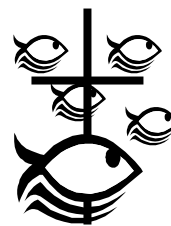


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# Parent Handbook 2007



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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>MISSION STATEMENT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ST. PATRICIA SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>6</b>
PASTOR.....	6
PRINCIPAL.....	6
FACULTY.....	6
<b>SCHOOL BOARD</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>ST. PATRICIA ATHLETIC COMMITTEE</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PARENTS ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>7</b>
Fundraising.....	7
Yearbook.....	7
<b>STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>STUDENT REGISTRATION</b>	<b>8</b>
ADMISSIONS.....	8
NEW STUDENT REGISTRATION.....	8
REGISTRATION OF CURRENT STUDENTS.....	8
ORGANIZATION DAY.....	9
School Tuition.....	9
Financial Aid.....	9
Lunch Program.....	9
Lunch Supervision Fee.....	9
Physical And Dental Examinations.....	9
School Calendar.....	9
School Supplies.....	9
Uniforms.....	9
<b>GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION</b>	<b>10</b>
SCHOOL HOURS (K-8).....	10
ATTENDANCE.....	10
ABSENCE.....	10
ARRIVAL.....	10
DISMISSAL.....	11
DISMISSAL PROCEDURE.....	11
DOCTOR VISITS.....	12
EMERGENCY DISMISSAL.....	13
EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.....	13
EXTENDED ABSENCES.....	13
EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM.....	13
ILLNESS OR INJURY DURING SCHOOL HOURS.....	14
LUNCH.....	14
PATROL.....	14
TARDINESS.....	14
THURSDAY BROWN ENVELOPE.....	14
UNIFORMS.....	15
Boys.....	15

Girls ..... 15

Warm Weather Options for Grades K-8 (Optional) ..... 15

Winter Uniform for Girls (Optional) ..... 15

Physical Education Uniform for Grades K-8 ..... 15

Shoes ..... 16

Hair ..... 16

Jewelry ..... 16

Make-up and Nail Polish, etc. .... 16

**SCHOOL OFFICE** ..... **17**

OFFICE HOURS..... 17

APPOINTMENTS AND CALLS TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE..... 17

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE ..... 17

COMMUNICATION ..... 17

EXTENDED TRAVEL..... 17

INSURANCE..... 17

LOST AND FOUND ..... 17

TRANSFERS ..... 18

VISITORS ..... 18

**LEGAL REMINDERS** ..... **18**

CHILD CUSTODY..... 18

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT..... 17

GOVERNMENT FORM FOR TRANSPORTATION..... 18

SEARCH AND SEIZURE..... 18

SEXUAL HARASSMENT REGULATIONS..... 19

STUDENT RECORDS ..... 19

**MEDICAL SAFETY AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION** ..... **20**

CHILD ABUSE ..... 20

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES ..... 20

EMERGENCY CARDS ..... 20

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING (check for accuracy) ..... 20

FIRE DRILLS ..... 20

MEDICATION ..... 20

PHYSICALS AND DENTAL EXAMS ..... 21

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS ..... 21

BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS, ROLLERBLADES ETC. .... 21

TORNADO DRILLS ..... 21

**ACADEMICS** ..... **22**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION..... 22

CURRICULUM..... 22

SPECIALS ..... 22

FIELD TRIPS..... 23

GRADING..... 23

GRADUATION POLICY..... 24

HOMEWORK ..... 24

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES..... 25

PROMOTION AND RETENTION ..... 25

STANDARDIZED TESTING ..... 25

T.A.T TEAM (Teacher Assistance Team) .....	26
<b>STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	<b>26</b>
CARE OF LIBRARY AND TEXTBOOKS .....	26
PERSONAL BELONGINGS .....	26
<b>STUDENT BEHAVIOR</b>	<b>26</b>
DETENTION .....	27
SUSPENSION and or EXPULSION.....	27
BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES.....	28
LUNCH CONDUCT .....	29
AMENDMENTS .....	29
<b>ST. PATRICIA SCHOOL PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>ST. PATRICIA SCHOOL JANUARY 2007</b>	<b>29</b>

## **PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK**

This handbook explains the general operation and policies of St. Patricia School based upon the teachings of the Catholic Church, the laws of the State of Illinois, and the directives of the Archdiocese of Chicago's Office of Catholic Schools. Statements are necessarily general, and the administration reserves the right to make specific amendments as circumstances arise. The school will attempt to keep parents informed of all changes as soon as possible. Unforeseen circumstances may necessitate an immediate change.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

St. Patricia School is called by God and the Catholic community to provide a quality Catholic Education for their students by:

- Providing a strong, religious program and a challenging academic environment that fosters the development of each child.
- Complementing the role of the family in nurturing a strong sense of self-worth in the child who then will be prepared to meet the challenges of the present and the future.
- Encouraging positive spiritual, moral, aesthetic, ethical and social sensibilities within the fabric of family, school, parish and community.

