

**St. John Catholic School**

**A Faith-Filled Future**

**Middle School Student Handbook  
2023-2024**



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# **St. John School Mission Statement, Philosophy, and Schoolwide Learning Expectations, 2023-2024**

## **Mission Statement**

*St. John School is a welcoming Catholic community, committed to celebrating diversity and inspiring moral development, academic excellence, and the courage to act for the common good.*

## **School Philosophy**

**St. John School is committed to:**

### **Providing an excellent Catholic education based on:**

- Serving the mission of the Church
- Curriculum and instruction informed by standards that emphasize critical thinking and moral discernment
- Fostering a love of learning through engaging academic and faith-based content, social/emotional learning, and co-curricular programs
- Affirming that all God's children are created in His image
- Practices that promote and nurture physical, emotional and social well-being while developing empathy for others

### **Keeping the school accessible to all by:**

- Welcoming all families who value Catholic education
- Providing assistance for families with financial need through Fair Share
- Supporting students with diverse needs
- Planning for long-term school and professional improvement

### **Empowering our children for missionary discipleship by:**

- Serving the marginalized in society and celebrating the diversity of our school, city-wide, and global communities
- Inviting active involvement in the mission and ministries of the parish and school
- Offering leadership opportunities
- Promoting social responsibility and environmental stewardship

## **Schoolwide Learning Expectations**

### **We are Christ-Centered People Who:**

- Pray with intention and reverence
- Know and live out the teachings of the Catholic Church
- Participate actively in liturgy and faith traditions
- Demonstrate love for our neighbors

### **We are Active Learners Who:**

- Meet or exceed National and Archdiocesan academic standards
- Share ideas clearly, creatively and effectively
- Think critically and solve problems
- Work independently and collaboratively

### **We are Disciples of Christ Who:**

- Embody Gospel values, Catholic social teachings, and the mission of the Church
- Value *all* of God's children
- Serve those in need
- Act as stewards of our natural environment
- Commit to a healthy body, mind, and spirit



### **Faculty**

Mrs. Hazel Brumback	Grade Six
Ms. Margaret Sullivan	Grade Six
Ms. Gwynedd Rzegocki	Grade Seven
Mr. Sven Tice	Grade Seven
Mrs. Mollie Overa	Grades Seven, Eight and Student Support
Mrs. Abby Mansfield	Grade Eight
Mr. Stephen Bretz	Grade Eight
Mrs. Kyoungmi (Kay) Jang	Art
Mrs. Meghan Villanueva	Music
Mr. Brent Stinebrickner	Math and Physical Education
Mr. Kevin Sylvester	Physical Education
Señora Blanca DenAdel	Spanish
Mrs. Kerri McCarthy	Reading Specialist
Mrs. Sarah Olsen	Math Specialist
Ms. Chloe Shaw	Counselor

### **Administration**

Fr. Crispin Okoth	Pastor
Ms. Bernadette O'Leary	Principal
Mr. Paul Kelley	Assistant Principal
Mrs. Jonna Skokan	Director of Development/Admissions
Mrs. Diane Crockett	Business Manager
Mrs. Andrea Marquez	Fundraiser Administrator
Mrs. Frances Quevedo	Administrative Assistant
Ms. Di Tran	Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Mary VandePutte	Development Assistant



September 2023

Dear Middle School Students,

Welcome to the Middle School Handbook. As you prepare to set out this year, read this handbook carefully. The Middle School teachers prepared this Handbook because they are familiar with all the best practices and procedures to help you reach your destination. You are members of a community that lives as Jesus did. Our teachings and actions are based on Gospel values. Administrators and teachers are committed to ensuring that you use your mind, body and spirit to fulfill the mission of the school, achieve the Schoolwide Learning Expectations, and successfully graduate.

You are a valuable member of this community; remember to *"Be alert, stand firm in the faith. Be brave, be strong. Do all your work in love."* May God bless you.

God Bless,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bernadette O'Leary".

Bernadette O'Leary  
Principal



September 2023

Dear Middle School Students,

As we embark on a new academic year, we pause to thank God for the health and safety of our family, friends and community. This year's school theme reminds us to *"Be alert, stand firm in the faith. Be brave, be strong. Do all your work in love."* As Catholics we commit to sharing our love for the betterment of the community and the common good. The goal of Middle School is to provide, both new and returning students, a structured environment committed to fostering spiritual and academic growth in any given situation. I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities that are available to you this year.

