.

Emergencies

School Closings, Hot Weather, Snowstorm, Fog, or Severe Weather

School Closing

- In the case of severe weather or other emergencies whereby school will not be open, parents will be notified through Parent Alert. Messages will be received via phone call, text message, and email.
- St. Michael Catholic School closes according to Lake Central School Corporation directives. Please listen to messages.
- All athletic events, practices, meetings, and social gatherings are **CANCELED** except for church sponsored activities.

School Opening Delay

- In case of the school starting two hours later, parents will be notified through Parent Alert. Messages will be received via phone call, text message, and email.
DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL.
- School dismissal will be at regular times.
- School lunches will be served
- Morning Preschool will be canceled when there is a 2 hour delay.

Emergency School Early Dismissal/Closing

- Parents will be notified through Parent Alert. Messages will be received via phone call, text message, and email.
- **DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL** as the phone lines are needed for emergency communications.
- Students will be sent home according to their regular dismissal plan.
- Parents who normally pick up students as car riders need to be aware of the weather and the possibilities of delays or cancellations.
- Students who are walkers will not be sent home until a parent has been reached.
- All athletic events, practices, meetings, and social gatherings will be canceled except for church related activities.

Heat/Water/Electricity Loss

Students will normally stay in school. If it becomes necessary to close school and send students home, the following procedures will be used.

- Parents will be notified through Parent Alert. Messages will be received via phone call, text message, and email.

Evacuation of the Building

When the building has to be evacuated, the following occurs:

- An announcement will be made over the public address system (P.A.).
- Students will use fire drill procedures and then will be escorted to the Church.
- Parents will be notified through Parent Alert. Messages will be sent via phone call, text message, and email. For those parents who were unable to be notified, students will stay at the Church or other safe facility.

Bomb Threat

- An announcement will be made over the P.A. System.
- Teachers/Staff and students will follow evacuation of building procedures.

Aggressive Intruder in the Building or on School Grounds (Code Red)

- An alarm will sound over the P.A. System.
- Teachers/Staff will follow Code Red Procedures.
- If students are outside on the playground, supervisors will be notified by cell phones/walkie talkies that there is a Code Red. Students will proceed to the gym.
- Students in the hall or bathroom must proceed to the nearest classroom.

Tornado Drill

- Tornado safety instructions are posted in each classroom.
- Tornado alarms will come over the P.A. System.
- Each student will bring a book to cover his or her head and proceed to the assigned area.
- Students should stay away from entrances and interior doors and windows.
- There is no talking during this drill.
- No students will leave the building until all is clear and safe.
- No parents will be allowed in the building during a drill.

Fire Drill

- Fire safety instructions are posted in each room.
- Fire alarms will come over the P.A. System.
- Students should walk to the assigned area outside the building.
- There is no talking during this drill.

Earthquake

- Students should take cover under a desk, table, or other furniture or against an interior wall.
- Everyone should get down on his or her knees and face away from windows. A book should be used to shield the head from glass.

IMPORTANT - All adults (parents, volunteers, guests, and visitors to St. Michael Catholic School) MUST follow all emergency guidelines and protocol when the school is experiencing an emergency.

Academics

Admission Policy

Students new to St. Michael Catholic School may be required to take a placement test to qualify for the grade of application. Students not qualifying for the grade requested will be required to repeat their current grade.

Curriculum

St. Michael Catholic School is accredited by the State of Indiana and Cognia. The school follows state guidelines for teacher licensing, attendance, school calendar requirements, and curriculum. The guidelines of the Diocese of Gary and the Roman Catholic Church form the foundation for religious education.

Homework during an Absence

Homework will be available for pick-up the day the student(s) return to school. Unless the student is out sick for 2 or more days they may request homework. The length of time allowed for returning completed homework resulting from an absence is **one day per day absent from school**. Requests for homework prior to vacations will NOT be granted. **The school does NOT approve of vacations during the school calendar days.** If a student is absent from school due to a vacation, they will have two days upon their return to complete work, tests, quizzes, etc.

Grading System for the Diocese of Gary

For Kindergarten

4 Outstanding

3 Satisfactory

2 Needs Improvement

1 Below grade level

NA Not Assessed

* Adjusted Program – where applicable

(Below grade level was added as justification for retention)

For Grades 1-8

A+ 100%

C+ 84%

A 94%-99%

C 76%-83%

A- 93%

C- 75%

B+ 92%

D+ 74%

B 86%-91%

D 71%-73%

B- 85%

D- 70%

F 69% and below

NA Not Assessed

Effort and Conduct Grade for Grades 1-8

4 100% to 93% Outstanding

3 92% to 85% Satisfactory

2 84% to 75% Needs Improvement

1 74% to 0 Below Grade level

Internet Policies

Following are policies regulating the use of the Internet. Parents and students must sign that they have read the policies and will abide by them.

While the benefits of the Internet are indeed enormous, it is important to know that it is an unregulated open system and, like any open system, carries risks. The Internet contains materials and potential contacts that could work to both the advantage and disadvantage of young people.

The School is taking precautions to restrict access to controversial material by:

- The school has invested in GoGuardian, an online security program.
- Requiring a user agreement and parent permission form
- Maintaining careful direction and supervision of students appropriate to their age
- Enforcing the rules for use.

St. Michael Catholic School wants to introduce your child to the tools he or she will need in the informational age. We must teach our students to be responsible users of information, and your child's participation in Internet/on-line use promotes this goal.

Students using St. Michael's equipment to access the Internet and other on-line services must abide by the rules below. Students violating the rules will be subject to school discipline. Students may be denied future Internet or on-line access, and will be reported to the police or proper authorities if in violation of the law.