## **ST. PATRICIA SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

St. Patricia Catholic School is concerned with the development of the whole child, religious, moral, social, academic and physical. The goal is to create a quality Catholic educational community in which students see themselves as unique individuals receiving from and contributing to this community in preparation for their role as mature Catholic adults. In order to provide an environment conducive to the learning process, a partnership with the parents/guardians is welcomed and encouraged.

Together we model Gospel values with an emphasis on peace and justice that assures our students unique opportunities to reach the gift of their potential in response to their Baptismal call.

Students strive to achieve a love of God, a sense of Church and a realization of self-worth through active participation in the Liturgy, appreciation of Scriptures, a respect for others, and a basic understanding of global issues.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **PASTOR**

The Pastor is the primary spiritual leader of the parish. He is responsible for fostering, nurturing, guiding and coordinating the ministries of the parish. He delegates the administration of the school to the Principal, who administers the school in accordance with Archdiocesan policies and guidelines.

### **PRINCIPAL**

The Principal is the administrative official of the school and is responsible for its instructional program, organization, direction and supervision.

### **FACULTY**

The responsibilities of the educators of St. Patricia are as follows:

- To educate students academically in accordance with Catholic doctrine and moral teaching
- To teach and act in accordance with the philosophy, objectives and policies of the Archdiocese and of the School; to lead through example
- To further enhance their own religious and academic competence by means of workshops, courses and readings.

## **SCHOOL BOARD**

The School Board serves as an advisory council to the Pastor and Principal. The Board acts as a liaison between the school families, the parish and the community providing policy direction for the educational programs of St. Patricia School in accordance with the policies of the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Office of Catholic Schools. The Board assists the Pastor and Principal in establishing the annual budget, acting as a public relations and marketing arm of the school and its programs, and in promoting and supporting the implementation of local school policies.

The School Board meets monthly. Meetings, except for executive sessions, are open to the public. Minutes from the meetings are posted in the church and school.

A list of School Board members is published yearly in the school newsletter. Elections for new members are held each spring, with members elected for a three-year term. Board officers are chosen annually at the June meeting.

## **ST. PATRICIA ATHLETIC COMMITTEE**

The role of the St. Patricia Athletic Committee is to oversee and coordinate school affiliated sport activities for the children of St. Patricia Parish under one governing body in order to facilitate organization, supervision and financing. The groups encompassed by this supervision shall include all existing teams for boys and girls. The Athletic Board meets monthly during the school year.

The Athletic Committee is an extension of the school and is subject to the authority of

the Pastor and Principal. Minutes are posted in the church and school.

## **PARENTS ORGANIZATION**

The Parents Club is created to foster good will and communication among students, parents, faculty and parishioners. Organizational goals include the following: Increase opportunities for parents and teachers to work together for the good of the child, raise funds via parent sponsored events, to publicize special events/activities and to increase opportunities for social interaction within our school community.

The Parents' Club is comprised of an Executive Board, Standing and Special Committees and the Association (i.e. all school families). Each spring, a nominating committee seeks nominations for the Executive Board positions to be elected by the parent body. Standing and Special committee chairpersons are appointed by the Executive Board. All parents are welcome to attend and observe the Parents Club meetings. Minutes from the meetings are posted in the church and school.

### **Fundraising**

Fundraising needs and goals are established yearly. To keep tuition affordable, the Parents' Club assumes responsibility for an established portion of the school's operating budget established by the School Board and the Pastor. In addition, the Parents' Club sponsors special projects to enhance the students, the curriculum and the school environment. Fundraising efforts are dependent upon volunteer time, talent and financial support in order to achieve these goals.

### **Yearbook**

The yearbook chronicles the school's activities throughout the year. It is coordinated and produced by the Parents Club.