The following manual is a guide for you and your families to consult during the academic year. It contains valuable academic and procedural information. Your teachers and administrators ask you to consult this manual regularly and familiarize yourself with the expectations of your academic and faith community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Señor Pablo", is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Señor Pablo  
Assistant Principal

## **St. John School Expectations**

Be kind and respectful.  
Travel quietly and safely.  
Do nothing to interrupt learning.  
Be prepared to learn.  
Be proud of your school.

Middle School students and families, along with the rest of our community, are expected to abide by the guidelines and rules laid out in the [Family Handbook](#). The Family Handbook provides a comprehensive explanation of Archdiocesan and school policies that govern St. John School. Middle School students, as young adults and student-leaders of St. John, have additional expectations, which are highlighted in the Middle School Handbook.

If you are ever unsure of what you should do given any situation, look to the school's mission to help you make the right decision: are you being inclusive; are your actions moral and just; are you striving for academic excellence; are you acting for the common good. At St. John, our mission permeates the School Wide Learning Expectations, culture and community. We can always look to our mission to guide our actions.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES**

At St. John School, every student has the right to a safe and enriching environment. St. John is committed to each student's success in learning in a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence and bullying. Our school works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

## **COVID-19 GUIDELINES**

An integral part of the school mission is the courage to act for the common good, and this is clearly demonstrated in our communal effort of ensuring a safe, healthy, and robust learning environment for our students, faculty and staff. Everyone in our community has the responsibility to help keep our community safe and healthy by adhering to the following guidelines. For information regarding the school's COVID-19 guidelines, refer to St. John's [COVID Response page](#). For additional information about COVID-19 guidance, see resources from the [Department of Health – Seattle & King County](#) and the [Center for Disease Control](#).

### **Healthy Hygiene Habits**

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use hand sanitizer. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



## **Illness**

Do not come to school if you are feeling sick. Parents are encouraged to get their child tested if they are showing any COVID-like symptoms. Report all absences to the school (illness, appointments, out of town).

## **Masks**

Masks are optional for students, staff and volunteers. However, there may be situations when the use of a well-fitting mask will be temporarily recommended, so always have a clean mask in your backpack.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

At St. John, academic excellence is not an end product of grades or test scores. It is the belief that every student has the capacity to learn and the opportunity to enjoy the experience of scholarship. The faculty and staff at St. John take a wholistic approach to academic excellence: it is engagement with the student through lectures, discussions, homework, and projects. It is mutual respect among faculty, staff, students and families. The following policies are integral to a positive educational environment.

### **Academic Integrity**

Teachers expect students to present their own work. Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in a failing grade and a detention. This includes copying homework, classwork, test answers, talking during a test or quiz, allowing someone to copy your work, and trying to pass off someone else's work as your own. If you feel the need to cheat, speak with a teacher about getting help with the material. St. John teachers want you to succeed and will help you do so, if you let them.

### **Arrival and Dismissal**

Middle School students are not allowed in the building before 8:15am or after 3:05pm unless they have made specific arrangements with a teacher or administration. Unless students remain after school for a supervised activity, they are expected to leave school grounds immediately after dismissal.

- **Tardiness:** Students must be seated and on-task by 8:20am. Students who are tardy three times within one trimester may be assigned detention. Tardiness is reported on permanent records. Three tardies equal ½-day absence.

### **Assignment Notebook**

Students are required to use the assignment notebook. Teachers review these notebooks, and students must take them to every class daily.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are designed to augment and provide opportunity for learning. All students are expected to participate in field trips unless specifically released by the administration. Field trips are a privilege afforded to the student. Individuals can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements or are on probation plans.

An optional trip to Washington, D.C., if offered, takes place during grade eight. It is an enrichment opportunity for those families interested.

### **Grades/Promotion**

Students are promoted once a year in June. Promotion to the next level is based on the student having fulfilled the requirements of the current grade level.

A student may be required to repeat the work of a grade if, in the judgment of the administration and teachers, it would be to the student's educational advantage to repeat rather than be promoted to the next grade. When a student's academic performance indicates retention is a consideration, their parents must be advised of this situation at least three months prior to the end of the school year.

Generally, the following guidelines are in effect:

- A student receiving A's, B's, or C's in the assessment areas will be promoted to the next grade.
- A student receiving low assessments (D's or F's) in more than 20% of their rated areas in a trimester is in danger of being placed on **probation**. Probation requires notification of the parents in order to plan for improvement of the student's academic performance. Students on probation cannot be promoted until they have satisfactorily mastered the goals of this performance plan.
- A student on probation for any reason is in jeopardy of not attending field trips (Washington State History tour, Washington, DC, tour etc.).