- a. All use of the Internet must be in support of education or research and consistent with the policies and objectives of St. Michael Catholic School.
- b. Use of the Internet or other services cannot be made without the permission of a supervising teacher.
- c. Any use of the network to facilitate illegal activity is prohibited.
- d. Use of the network to access obscene material is prohibited. (SEP)
- e. Any use for commercial or for-profit purposes is prohibited, including product advertisement. This also includes buying, selling, and bartering, including but not limited to the use of credit cards
- f. Disruption of the Internet on-line service, supporting equipment, or information available on it is prohibited, including but not limited to tampering with hardware or software, vandalizing data, introducing or using computer viruses, attempting to gain access to restricted information or networks, or violating copyright law.
- g. The use of the Internet or other services to harass other users or to transmit materials likely to be offensive or objectionable to recipients is prohibited. (SEP)
- h. Students will be prohibited from using Internet "chat rooms" and/or any instant messaging.
- i. Students must never share their password or account information with anyone. Each user has the responsibility for the appropriate use of his her account. (SEP)

- j. Students are to honor all rules of copyright and personal property. Ownership of text, music, software, and other media is protected to the full extent of the law. Use of data/information from the Internet may be done only within the realm of copyright laws, policies, and crediting sources.
- k. Students will not access personal email accounts. Email use is permitted when it is a classroom activity and under special circumstances.
- l. Students may search only for a subject chosen and approved by the teacher.
- m. To assure the safety of our students; parents and students are prohibited from posting pictures of St. Michael Catholic School sponsored social events. An appropriate faculty, staff, or our communication director may post pictures to the School Facebook page.
- n. To assure the character of St. Michael Catholic School and Parish students/parents are to use good judgment when posting comments, dialogue or feedback concerning St. Michael Catholic School, pastor, principal, faculty and staff, student body and parent community. Students/Parents will be held liable for defamation of character and will be requested to withdraw their child/children from the school. Legal action may be taken on the part of the school and any individual (including the parents of a minor) associated with the St. Michael Catholic School if defamation of character is proved.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held at the end of the first grading period. If parents need to talk to a teacher about their child's academic progress at other times, parents are encouraged to email or call the school office and leave a message for the teacher. There is a 48 hour window for a returned call, email, or note from a faculty/staff member.

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report cards are issued at the end of each 9-week grading period. Students will receive their report cards on designated dates listed on the school's main calendar and the school's website. Continuous progress is available online through FACTS/Ren Web. Progress Reports will be administered half-way between a 9-week grading period.

Parents have access to student progress by checking our online grade book. Teachers update grades in a timely manner. To access information concerning your child from FACTS (RenWeb) you must submit a current email address to the school office.

Student Service Plan

Lake Central School Corporation will service our students for Speech and testing for academic evaluation. A case conference is called, and evaluations are discussed and reviewed once a student is evaluated. The administration has the final decision on a student's continued attendance at St. Michael Catholic School.

Attendance

Continuous attendance at school is extremely important. Time lost because of absence or tardiness can never be made up or reclaimed. Learning is based upon continuity of instruction. It is vital that students not miss school, for vacations or other leisure activities.

Absence

A parent or guardian must report a student absent by 9:00 a.m. each day of the absence. When the student returns to school, the parent must write a note explaining the absence. If a student accumulates 10 or more unexcused absences per academic school year, a parent conference may be required. If a student is absent 3 or more days, a doctor's note is required to return to school. The administration has the option to retain a student who is absent from school 25 or more days.

Absence for Partial Days

The school and the Indiana Department of Education strongly recommend that all doctor appointments be scheduled at times other than a school day. Various appointments scheduled during the school day will count against attendance.

Excused Absences

A student shall not be considered absent for: attending the funeral of an immediate family member/close family friend, participating as a Liturgical Ministry, working as a "page" for the State, serving at a precinct, shadowing at a high school, working for a political candidate, or appearing in court as a result of a subpoena (**Indiana Code 20-8.2.**).

Medical Excuse

If a student cannot participate in gym due to a medical reason, a written note from the doctor must be presented to the teacher and office. Students not eligible for gym class would not be eligible to participate in CYO Sports. If a physician writes a medical note of excuse, this physician must write a note of release. Students not able to participate in gym class will be excused from recess time.

Student Tardiness

Students are marked tardy if they are not present in their classroom by 8:20 am.

Vacation Requests

The vacation policy applies to vacations and to all extended absences of three or more days for whatever purpose other than illness. **Vacation requests are strongly discouraged.** Indiana State Law requires a child to be in attendance at school while it is in session except for emergencies. St. Michael Catholic School's attendance rate, a legal standard to maintain school accreditation, depends on students being in attendance for the full school year. Parents who insist on taking a child out of school for non-emergency reasons are responsible for the impact that this absence may have on the child's academic grades.

Vacation Notification Form. Vacation Notification forms are available in the school office. These forms must be completed and returned back to school one week (7 calendar days) prior to leaving on vacation. Students whose parents do not complete the form or who do not submit the form jeopardize their child's access to assignments, quizzes, tests, etc. Seven calendar days will allow for the teacher to make sound educational decisions about missing assignments, quizzes and tests.

It is the policy of the school that no assignments will be given in advance for students leaving on vacations or an extended absence. Tests/quizzes, depending on the timing of the requested vacation, may be given prior to a student's leaving if that chapter or unit is nearly completed. Parents will be notified if tests or quizzes will be administered prior to the vacation or if a test/quiz must be taken immediately upon a student's return. If a vacation falls at the end of an academic grading period, the student will not be able to make up any missed homework, tests, or quizzes. Upon returning from a vacation which is not at the end of an academic grading period, students will be given two school days to complete and submit all missed assignments and to take all tests/quizzes. Teachers can require tests/quizzes to be taken earlier than three school days provided that parents were notified of the requirement prior to leaving. It is the parents, rather than the school's responsibility, to initiate and receive all non-emergency vacation communication.