## **STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

St. Patricia School is operated under the auspices of the Catholic Bishop of Chicago, a corporation sole, in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

St. Patricia School admits students of any sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin and are accorded the rights, privileges, programs and activities available to all students. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, school administered programs, athletic or other activities.

## **STUDENT REGISTRATION**

### **ADMISSIONS**

St. Patricia School accepts children in accordance with Archdiocese of Chicago Guidelines and Local Admission Policy.

Admission priority is as follows:

- Siblings of students currently attending St. Patricia School (K-8)
- Families registered and actively supporting St. Patricia Parish
- Families moving into the St. Patricia Parish and transferring from another Catholic School
- Families not registered with the St. Patricia Parish but living in a parish without a school
- Families who wish to transfer their child(ren) from a public school
- Families who are of another faith

Students will be expected to participate in Religious Education classes and prayer services and liturgies.

### **NEW STUDENT REGISTRATION**

Open House is held during *Catholic Schools Week*. At that time applications are made available to interested families to fill vacancies for the upcoming school year. All completed applications accompanied by the registration fee and returned within the two-week registration period are considered equally with all other applications in their category. An application received after the deadline is processed separately as space permits. Waiting lists will be formed if more applications are received than space available. Kindergarten students must be 5 years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. Grade 1 students must be 6 years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

Prior to Acceptance into St. Patricia parents/guardians of prospective students will need to present some or all of the following:

Birth and baptismal certificate

Social Security number for each student and proof of residence

#### **In addition transfer students will need:**

- A current valid report card and recent testing results
- Current medical and dental forms (K, 1, and 5 students)
- To be tested to determine proper placement
- Registration fee

Students are accepted on probation for the first quarter.

### **RE-REGISTRATION OF CURRENT STUDENTS**

Families with children currently in the school are sent registration materials in January. Returning students are given first priority for registration provided completed materials along with the re-registration fee are returned by the deadline. New siblings may register at the same time.

The Archdiocese requires that we submit an annual school budget for the following year. Our goal in preparing the budget is to gather the most accurate enrollment data possible. Families are required to submit a \$200 non-refundable (per family) re-registration fee. This commitment is essential in calculating next year's tuition and class sizes.

This payment indicates your commitment to return to St. Patricia. The money is credited towards your next years' tuition. This is not an additional fee.

At Open House, applications are accepted from new families to fill vacancies. However, admission priority of new students (siblings or otherwise) is determined by their admission category.

### **ORGANIZATION DAY**

Organization Day is held just prior to the beginning of the school year. At that time, families pay fees, purchase materials, update records, and collect information.

#### ***School Tuition***

Each family completes a Tuition Agreement Form at the time of registration selecting a payment schedule (full payment, semi-annual, or ten monthly payments) and a tuition rate (Parishioner or Non-parishioner). The first tuition payment is due on Organization Day. Credit card, check, money order, or cash can be used to pay for tuition.

#### ***Financial Aid***

A family wishing financial consideration is required to contact the Principal or Pastor.

#### ***Lunch Program***

The Archdiocese of Chicago Hot Lunch Program is available to our school families. Forms are distributed on Organization Day.

#### ***Lunch Supervision Fee***

Families pay a lunch supervision fee based on the number of students they have at St. Patricia. This fee covers the cost of supervision for the classrooms and playground. Parents may also choose to be a paid classroom lunch supervisor.

#### ***Physical And Dental Examinations***

Forms, available in the office, must be updated and completed by October 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### ***School Calendar***

A tentative school calendar is available for parents.

#### ***School Supplies***

Some school supplies such as school pencil cases, assignment notebooks, and folders are available for purchase. These supplies may also be purchased in the office throughout the school year.

#### ***Uniforms***

New physical education uniforms may be purchased.

## **GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION**

### **SCHOOL HOURS (K-8)**

- 7:45 First Bell - Children proceed to homeroom
- 7:55 Tardy Bell, Pledge of Allegiance, Peace Pledge, Prayer of the Day, Birthday recognition, General announcements
- 11:00 Lunch period for Grades K-4
- 11:35 Lunch period for Grades 5-8
- 2:05 Bus departures
- 2:15 Car departures
- 2:25 Walkers and Extended Day

### **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance and punctuality are important. The development and reinforcement of this responsibility is important to the student's growth. Although regular attendance is important, it is a disservice to all children in the class if he/she is sent to school ill.