Any request for review of an assessment must be initiated within one week of issuance through direct contact with the homeroom teacher.

### **Grading Scale**

A: 90-100%   B: 80-89%   C: 70-79%   D: 60-69%   F: Below 59%

### **Homework**

The amount of homework per night usually falls within the range of 60 to 90 minutes. Failure to turn in missing work will negatively impact a student's evaluation and may result in disciplinary action. Students and families have the responsibility to monitor the grades online on [PowerSchool](#).

- **Missed Assignments Due to Absences:** It is the student's responsibility to communicate with teachers regarding any missed schoolwork during absences.

### **Retest**

Prior to retaking a test, students will be required to submit a retest plan (see Request to Retest form). Retests are scheduled after school on a case-by-case basis, and students are responsible for initiating and undertaking the retest process. Quizzes and small assessments are ineligible for retests, and students may retake a larger test only once.

## **CELL PHONES, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND TECHNOLOGY**

Cell phones, social media and technology are part of most people's daily lives. However, there are appropriate times for their usage. The following guidelines address cell phones, social media and technology at school.

### **Cell Phones**

Students may not access their cell phones during the course of the academic day; they may use cell phones after 3:05pm. Students and parents must review, sign, and submit the signed [Student/Parent Cell Phone Contract](#) at the beginning of each academic year. Only through this written request from the parent to the teacher and school administration may students bring cell phones to school. Cellular phones must be checked in to homeroom teachers each morning by 8:20am. Cell phone etiquette is essential to maintaining a successful academic environment.

### **Computer Use Expectations**

- Students may not visit offensive or inappropriate sites, chat rooms, or access email accounts at school or on school equipment.
- Hardware
  - Students may not gain unauthorized access to system programs or computer equipment.
  - Student may not use computers or iPads when the teacher is absent from the room. When a substitute teacher is present, no computers may be used at all.
  - Permission from the teacher is required before printing.
  - Computers and iPads may not be used for personal email messaging.
  - Food and drink are not allowed near computers.
  - Personal electronics may be connected to the school's Wi-Fi if an accommodation exists or with teacher consent.
  - Students may not use digital recording devices without administrative consent.
- Software
  - Students may not engage in any form of vandalism, such as maliciously attempting to destroy or harm another person's data or creating or uploading computer viruses.
  - Students may not make copies of software found on school computers.
  - Computer and iPad settings, preferences, or options may not be altered on any school computers.
  - Students may not share their password or attempt to learn another's password.
  - Students can only access their files and may not download or store any files on the hard drive of any school computer without teacher permission.

### **Social Media**

Participation in online social networks and user-driven sites may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's entries includes pictures without permission and/or defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, the parish, or members thereof. Privacy tools do not guarantee that messages and information intended solely for private use will not become public. Activities on social media should reflect an understanding that they may

become public even when they are intended to be private.

## **PERSONAL CONDUCT**

Whether you are new to Middle School or this is your last year, younger students look to you as, and faculty and staff expect you to be, good role models. Your actions matter. Your words matter. Your behavior matters. You are examples of Christ-Centered People, Active Learners and Empowered Disciples. Your conduct reflects upon you, your family, and your school. The following are expectations regarding your personal conduct.

### **Behavior Choices**

When a student's behavior, attitude and/or actions harm another person, the community or the reputation of the school, the student becomes subject to any or all of the following as determined at the discretion of the principal or assistant principal.

Consequences for behavior infractions range from the loss of a privilege to expulsion, depending on the infraction, choice, or behavior. See the Family Handbook for a comprehensive list of choices subject to disciplinary action, the possible consequences and additional information related to St. John School's discipline policy.

### **Bullying**

St. John Catholic School, as part of the greater Catholic Archdiocese, is committed to a positive and productive community environment free of bullying in any form including online harassment via email or social media. It is our policy to prohibit harassment, bullying, or intimidation of any kind. The school will promptly respond to allegations of harassment and bullying and investigate such matters in a professional and timely manner.

St. John Catholic School prohibits retaliation against any student, staff member, volunteer, and/or parent who has testified, assisted, or participated in the investigation report. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or adverse pressure.