Teachers may require students to use their recess time or seek parent permission for a student to stay after school to complete missed work.

Vacation Notification Form (Sample Form) is on the following page

Saint Michael Catholic School Vacation Notification Form

Date _____

Dear _____,

According to Indiana State Law a child is required to be in attendance at school while it is in session except for emergencies. If you are taking your child (children) on a vacation during regularly scheduled school time you are responsible for this failure to abide by Indiana State Statute.

Further, you are responsible for seeing that arrangements are made with the teacher concerning the work that will have been missed.

My responsibility is to inform you of the law and your obligation. Please sign below the acknowledgement that you have received this communication. Complete the additional information and return this letter to the school office.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Biscan
Principal

Please refer to the Vacation/Extended Absence section of the Parent Handbook for the school policy.
I will be taking my child (children) out of school for the following days:

(Day, Month, and Dates)

Reason for absence _____

Name of child (children) _____

Grades _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Code of Conduct

In keeping with its mission of cultivating Catholic values and providing a distinctive educational framework, St. Michael Catholic School will promote respect. Students are expected to observe St. Michael Catholic School's policies and procedures outlined in the handbook, as well as, other school practices and classroom rules determined by the faculty and staff. A student's failure to observe these policies will result in disciplinary action.

Discipline Policies

Teachers handle student discipline on an individual basis in the classroom. Discipline is viewed as a matter of instruction, not punishment. Growth in self-discipline is the goal. Consequences for not observing classroom or school policies and procedures are determined by the teacher, and may vary according to the seriousness of the behavior. Some behaviors that may result in disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:

- Disrupting others during prayer and Church time
- Failure to complete homework
- Tardiness
- Not engaging in the educational process (off-task behavior)
- Disrupting the educational process (distracting others)

In the event of persistent/recurring discipline problems, the principal will communicate with the student's parents. The goal of this communication will be to solicit the parents' assistance in resolving the discipline problems.

Some behaviors are deemed **VERY SERIOUS** and warrant immediate action. Examples of such very serious behavior include; but are not limited to the following:

- Harassment, bullying, or intimidation of others such as excessive teasing, making threats, or physically pushing someone to frighten another, horseplay, etc.
- Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury or intentionally behaving in such a way as could reasonably cause physical injury to a student or school personnel.
- Personal dishonesty (such as lying, forging a signature, or stealing) or academic dishonesty (such as cheating and/or plagiarism) defacing or vandalizing school or another's property.
- Insubordination to school personnel.
- Foul language.
- Possession of illegal substances or weapons (such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, knives and guns) or engaging in illegal activity. According to the Office of the Attorney General for the State of Indiana: Should a student bring a firearm to school the student must be expelled for a minimum of one school year (**Indiana Code 20-8.1-5.1-10**). Under this statute, the local county prosecutor must be notified if a student has been expelled for bringing a gun to school. The prosecutor must investigate and take appropriate legal action. Additionally, any person who brings a gun onto school property or a school bus, unless otherwise legally authorized to possess a gun, commits a felony (**Indiana Code 35-47-92**).

Indiana law allows enhanced sentences for certain drugs (**Indiana Code 3548-4**) and gun (**Indiana Code 35-47-2-23**) crimes committed on a school bus, school property, or within 1,000 feet of school property.

- Verbal and/or non-verbal disrespect for school personnel or other students such as profane or vulgar language (spoken, written, or gestured), making fun of others (Including name-calling), or making threats. * Fighting
- Sexual harassment which includes (but not limited to) any unwanted or unwelcomed comment, joke, gesture, touch, noise, graffiti, phone calls, e-mail and/or text message, or a letter that is of a sexual nature or has a sexual connotation. Sexual harassment by an employee or a student, by a student or an employee, or by one student of another is unacceptable conduct. Employees or students who engage in any type of sexual harassment will be subject to appropriate discipline, including suspension and/or dismissal. Retaliation in any form against an employee or student who exercises his or her right to make a complaint under this policy is strictly prohibited, and will itself be cause for appropriate disciplinary action. Any employee or student, who knowingly makes false charges against an employee or student in an attempt to demean, harass, abuse, or embarrass that individual will be subject to the sanctions for the misconduct set forth above.
- Gang Behavior: St. Michael Catholic School, in keeping with its mission of implementing a Catholic educational community, does not tolerate gang behavior in any form. Gang affiliation or the appearance of gang-affiliation – which may include but is not limited to, expressions in costume (for example clothing colors, gang names/symbols printed on clothing, or earrings); hair styles; hand gestures, signs, insignias, and posters (whether in lockers, books or notebooks); graffiti; and intimidation of others – has no place at St. Michael Catholic School and may result in immediate suspension and/or expulsion.
- Possession of pornographic materials or exploring internet sites with such material.
- Engaging in illegal behavior such as possessing alcohol, drugs or tobacco.
- Leaving school grounds without specific permission to do so by the School Administration.
- Engaging in any terrorist threats.
- Engaging in any of the above mentioned behavior via-mail, instant messaging, websites, telephone messages, and so on.
-

Our discipline policy is based on the Christian Values of respect, love, mercy, and forgiveness.

The school atmosphere should be one which allows the teacher to teach and every student to learn. All staff members are responsible for developing good discipline and should model good behavior. To ensure that every child is provided an adequate learning environment, students and parents will allow teachers to teach, respect the right to learn, and behave in ways that support the best interests of the class and school.

Discipline is a process, not a single action or statement. The ultimate goal is to have students become self-disciplined individuals who know and accept personal boundaries, standards, and expectations. Self-disciplined persons are motivated to do the right thing, whether observed or not.

This discipline policy applies to students in school and at school sponsored events, as well as in the school/parish community and outside the school/parish community where the behavior is contrary to Catholic teachings, or could bring disrepute or embarrassment to the school. St. Michael reserves the right to discipline students for conduct, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, including matters that the school is aware of on social media (e.g.: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, House Party, SnapChat, etc.)