### **ABSENCE**

In case of absence, a parent is expected to phone the school office by 8:30 of the morning of the absence. The school phone number is 598-8200. It is the student's responsibility to follow their teacher's guidelines regarding make-up work. A student is requested to present a written note to his/her homeroom teacher indicating the date(s) of absence, the specific reason for the absence and the signature of the parent/guardian.

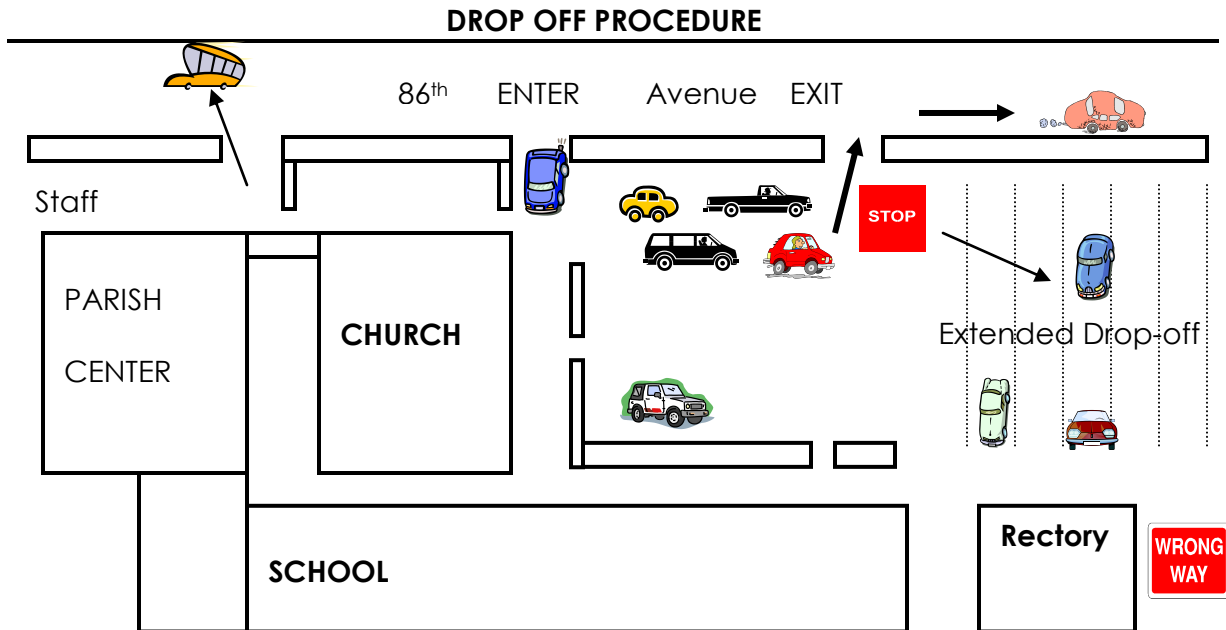
### **ARRIVAL**

Since adult supervision of students before regular school hours is not provided, children should not arrive before 7:45 A.M.

Students are to be dropped off in the morning in the school parking (see the graphic). Vehicles will be directed southward into two lanes of traffic. The adult Traffic Coordinator and the Safety Patrol will signal when it is safe for students to walk toward the school building. Vehicles are to move slowly and carefully through the traffic lanes. Vehicles should exit the parking lot and turn right onto 86th avenue to avoid traffic congestion. Students are not to be dropped off in the Parish Center parking lot or street.

Parents who need to enter the school building are requested to continue through the drop-off line and park in front of the rectory. To ensure the safety of students walking across the parking lot, no vehicles may enter the parking lot by the rectory drive.

District buses drop off students in front of the Parish Center. The spots in front of the Parish Center are reserved for staff.