### **Care of School Property and Personal Property**

Care of school property portrays pride and stewardship. Students are to take care of the school property that they use. Fines equal to repair or replacement cost are imposed for loss or damage to school property resulting from carelessness, negligence, accidents, or disregard for school regulations.

Students are to maintain their personal property used at school, as they are required to maintain school property.

### **Closed Campus**

Students may not leave the school premises without the written authorization of parents/guardians and the permission of the principal or assistant principal. Students must go directly to the school site for school-sponsored afterschool activities following dismissal at 3:05pm and may not leave campus until the appointed end time for the activity. Requests to be

excused during the day will be sent to the office. Students dismissed during the school day must be signed out at the office. A parent/guardian may request in advance and in writing that students in grades six, seven, and eight sign themselves out.

### **Dress Code**

The school uniform identifies one as a student of St. John Catholic School. The goal of the dress code is to maintain an atmosphere that reflects Catholic values and is conducive to academic pursuits.

The dress code is based on the values of personal respect and dignity. Adherence to the dress code helps encourage responsible behavior and promotes positive study habits. Parents are expected to understand and support these guidelines as well as help their children make good choices about appropriate attire and grooming. Periodic changes to the dress code take into account current trends. Should changes to the policy occur, parents will be informed. Refer to the Family Handbook for comprehensive information about the St. John Dress Code.

#### **Additional Guidelines:**

- Makeup and nail polish: very light makeup is permitted in grades 7 and 8. Polish must be clear.
- Jewelry: small stud earrings (single pair), a simple necklace, up to two cause bracelets, and a ring are the only jewelry permitted.
- Hairstyle: must be moderate and appropriate for school, which rules out extremes in style and color (non-natural hair color). Hair should be trim and clean, styled so as not to be in the student's eyes, and for boys not below the collar unless it conforms to cultural norms.
- Body markings: tattoos, if allowed by the family, must be covered while at school, in class, and at school sponsored events. Body marking with pen or ink are prohibited.

All school staff assist in monitoring student appearance. Parents of students not properly attired or groomed will be contacted and asked to bring appropriate attire to school, or the student may be dismissed to modify appearance.

### **Drugs, Alcohol, and Related Substances**

Possession and/or use by students of tobacco products, drugs, alcohol, or other illegal substances and the paraphernalia used to administer them are prohibited.

If a student possesses, transmits, uses, or is suspected of, or found with, or under the influence of drugs, alcohol, any illegal substances, and/or drug paraphernalia, the procedures described in the Family Handbook will be followed. The student may be expelled.

If school staff suspects that a student has consumed any harmful substance, the situation will be treated as a medical emergency. This means the appropriate first aid, including calling 911, if judgment indicates.

If staff members are satisfied that the student has not consumed any harmful substances, the

student will be retained in the office. In both of the above circumstances, any drugs, alcohol, etc. will be confiscated and held by the school pending a decision as to its disposition. Parents will be called and informed of the student's medical condition and asked to come to school to take the student home.

The student will be on suspension from school at least until a conference with the parents is arranged and held. The purpose of the conference will be:

- To decide the student's immediate future status as a student at St. John;
- To identify appropriate interventions to deal with the student's harmful involvement with any substance;
- To decide on future consequences for any similar behavior.

If school officials have reasonable cause to suspect that a student is harmfully involved with drugs, alcohol, or other illegal substances, administration will contact the student's parents and share the information that has led to this concern. In such circumstances, administration may ask the student's parents to have the student submit to a drug test and to share the results with the administrator as a condition of continued enrollment at St. John. Refusal or failure to comply with this request will be considered grounds for the student's expulsion from St. John School. If the results of the drug test are positive for any illegal substance, a conference, as outlined above, will be arranged.

### **Lunchroom Expectations**

Students are expected to practice their best table manners during lunch.

### **Medication at School**

Only trained and designated personnel will administer medications to students. We make no distinction between prescription, naturopathic and non-prescription medication in this regard. Students are not to keep medicine of any kind with them. Medications must come to the office in the original pharmacy container listing proper dosage. Neither the faculty nor the staff at St. John School will administer medication to students except in compliance with our policy. Forms for the authorization for administration of oral medication at school are available through the school office.

*Exception:* In situations where it is in the best interest of a student, such as a student with asthma, that they self-administer oral medication, a special authorization is required. Medication at School forms are available through the school office.

### **School Dances**

Seventh and eighth grade students from St. John are eligible to attend school dances and may receive invitations from designated North Seattle Catholic schools. Guests from uninvited schools are not permitted to attend St. John School dances. All standards outlined on permission slips must be followed.