The following general rules are to be adhered to by students, but are not limited to the following:

GENERAL RULES:

- Be in class and ready to learn before the 1st bell - 8:10am.
- Listen to **ALL ADULT** supervisors within the school environment.
- Respect school property at all times.
- Follow the Uniform Policy.
- Respect other students' personal space and property: No pushing, shoving, hitting, tripping, etc.
- Improper language, music, gestures, drawings, or writings are not tolerated.
- Fighting will not be tolerated.
- Gum is not allowed in school.
- Follow specific classroom rules as determined by teachers and students.
- Once distributed, students in grades 5-8 should have the school ID on at all times.
- Weapons of any kind are not permitted.
- Alcohol and drugs are not permitted.
- Never trade, share, sell, play with, or throw food due to food allergies or other circumstances.
- Follow the policy for electronic devices and cell phones (*See Acceptable Use Policy*)

Classroom Rules:

- Each classroom will post classroom rules within the classroom. Classroom rules will be discussed, modeled, practiced, reinforced, and reviewed periodically. All students will follow these rules as expected or consequences will be enforced.

Bullying/Teasing:

St. Michael is committed to providing an environment free from physical, psychological, verbal and virtual harassment. Any behavior that creates, or is intended to create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating school environment constitutes harassment. St. Michael prohibits any form of harassment and views such action as extremely serious. Any allegation of bullying made to an adult, teacher, staff member, or administrator will be investigated and documented.

The discipline policy is implemented and enforced by all faculty/staff members and the administration throughout the year. A copy of this policy is sent home to all parents at the beginning of the school year in the handbook. Each parent is asked to read it, review it with their child, and sign/return the *Handbook Acknowledgement Form* indicating they have done so. The handbook from the previous year will stand in place until a current handbook is published and distributed.

Social Media:

At St. Michael School, we deeply value our partnership with families in creating a positive, supportive learning environment for our students. We are committed to addressing any questions, concerns, or grievances constructively, respectfully, and privately.

We ask that students, parents/guardians bring any concerns directly to classroom teachers or school administration rather than posting them on public social media platforms. Publicly posting negative, disparaging, or defamatory comments about the school, its staff, or its students damages the collaborative partnership necessary for your child's education. In cases where public social media posts compromise this essential partnership, disrupt the school community, or damage the school's reputation, St. Michael School reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of the children and request the withdrawal of the children.

Behavior Management and Consequences

One hour detention	Behavioral Contract	Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) 1-10 days	Expulsion
Disruptive, uncooperative behavior on school property (e.g., classrooms, church, hallway, cafeteria, bathrooms, and playground)	Receiving a 3rd infraction or directly in relation to areas listed below.	Receiving a 4th infraction, after having a contract, or directly in relation to the areas listed below. No detention served.	Receiving a 5th infraction, after an OSS, or directly in relation to the areas listed below. No detention served.
Negative Behaviors include but are not limited to: class disruption, destruction or misuse of school property, disobedience, disrespect/insubordination, failure to appear for detention, forgery, infraction of classroom policies, in off-limit areas of campus, inappropriate language/behavior, lying, stealing Unauthorized cell phone usage during school hours Misuse of school property Violent images Multiple warnings will be given prior to a detention being issued for the following: Chewing gum, uniform violations, excessive tardiness/truancy Cheating/plagiarism will also result in an automatic zero. Any conduct that might detract from the educational environment.	Racial/sexual harassment, bullying, and/or threats. Damage to, or theft of, school/personal property, extortion or gambling Excessive/repeated defiance or refusal to cooperate.	Possession of tobacco or tobacco products including matches, lighters, cigarettes, chewing tobacco, and smoking pipes Fighting. A student, who takes any physical action toward another including: students, teachers, or teacher aides, is considered a participant in a fight. Students must keep their hands to themselves at all times. Videotaping or taking pictures of students or staff without their consent for purposes of ridicule or bullying. Missed work must be completed, but zero's will be given for the assignments, and homework. Tests and quizzes may be made up.	Unlawful activity, including, possession/use of weapons, drugs, or alcohol, including "look-alikes" Sending, sharing, viewing, or possessing pictures, text messages, emails, or other material of a sexual or threatening nature in electronic or any other form, including the contents of a cell phone or other electronic device.
Not limited to the above examples, may be given at the discretion of administration	Not limited to the above examples, may be given at the discretion of administration	Not limited to the above examples, may be given at the discretion of administration	Not limited to the above examples, may be given at the discretion of administration

Parents are asked to follow the chain of command by contacting the teacher first for more information regarding the situation and decisions regarding action taken.

This discipline policy will be strictly and consistently enforced by the School Staff and Administration.

After School Detention

St. Michael are expected to follow school policy regarding attendance, assignments, uniform and behavioral expectations. Failure to do so may result in the student serving an hour detention after school on Fridays from 3:20 pm-4:20 pm. Parents will be notified the day of the behavioral incident and mandatory detention must be served and arrangements must be made to pick up the student after detention. Detentions received Monday through Thursday will be served that Friday. Detentions given on Friday will be served the following Friday, unless otherwise determined by staff and parents.

Drugs and Alcohol

St. Michael does not tolerate the use or possession of illegal drugs or look-alike drugs, marijuana, narcotics, controlled substances, alcoholic beverages or intoxicants of any kind, as well as drug apparatus or paraphernalia. Using, transmitting, possessing or being under the influence of any of the items listed above, by any student while on school property or at any function connected with SJB, will result in suspension and expulsion procedures will be initiated.