### DISMISSAL

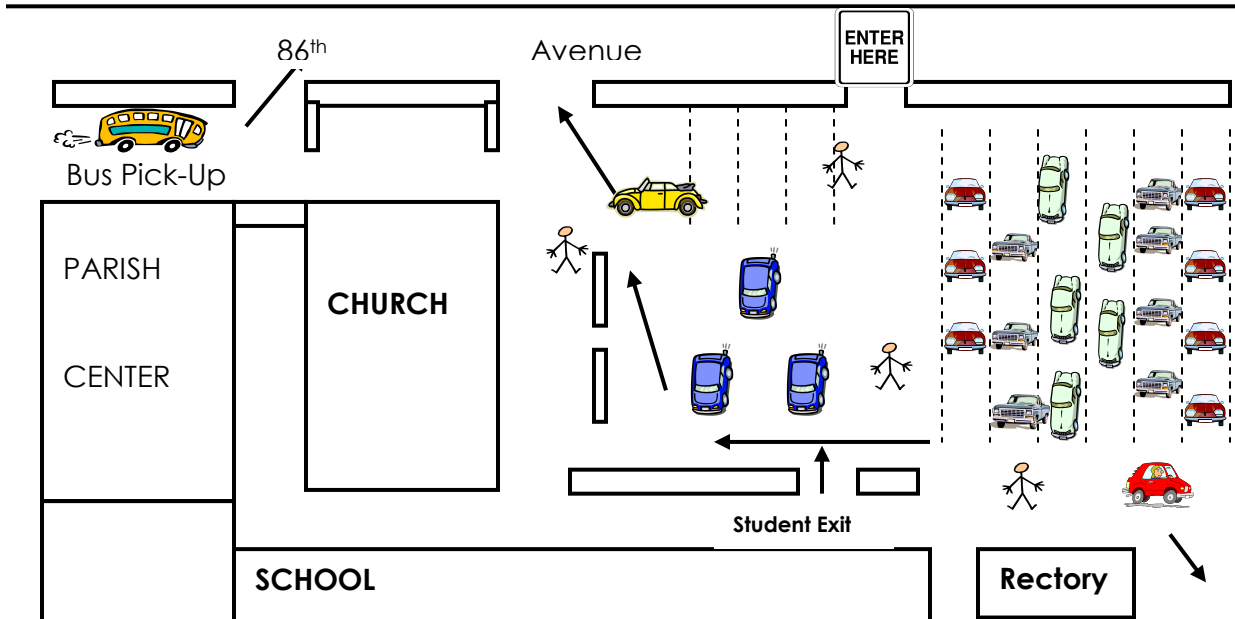
All vehicles are to enter the lot and park facing west toward the rectory. Drivers are to pull directly up to the vehicle in front of them. Due to the large number of students departing by car, it is important that all vehicles park between the yellow lines. Dismissal begins at 2:05 P.M. for bus riders. Car riders are dismissed at 2:15 P.M. When everyone is in a vehicle the exit process will begin.

*FOR REASONS OF STUDENT SAFETY:* No student will be allowed to enter the parking lot when vehicles are moving. No vehicle will be allowed to move until all students/drivers are in their vehicles.

Follow the directions of the Patrol Person and teachers. If your child(ren) is/are not in the vehicle when it is your turn to exit, you move up and park in the lot facing the school. After all vehicles have left the parking lot, staff members escort the remaining students to the main entrance to await pick-up by a caregiver. Students not picked up are walked down to Extended Care Program.

Students are not to enter vehicles parked on 86th avenue, in front of the Parish Center, or by the Extended Day Program doors. Cooperation is essential to the safety of all of our children.

## DISMISSAL PROCEDURE NORTH



Please inform the school office of any conditions, which would necessitate an early dismissal or deviation from the established procedures. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform those transporting your student(s) of the above-stated procedures.

Students walking home are dismissed after the cars have left the main parking lot, usually at 2:25 P.M. All bicycle riders must walk their bicycles until they have reached the front of the church or the southern end of the school building.

Supervision *is not* provided after regular school hours unless the child is staying for: the Extended Day Program, a certain teacher or an extra-curricular activity. All other students should leave the school grounds immediately after regular school hours.

Students not picked up by 2:30 will be sent to the Extended Day Program facility and the appropriate charge will be made to the parent/guardian. The entrance to the Extended Day Program can be found on the north side of the school building on the lower level. Usually teachers will not detain students without parents being notified.

### DOCTOR VISITS

When the student must visit a doctor/dentist during the school hours, the student shall present a note to his/her homeroom teacher stating the time the student will be picked up, the time of the appointment and when the student may be expected to return. Whenever it becomes necessary for a student to leave school early, parents/guardians are asked to come to the school office pick-up and sign out their child(ren).

If a student has a doctor/dentist appointment prior to attending school, upon the

student's arrival, he/she shall first report to the school office for an admittance slip and then present both a note of explanation from the parent and the admittance slip to his/her homeroom teacher.