### **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

At St. John School we recognize that middle school is a time when students begin to take on more responsibilities and to make increasingly important choices about their own behavior and academics. We know that children need guidance and experience to make wise choices. Students make mistakes, and we allow for that, encouraging them to LEARN from their mistakes. Students support the common good by allowing teachers to teach and respecting their own and others' right to learn.

## **Discipline Interventions**

### **Rewards:**

- Praise (daily)
- Positive affirmations communicated to family (as appropriate)
- Various other positive perks (throughout the year)
- The joy of learning in a constructive, positive, safe environment (each day of the school year)

### **If My Choices Detract from the Common Good:**

- Step One: Warning issued and documented.
- Step Two: Student will be asked to leave the room, fill out a Restorative Practices Behavior Reflection form and return when they are ready.
- Step Three: At a minimum, an after-school detention will be administered. Depending on the disruptive nature of the offense, the student may be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period.

**Severe Infractions:** Student will be sent immediately to the office and/or will be asked to call home. Further consequences such as in-school suspension, probation, out-of-school suspension and expulsion may be administered. (Refer to the Family Handbook for specific details.)

**Repeated Infractions:** At a minimum, an after-school detention will be administered, and a parent conference will occur. Further consequences such as in-school suspension, probation, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion may be administered.

**The expectation is that students demonstrate the courage to act for the common good.**



## Middle School Behavioral Expectations Agreement

The expectation is that students demonstrate the courage to act for the common good. Students, through cooperation, attentiveness, and behavior in class, will:

- Allow teachers to teach
- Respect their own and others' right to learn
- Behave in ways that support the best interests of the class, school and common good

### If My Choices Detract from the Common Good:

Step One:	Warning issued and documented.
Step Two:	Student will be asked to leave the room, fill out a conduct referral form (Restorative Practices Behavior Reflection), and return when they are ready, on their own.
Step Three:	At a minimum, an after-school detention will be administered. Depending on the disruptive nature of the offense, the student may be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period.
Repeated Infractions:	At a minimum, an after-school detention will be administered, and a parent conference will be requested. Further consequences such as in-school suspension, probation, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion may be administered.
Severe Infractions:	Student will be sent immediately to the office and/or will be asked to call home. Further consequences such as in-school suspension, probation, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion may be administered. (Refer to the Family Handbook for specific details.)

### Rewards:

Praise (daily)

Positive affirmations communicated to family (as appropriate)

Various other positive perks (throughout the year)

The joy of learning in a constructive, positive, safe environment (each day of the school year)

**STUDENT:** I have read this behavioral plan and understand it. I will honor it daily.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT(S):** My child has discussed the behavioral plan with me. I understand it and will support it.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**TEACHER:** I will be fair and consistent in administering the behavioral plan for St. John School.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT: KEEP THIS PLAN IN YOUR BINDER AT ALL TIMES**





## ***Restorative Practices Behavior Reflection Sheet***

### **What happened:**

*1. Briefly describe the incident that occurred (e.g., what choices did you make?)*

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### **Reasons for my choice:**

*1. How were you feeling?*

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*2. What were you thinking?*

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*3. What did you want?*

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*4. Is there anything going on in or outside of school (unrelated to this incident) that is impacting your behavior and/or performance at school?*

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**Consequences of my choice:**

*1. How are you feeling now?*

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*2. How did your behavior impact others?*

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*3. How were you impacted by your behavior?*

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**Making amends:**

*1. What are two ways you could fix this?*

1) 

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2) 

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*2. What will you do differently next time?*

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*3. How would this choice have a more positive outcome?*

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**Restorative actions taken by the student and staff:**

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff name: \_\_\_\_\_



## Request to Retest

*In the event a student does not show mastery of a concept on a summative assessment, a retest opportunity may be granted. Retests are scheduled after school on a case-by-case basis, and students are responsible for initiating and undertaking the retest process. Retests are only granted to students who earn a D or F but have shown effort.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the test you wish to retake: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous Score \_\_\_\_\_

## Reflect

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

## Action Plan

3 activities I will complete in order to improve my understanding of this concept

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

When you have completed the three activities above turn in this sheet with the following:

- Original test (if you have not already returned it)
- Evidence of you completing the above activities (work, parent signature...)

## Request

I request the opportunity to retest. I have worked hard to improve my understanding of this concept.

Student

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_