Out-of-School Suspension

Out-of-school suspension means that a student is removed from the school environment for a period of time determined by the administration and placed in the custody of the parents/guardian. A child's academic progress during an out-of-school suspension is the sole responsibility of the parents. They are to complete all academic work missed during their day(s) of suspension. All work will be given a zero.

Expulsion

The student will immediately be removed from the school.

Search and Seizure

Contents of lockers and desks are the property of St. Michael Catholic School and can be searched by the principal/school personnel if warranted. Book bags, gym bags, purses, or any type of item used for holding personal property can be searched by the principal/school personnel if warranted.

Appearance and Personal Belongings

Basic school uniform:

- Preschool students do not wear a school uniform. Students should dress in comfortable, weather appropriate clothing. Shoes can be soft-soled dress shoes or tennis shoes. **Other uniform items/policies do not apply to preschool.**
- **Boys in grades K-8** must wear navy pants, light blue polo shirts, and a belt.
- **Girls in grades K-4** must wear the school uniform plaid jumper (purchased at Tee Party Studio), plaid skort (purchased at Tee Party Studio), navy slacks with a belt, and a navy or white polo shirt. Pants may not be skin tight and the waistband must sit at the waist. Girls in grades K-8 can wear navy pants/shorts.
- **Girls in grades 5-8** must wear the school uniform plaid skort (purchased at Tee Party Studio) and white or navy polo shirts and navy slacks. The skorts (plaid) must be no more than 3” above the knee. All undergarments must be solid white and with no designs. Pants may not be skin tight and the waistband must sit at the waist.
- Belts shall be worn with all shorts and slacks and shall be solid black, brown or dark blue. The belt should have no designs, glitter, jewels, emblems or the like.
- No jeans, jean shorts, or pants with any side pockets. No visible designer labels, emblems or logos of any kind.
- All shirts must be tucked in pants/skirts with belts visible at all times.
- Girls are able to wear solid black or navy blue tights or leggings under their skorts/jumpers.
- Boys in grades K-8 and girls in grades K-8 can wear shorts in August, September, October, April, May and June.
- A St. Michael Catholic School uniform sweatshirt (gray). **No hoodies allowed with the school uniform.**

The 2023-2024 school year was the start of our transition to creating consistent uniforms. See changes below:

- 2023-2024: skirt (blue or plaid) or skort (blue or plaid) or plaid jumper
- 2024-2025: only plaid skort or plaid jumper; transition year of uniform sweatshirt
- 2025-2026: only gray (Crewneck/quarter zip) or black fleece zip-up St. Michael uniform sweatshirts with school logo
- 2026-2027: PE sweatpants MUST have St. Michael logo on it (sold through Tee Party Studio)

Where to get your uniform:

Plaid skort/jumper - Tee Party Studio

PE uniforms - Tee Party Studio

Shorts/Pants/Polos - anywhere they are sold. Suggested places Old Navy, Target, Walmart

General Dress Code:

- All students are required to wear socks to school. Socks, tights, knee highs, and ankle socks must be solid white, grey, black, or navy blue. Socks must cover the ankle bone. No ‘no-show’ socks, footies or nylons.
- **Shoes can be soft-soled black, brown or blue dress shoes or black and/or white tennis shoes or saddle shoes.**
- **No moccasins or slipper-type shoes. Sandals, Crocs, clogs, backless shoes, high heel shoes, flip-flops, or largely color designed, glitter, colored shoes are not permitted.**

- **Tennis shoes must be 100% black and/or white with laces and/or Velcro.**
- On PE days students are able to wear any type/color of tennis shoe.
- Boys may not wear earrings. Hair length is above the eyebrows, above the top of the ear, and off the top of the collar of their polo. No ponytails or man buns. Requests for boys to get a haircut, must be completed within 7 days of the notification by the staff/principal. Boys can wear a simple watch; however, it should not be an alarm or novelty watch. No smart watches that connect to the internet. A simple religious bracelet is also allowed. Boys can wear a chain with a small cross or religious medal. No other jewelry is allowed.
- Girls may wear post earrings only (no hoops or dangling earrings) – one pair. A simple watch can be worn; however, it should not be an alarm or novelty watch. No smart watches that connect to the internet. A simple religious bracelet is also allowed. No other jewelry is permitted except a necklace with a small cross or a religious medal. Girls are not to wear more than one hair-tie or scrunchie around their wrist. Ankle bracelets are not allowed.
- Girls may not wear make-up or nail polish of any kind. No French manicures. Bandana type headbands are not permitted. Headbands may be plaid and/or school colors – solid color.
- Girls can wear SOLID color sweats under jumpers (for outside recess or for walking over to Mass) or tights/leggings (black, navy blue) during cold weather.
- ***Boys & Girls - No inappropriate hair coloring (natural color only), styles, and/or designs in hair are allowed.***
- Girls in Middle School (Grades 6th, 7th & 8th) may carry and/or bring a small compact size purse to school.
- Smart devices (watches, glasses...etc) are prohibited in school.

Physical Education (PE) Uniform

Parents are expected to purchase an official P.E. uniform at the beginning of each school year through the school. School uniforms and school “spirit” wear are NOT appropriate for gym class. Gym shoes for P.E. Class must tie or have Velcro that can be tightened; they may be any color/design. No slip on gym shoes allowed for P.E. Class. **Students in Grades Kindergarten – 8th shall wear their gym uniform and gym shoes to school on their designated gym class day.** Appropriate sweatpants and athletic wear pants must be worn over the gym uniform to and from school during the months of November, December, January, February and March. The sweatpants are to be black.
 *2026-2027 school year PE sweatpants must be purchased through Tee Party Studio with school logo

Spirit Wear

On school spirit wear days, students may wear t-shirts and sweatshirts with the St. Michael Catholic School name or logo printed on them. These items can be purchased through the school. Jeans may be worn with all spirit-wear. Jeans with rips, holes or patches (or skin tight) are not permitted. Gym uniforms are not to be used as spirit-wear. Students may wear sweatpants, athletic wear pants, basketball shorts and athletic wear shorts. Yoga Pants or leggings of any type are NOT allowed.