### **EMERGENCY DISMISSAL**

If it becomes necessary to release students from school before the regular dismissal time due to weather or some other emergency, the students will only be released to their parents or other persons authorized on the School Emergency Form.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Activities and sports are excellent ways for acquiring skills and habits that develop the whole individual. Caution must be taken to insure that these activities do not interfere with the scholastic growth of your child(ren). As a parent/guardian, please use discretion in determining the amount of activities in which your child(ren) participate(s).

#### **St. Patricia School offers students the following Extra-Curricular opportunities:**

- Altar Servers
- Band (Grades 4-8)
- Children's Choir
- Sports programs (Grades 4-8): Basketball, Football, Volleyball, Cheerleading, Soccer
- Junior Honor Society
- Student Council

Extra-curricular sports teams are sponsored and administered by the Parish Athletic Association. Concerns and comments should be addressed at their monthly meeting.

### **EXTENDED ABSENCES**

In the case of extended absence, including illness, it is essential that parents/guardians and the student meet with the teacher(s). Any necessary make up work will be reviewed and a timeline for its completion will be established.

Parents/guardians who wish to remove a student from school for a family vacation should discuss in advance the effect this might have on the student's academic progress and should consult with the principal and the student's teacher(s). They will be advised, of what effect this may have on the child's progress and what classroom work will have to be completed upon their return. The responsibility for completing all class work lies with the student and the parents/guardians according to the teachers' discretion.

### **EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM**

The St. Patricia Extended Day Program provides care for students enrolled in the school. Due to legal and insurance restraints, the program can only operate on days when school is in session and only for children enrolled in the school..

The Extended Day Program provides care, supervision, recreational activities and homework help. A snack is provided.

The Extended Day Program hours are from 2:15 P.M. until 6:00 P.M. each regularly scheduled school day. On days when school dismisses early, the program will be available from 11:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. An hourly fee is assessed and additional charges will be incurred by families who do not pick-up their child(ren) by the closing time.

### **ILLNESS OR INJURY DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

If a student should become ill or injured during the school day, the following procedures will be utilized:

- The teacher will send the student to the school office.
- The office staff will call the student's home.
- The office staff will arrange with the parent/guardian/alternative adult as to whom will accompany the student home and sign him/her out of school.

If a sudden/serious injury or illness should occur and the parent/guardian/alternative adult cannot be contacted, the school will call the emergency 911 number.

### **LUNCH**

The lunch period provides time to eat and have a recess period. For safety reasons students are not allowed off the playground. Students go outside whenever the weather permits. Please dress your child accordingly.

The Archdiocesan Hot Lunch Program is available four days a week. Each Tuesday is Hot Dog Day. Fast food orders and soda are not permitted. Students may not use the soda machines during regular school hours.

Students are responsible for bringing their own lunch. Any lunches arriving late should be labeled with a name and room number and left at the front desk. The student will be called down to the school office at lunchtime.

### **PATROL**

Parents are responsible for the safety of the child traveling to and from school. The purpose of the student safety patrol is to assist in the safe conduct of students to and from their vehicles. However, by providing this service, St. Patricia School and the Catholic Bishop of Chicago accept no liability for the safety of the child.

### **TARDINESS**

A student is tardy if he/she arrives after the 7:55 A.M. bell. Students arriving after the start of school (7:55 A.M.) need to stop in the office for a tardy slip and present it to his/her teacher. A pattern of tardiness interferes with a student's progress. If tardiness becomes a consistent problem, the teacher will discuss the matter and any appropriate consequence with the parent(s)/guardian.

### **THURSDAY'S BROWN ENVELOPE**

Each Thursday parent information including the school newsletter, Parent Club information, Community events, etc. is sent home with the youngest or oldest child in the school. Please make sure that you check your child's backpack for this weekly information. This is our best means of communication between the school and the home.

## UNIFORMS

The purpose of a dress code is to instill in the students high standards of cleanliness, neatness, and good grooming. Appearance and dress contribute toward establishing a positive learning environment. In order to achieve this objective, the school assumes responsibility for enforcing the dress code; however, it is also the parents' responsibility to ensure that the children are dressed properly before leaving home each day. Uniforms are to be kept in good order and worn at all times unless specified by the principal/teacher. The student's uniform polo shirt/blouse is to be worn tucked into the shorts, pants or skirts.

Parents will be notified if children are not dressing in accordance to the required uniform guidelines.