Out of Uniform Attire

On out-of-uniform days, students may wear casual or dress clothes, such as jeans, dockers, capris, t-shirt, skirts or dresses. Students may wear sweatpants, athletic wear pants, basketball shorts and athletic wear shorts. **Sleeveless shirts, tear away pants, leggings and yoga pants are not allowed.** Socks are required. Shirts and blouses must be long enough to be tucked into pants/slacks. Blouses or shirts that are designed to reveal the lower abdomen/or low on the chest are not acceptable. No hats are to be worn inside the buildings. Length of skirts/dresses must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee. No jeans with rips, holes, patches or skin tight.

Personal Belongings

Students should have all their personal possessions marked with their names. Items of value should remain at home. All electronic devices and toys are not the responsibility of the school and are not allowed on school property during school hours. If a student is found with any type of electronic device/toys or in the student's locker/book bag/gym bag, and/or purse during school hours, the items will be confiscated and held in the school office.

Cell Phones

Students are not permitted to have a cell phone on school property during school hours. If a student needs to place a call in case of an emergency, they must make the call from the school office phone. Students may not use other phones in the school building without permission from the office. If a student is found with a cell phone during school hours, the item will be confiscated.

Spiritual Formation

Liturgy

Students of St. Michael Catholic School attend Mass on Wednesday at 8:55 a.m. unless a major feast or a holy day of obligation is celebrated on another day. In addition to attending Mass, students in grades 5th through 8th can volunteer to serve school masses, Confirmation, First Communion, Sunday Masses, funerals, weddings and other occasions. Students in grades K through 8th are Lectors at all school Masses. Students Council also participate in Morning Prayer on a daily basis.

Students can volunteer to be a singer, cantor, or instrumentalist for school liturgies and services. Volunteers include students from all grade levels.

Religious Education

Religious Education occurs in cooperation with the Director of Faith Formation. A baptismal certificate will be kept on file. Only students who are baptized Roman Catholic will receive their First Communion and Confirmation. Parents wanting their child baptized should contact the Parish Office at (219) 322-4505.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is received in 2nd Grade.
The Sacrament of First Communion is received in 3rd Grade.
The Sacrament of Confirmation is received in 8th Grade.

All children regardless of religious beliefs and opinions, will participate in religious education and formation.

Health Policies

Accidents

If an accident occurs on parish property, parents must report the incident to the school office within 24 hours. Accidents of any nature, which may require completion of insurance forms, must be reported to the school office as soon as possible. Forms must be completed within 2 months of incident. Parents are to submit initial claims to their personal insurance agency.

The school office keeps a log of students sent to the Nurse/Office. Authorized medications administered to students are also logged. Calls to parents regarding student conditions are logged.

Allergies

Parents of students with specific allergies or conditions requiring medication must supply the school office with this medication and the necessary forms completed and signed by the parent and/or the physician at the beginning of each school year. This medication must be picked up by the parent at the end of the school year.

Teachers will be informed by the school office of these allergies. In regards to ingested allergies the H.S.A., staff members, lunch room hostess/Volunteers will be informed.

Students are not allowed to share lunches or snacks from home.

Communicable Diseases

If a student is sent to school with a Communicable Disease (as listed in The Indiana State Department of Health Guide), the school is bound to follow the policy of this Guide. A medical note from the doctor releasing the student to attend school is required.

Head Lice

If a parent discovers that their child (children) has head lice, they should treat their child and follow the procedure to free their home of infestation. In the best interest of the school, parents are strongly encouraged to notify the school of any case of lice in the family home. The school will communicate through email to the school body that a case of lice has been brought to our attention and encourage families to do a thorough lice check of all family members. Students should not return to school with live head lice or nits in hair.

Illness

If a student is sent to school while contagious, with a fever, vomiting or complaining of illness, the student will be removed from class and the parents will be notified to pick up their student. Students must be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication before returning to school. Students who vomit at night, in the morning prior to school, must be **free of vomiting for 24 hours** before returning to school. If a student vomits in school, during the school day, they must leave for the day.

- If a student has “pink eye”, they may return to school with a doctor’s note stating the student is not contagious.
- Students diagnosed with ‘hands, foot, mouth’, and other highly contagious childhood illnesses must leave school and can only return with a note from a doctor.
- After school activities cannot be attended by a student who was absent from school or who was sent home sick from school.

Immunizations

According to **Indiana Code 20-8.1-7-10.1**, students are not permitted to attend school beyond the first day without furnishing a written statement of immunizations. Students attending St. Michael Catholic School are required to have immunizations.

Objections to immunizations for medical or religious reasons must be filed each school year. As required by the Lake County Health Department; an Immunization Waiver and an Acknowledgement of Consequences of Incomplete Vaccination form must be completed along with a written request for exemption from parent/guardian. Students without immunizations must be removed from school if a communicable disease is present in the school. Return to school will be determined by the administration and the Lake County Health Department.

Medications

According to Administrative **Ruling 6001-Rule S-1 – Section II**, no medication will be given to any student without the written consent of the parent. Such consent shall be valid for no more than one school year (**Indiana Code 34-4-16.35**). A school administrator or school employee designated by the school administrator can administer medication in compliance with written permission of the student’s parent as long as proper authorization forms are on file. (**Indiana Code 25-23**). School employees may not administer injectable medication without a written note from a health care provider stating that the employee is trained. Procedures for administering medications or treatments such as inhalers, bee sting kits, etc. will be determined on an individual basis, based on the health notes (prescriptions) from the student’s physician or nurse practitioner are required.

Specific medication policies are as follows:

- All medications, prescription and OTC must be in the original container and brought to the office by the parent with completed forms signed by the physician and/or parent. (Note: this includes cough drops)

- Students are not allowed to carry any medication (prescription or OTC) on their person or store medication in their locker or desk.
- Certain situations may allow for a child to carry their medication on their person. I.e. inhalers; a form must be completed by physician. Complete written instructions must accompany all medications.
- The school cannot send medications back and forth with the student. Therefore, parents should bring only enough medication for the doses that need to be given while the child is in school and keep the rest at home.
- For each prescription medication, a Parent and Physician Medical Form must be submitted to the office.
- Students requiring an EpiPen for allergies must sign a waiver releasing the school and staff of responsibility.

Suicide

If a student comes to school and expresses the attempt of suicide, the following steps will be followed:

- Never leave a student alone
- Teacher is to notify principal
- Principal will contact parent
- Student will remain with principal/teacher
- Parents will leave with student
- Student must have a doctor's note stating that return to school is allowed and best for the student's mental health
- Student may be asked to seek an evaluation before returning into the building

If a student comes to school and attempts suicide on school premises, the following steps will be followed:

- All of the above steps will be followed
- School will be placed in a Code Red (lock down) to prevent danger or trauma to other students
- Principal will provide information necessary to emergency responders

School Services

Special Services

Special services are provided by Lake Central School Corporation, Catholic Family Services, and AAP Mental Health Resource Counseling. Speech, Vision, and Hearing testing are provided. Along with consultation (evaluation) for learning disability.

Extracurricular Activities

Service Hours

Service hours provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their faith. Students in Grades 5-8 are required to perform service hours. All hours must be completed by May 1st or there will be a charge of Ten Dollars (**\$10.00**) per hour. The amount of service hours required per grade is:

- Grade 5 = 5 hours
- Grade 6 = 6 hours
- Grade 7 = 7 hours
- Grade 8 = 8-10 hours * Service hours are required for Confirmation.

Activities that may be considered for service hours include:

- Related parish/school activities
- H.S.A. activities
- Civic/community activities
- Nursing home or soup kitchens
- County parks
- Public Library
- Babysitting for non-siblings
- Cutting grass, raking leaves, shoveling snow for non-family members

It is the student's responsibility to complete the Service Hour Form and make sure the chairperson of the event signs the form. Forms can be obtained through RenWeb (Facts), school website and school office.

Library

School library books are checked out for one week and may be renewed.

If more time is needed, students may renew the book for an additional one week. Students having a late book will not be allowed to check out any other books until they return the late book. If the book should be lost or damaged, the student is responsible to pay the cost of replacing the book. Our Librarian will provide the student with the cost of replacement.

Sports

The St. Michael Catholic School sports program collaborates with the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) of the Diocese of Gary. The athletic director issues a set of rules and policies to each student who is participating in sports. Both students and parents must sign these policies indicating their intent to comply. The eligibility standards for participating in sports at St. Michael Catholic School are determined by the School Sports Advisory Committee.

General Eligibility

Students may begin participating in sports when they reach the 4th grade.

Participation in St. Michael Catholic School's sports program is open to enrolled students of St. Michael School. Students from our Faith Formation Program may be asked to join a team if there is a need to fill a roster. Students not participating in gym class may not participate in games or sports activity.

Students absent from school after 11:00 a.m. will not be allowed to participate in any practices or games that same day. A doctor's note must accompany a student to be excused. A doctor's note will allow for practice and to play in a game.

Students absent/or leave early from school on a Friday, will not be able to participate in a Friday and Saturday game. Students returning from a vacation must attend at least one practice prior to a game.

- The Athletic Director is kept informed of an athlete's early dismissal, absence, and doctor's notes.

Financial Eligibility

Eligibility is repealed if the student's tuition payments are not kept current as outlined in the section of the handbook that addresses tuition payments.

Academic Eligibility (Diocesan Policy)

- Student athletes are required to have at least a "C" average and can have only one "D" and no "F's" in any subject.
- Conduct/effort grades must be a "3" or higher in all subjects.
- Any student receiving more than one "D" or an "F" on their report card will have a two-week suspension from practice and games in order to raise their grade. After two weeks, a progress report will be generated for reevaluation. An athlete will have a total of four (4) weeks to bring up a grade before being dismissed from a team.
- Students, parents, athletic director, and coaches will be notified when the student is eligible.
- An ineligible athlete may not dress in a St. Michael Catholic School team uniform, but may at the discretion of the parent, coach, and athletic director, attend competition and sit with the team.
- Students must abide by all CYO rules.
- The administration of St. Michael Catholic School may make changes to their Sports Policy when it deems necessary.

Sports Physicals

Students are required to have an annual sports physical before participating in any sport. CYO issues the forms for the physical and maintains them in their office. These forms are not the property of St. Michael Catholic School.

The pastor/principal (in collaboration with the CYO Office and the Diocese of Gary) has the right to change (and enforce) any handbook policy, rule, regulation and/or guideline as he/she deems necessary.

Appendix A

Guidelines for Implementation of Safe Environment Programs (SEP)

The following information is presented to assist dioceses in the implementation of “Safe Environment Programs”.

What are the necessary elements of a “Safe Environment Program”?

A safe environment program begins with a “code of conduct” for all adults who work with youth on a regular basis. A “code of conduct” establishes acceptable behavior that is legal, professional and responsible and it must include standards of conduct with regard to sexual abuse and harassment. Written copies are to be provided to each employee/volunteer who must acknowledge in writing that they understand and must abide by it.

A “safe environment program” requires **training** of parents, ministers, educators, church personnel, volunteers and others regularly involved with minors as to the issue of abuse of children, to include sexual abuse.