### Boys

- Grades K-8 will wear solid navy blue or black *dress slacks*
- Solid white polo shirt (long or short sleeve) with no logo.
- A solid blue cardigan sweater, school fleece or school sweatshirt may be worn.
- Jeans, corduroy, and other casual slacks are not acceptable.
- White or navy socks above the ankle are to be worn.

### Girls K-4

- A navy blue plaid jumper
- Solid white blouse or polo shirt.
- A solid blue cardigan sweater, school fleece or school sweatshirt may be worn.
- Above the ankle socks, tights or knee socks in white, navy or black may be worn.

### Girls 5-8

- A navy blue plaid skirt
- A solid white polo shirt, and a navy blue vest with no design or logo
- A solid blue cardigan sweater, school fleece or school sweatshirt may be worn.
- Above the ankle socks, tights or knee socks in white, navy or black may be worn.

### Warm Weather Options for Grades K-8 (Optional)

Navy blue walking shorts, may be worn when the temperature is 70 degrees or above.

### Winter Uniform for Girls (Optional)

Girls may wear solid navy blue *dress slacks only* with their uniform polo shirt/blouse and vest. The winter uniform may be worn from October 1<sup>st</sup> to March 15<sup>th</sup>. Jeans, corduroys, and other casual slacks are not part of the school uniform.

### Physical Education Uniform for Grades K-8

All students are required to wear a Physical Education uniform. Gym uniforms are worn instead of the regular school uniform on days that a child has physical education class. Uniforms may be purchased on Organization Day or ordered from the current supplier.

Physical Education uniforms consist of a **royal blue** St. Patricia monogrammed T-shirt and shorts. In addition, students may also wear *royal blue* sweatshirt/sweatpants. Gym shoes are part of the Physical Education uniform and are required for class. Students are *not* permitted to wear any Athletic Association uniform item for Physical Education class. For safety reasons shoes are to be laced over the tongue of the shoe.

**Shoes**

Both boys and girls are expected to wear *solid, soft-soled non-marring* shoes.

- Gym shoes are permitted.
- For safety reasons shoes are to be laced over the tongue of the shoe.
- Platform, plastic-soled, backless or "light up" (mercury-filled) shoes are dangerous and, therefore, not acceptable.

For safety reasons in traveling up and down stairs backless shoes or shoes with high heels are not allowed.

**Hair**

A student's hair should be neatly combed and groomed. Extreme or "fad" haircuts include, but are not limited to: streaks, designs, razor cuts, shaved, multiple parts or distracting hairstyles. Dyed or colored hair is not permitted. The use of hair spray and excessive hair gel are not permitted.

**Jewelry**

Inappropriate or excessive jewelry (e.g. thick chains, multiple chains) is not permitted. For safety reasons long, dangling or hoop earrings are not to be worn. Boys may not wear earrings. Girls may not wear more than one earring per earlobe. Post earrings are acceptable. Students are limited to one set of earrings, no cartilage piercing.

**Make-up/Nail Polish/Perfume/Cologne**

Make-up and nail polish are not to be worn by any student. Due to possible allergic reactions students are asked not to use perfume or cologne.

Tattoos and gang/cult signs, symbols or colors are not allowed on the school premises.

## SCHOOL OFFICE

### OFFICE HOURS

School office hours are 7:00 A.M. until 2:15 P.M.

### APPOINTMENTS AND CALLS TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE

Calls to Teachers: Teachers have assigned duties before and after school and are expected to be in their classroom during the regular school day or at lunchtime. Since the teacher's primary function is to educate the students, any parent/guardian wishing a conference should either call for an appointment or leave a message at the front desk for a teacher. Your telephone call will be returned as soon as possible. Do not hesitate to make an appointment when necessary.

Teachers can also be reached via e-mail. Teachers e-mail address is their first initial, their last name followed by @stpatriciaparish.com

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE

To maintain accurate records and files, the school office needs to be notified as quickly as possible of any change of address or telephone number (cell, business or home).

### COMMUNICATION

**Parent Night** - held each September to provide parents with an opportunity to tour the school, view student work and meet the teachers.

**Catholic Schools Week** – consists of planned activities to encourage and promote the quality of Catholic Education, and foster parental/family participation in the School. The annual Open House takes place during this week of academic and service events. Parent Teacher Conferences- held in early November.

**Weekly Newsletter**- goes home each Thursday in the *Brown Envelope*. The newsletter and *Brown Envelope* are our chief means of communication with our families. It is important to take a few moments to check the envelope and go through the enclosed material.