Training programs for adults should include the following:

- What **constitutes** child abuse, **including** sexual abuse?
- What actions, procedures and policies are used to **prevent** child abuse in any form?
- How does an adult **identify** instances of abuse of a child, including sexual abuse?
 - What signs should an adult look for in a child who may be abused?
 - What signs should an adult look for in a person who may be abusing a child in any way?
- What **actions** should an adult take when they believe that child abuse, to include sexual abuse, may be occurring?
- What are the laws and policies regarding the **reporting** of abuse, to include sexual abuse, of children?

Training programs for **children and young people** should include age appropriate materials pertaining to personal safety. This includes information about improper touching and relationships. Children are not expected to be fully knowledgeable about child abuse or of the laws governing care of children but they need to know when they should seek assistance from a trusted adult.

Should the diocese have codes of conduct for minors?

Codes of conduct are recommended for students as well as your employees and volunteers. Children in your schools should adhere to standards of behavior that include respect for their fellow classmates, teachers and volunteers. It is important to remember that while child abuse is usually committed by an adult, children and young people may be offenders.

Who must be included in “safe environment programs”?

Training relating to prevention, identification, and response and reporting is to be provided to ministers, educators, parents, volunteers, church personnel and others who have regular contact with youth.

How do we ensure that parents receive this training?

It may be difficult to ensure all parents in a parish are adequately informed about this issue of child abuse. To reach as many parents as possible, attempts should be made to provide various types of instruction. Multiple delivery methods could include formal training sessions led by experienced child-safety professionals, independent reading materials, videos, or information posted on the diocesan website.

Do children in our parish religious education classes receive the same training as our students in Catholic schools?

Children in parish religious education programs should receive the same basic information as those who attend Catholic schools. Some programs may have to be modified for parish religious education programs due to time constraints.

What types of “safe environment programs” are available?

In addition to those offered by public and private social service agencies and schools, there are a variety of “safe environment programs” available commercially. The National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministers, Washington, DC (www.nfcym.org) is an excellent resource regarding codes of conduct for adults and youth.

Can a diocese create its own “safe environment program”?

A diocese can create its own “safe environment program” as long as it includes the information outlined above and reaches the pertinent audiences.

How long should “safe environment programs” last?

Due to the dynamic nature of parish life and personnel turnover, “safe environment programs” must be incorporated into the long-term mission of dioceses.

Are new employees required to become part of “safe environment” programs?

New employees must receive “safe environment training” and adhere to diocesan codes of conduct.

Can a diocese change “safe environment programs”?

A diocese can change “safe environment programs” as long as the new program includes the information outlined above and reaches the pertinent audiences.

How do dioceses evaluate the background of personnel who have regular contact with minors?

Background investigations of personnel who have regular contact with minors must be conducted. Such investigations are best conducted by a reputable professional agency, law enforcement or social service agency, if available in your area. Background investigations should include criminal history checks of employees/volunteers and, if lawful in your state, the employee/volunteer should be asked if they have ever been accused of or investigated for an act of abuse or harassment. References must be checked.

Who evaluates the results of the background investigation and determines if the individual is suitable for work with children?

Supervisory personnel within your diocese can evaluate the results of the background investigation. It is preferable that this individual have experience in human resource management.

Saint Michael Catholic School

Wellness Policy

Saint Michael Catholic School is committed to providing an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity that promotes a healthy student.

- **Parents, teachers, and the food service professionals, will be engaged in monitoring and reviewing our wellness policy.**
- **Students in grades K-8 will have opportunities to be physically active on a regular basis through physical education classes and organized sports.**
- **Lunch programs shall meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.**
- **Students will be provided a clean, safe and pleasant dining area.**
- **School will provide nutritional, educational, and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity.**
- **Students are not allowed to bring in fast food (Jimmy John's, Subway, McDonald's...etc)**

School Wellness Administrative Regulations

We are committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and development of lifelong wellness practices. To this end, the following will be implemented:

School Meals

Meals are provided through “Just a Dash” catering company. Meals are purchased in advance. There is no day of option.

If a student forgets their lunch a phone call will be made home to provide a lunch for their student.

Breakfast

St. Michael School does not offer breakfast in the morning. We encourage that all children have breakfast at home to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn.

Free and Reduced Meals

We will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to and prevent overt identification of students who are eligible for free and reduced price school meals.

Meal Times and Scheduling

- Students will have adequate time to eat their lunches
- Students will have access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snack

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

We discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack time due to food allergies and sensitivity.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day should make a positive impact on a child's diet and health. Emphasis should be placed on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snack, and water as the primary beverages.

Fast Food

No outside food may be brought into the cafeteria except those packed AS A LUNCH FROM HOME. Please follow the state guidelines for healthy meals and snacking. Students are not to bring soft drinks, sports drinks, caffeinated beverages or foods high in sugar and fats to school. Parents may NOT bring in fast food and high glycemic foods to the school cafeteria during lunch. (Jimmy John's, Subway, McDonald's...etc) Students who do have fast food will have to eat in the front office.

Birthday Treats

Due to food allergies and sensitivity to snacks, treats, and/or food; St. Michael Catholic School has created a guideline for Birthday Treats which need to be followed. .

- No freezer or refrigerator treats allowed.
- Low calorie pre-packaged items may be distributed.
- No homemade (baked goods) may be distributed.
- Non-edible items are encouraged: pencils, erasers, stickers, or a donation of a classroom book
- St. Michael Catholic School can no longer allow donuts, cupcakes, and/or bagels with cream cheese.
- Items which do not follow these guidelines will be returned at the end of the school day.
- **Birthday treats must be store bought and all individually packaged.**

Daily Recess

All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which students are encouraged to have moderate to vigorous physical activity. A doctor's note is required to be excused from outdoor recess.

The Pastor/Principal has the right to change (and enforce) any handbook policy, rule, regulation and/or guideline as he/she deems necessary.