**Grievance Procedure** - problems and concerns will always arise. In working through these issues it is important to talk to the teacher first. If problems persist after these discussions, then the principal will assist.

### EXTENDED TRAVEL

Parents/guardians who will be out-of-town for several days should inform the school office of the name of the person responsible for their child(ren)'s care in their absence. (Also see extended absences page 12)

### INSURANCE

It is strongly recommended that all children be covered by a family insurance policy.

### LOST AND FOUND

A lost and found box is located in the school office. At regular intervals, this box will be cleaned out and non-claimed items will be given to charity.

**TRANSFERS**

Parents transferring their child/children to another school must come to the office for an Archdiocesan Transfer Form. Transfers will be issued and records sent only if monetary obligations are fulfilled.

**VISITORS**

School visitors are always welcome at St. Patricia. However, anyone visiting the building is asked to sign in at the school office and state the nature of their business. This rule is necessary for security purposes and to prevent unnecessary interruptions in classes. During certain times of the year, special activities are held to provide students, their families and visitors an opportunity to view our facility and programs. Visits are permitted at other times, but arrangements must be made in advance through the office.

Materials brought during the school day for any student must be taken to the school office. Children should be encouraged to be responsible for bringing their own lunches, books, etc. As a standard procedure, students are *not* permitted to place a telephone call to his/her home except in the case of an emergency.

**LEGAL REMINDERS****CHILD CUSTODY**

The name of the custodial parent/guardian must be on file with the school office.

St. Patricia School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of the non-custodial parent/guardian. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, St. Patricia School will provide the non-custodial parent/guardian access to academic records and other school related information regarding the child(ren). If no information is to be given to one parent, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent/guardian to provide the school office with an official copy of the court order.

**CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

Corporal punishment is not permitted.

**GOVERNMENT FORM FOR TRANSPORTATION**

Reimbursement for transportation costs for students living more than 1.5 miles from St. Patricia is available. Please come to the office before the end of the school year and sign the appropriate forms.

**SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

St. Patricia School reserves the right to inspect all school and/or personal property.

School authorities may request the assistance of law enforcement officials for the purpose of conducting inspections and searches of desks, parking lot and other school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school for illegal drugs, weapons and other illegal or dangerous substances or materials. This procedure may include the use of specially trained dogs.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT REGULATIONS**

Sexual harassment by one employee to another, or by an employee to a student, by a student to an employee, or by one student to 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 a student in an attempt to demean, harass, abuse or embarrass that individual shall be subject to the sanctions for misconduct set forth above.

The school will determine the facts regarding all allegations of sexual harassment in as prompt and confidential a manner as possible and will take appropriate corrective action when warranted.

**STUDENT RECORDS**

The school keeps full and accurate records of each child's attendance, health and directory information according to procedures established by the Office of Catholic Education. Parent Guidelines explaining the availability and the procedures for the checking of their child's school records are available in the school office.

## **MEDICAL SAFETY AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

### **CHILD ABUSE**

In accordance with state law, educators are mandated to report any suspected cases of child abuse.

### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

In cases of a communicable illness (i.e., strep throat, measles, chicken pox, pink eye, lice, etc.), the office should be notified so that other families and the teachers may be alerted to watch for further developments. It is expected that your child see a physician.

### **EMERGENCY CARDS**

In medical or emergency cases, the school will contact the parent/guardian immediately. For this reason, it is necessary that the name and telephone number of an alternative adult be on file with the student's emergency information. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to keep this information current!

### **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

During the winter months, the Archdiocesan School Policy is to keep the school building open unless there is extreme weather.

Generally if District #117 is closed due to WEATHER CONDITIONS, St. Patricia School will also be closed.

The closing of St. Patricia School will be announced via radio, television, the Internet, and through the school by the Parent Club developed Phone Relay. Please avoid calling the rectory, convent or school office. Please keep your telephone lines open so that you may be contacted.

If you do not hear an announcement by 7:45 A.M., the school building will be open. Parents always have the discretion not to send their child(ren) to class due to the weather or emergency situations.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

Fire drills are held regularly according to city ordinances and Archdiocese regulations.

### **MEDICATION**

All parents/guardians are required to complete and return the *Medical Information and Emergency Form* at the start of each school year.

Illinois State law forbids school personnel to administer any type of medication to students. If medication is necessary to maintain the student in school, parents are asked to consult their physician in order to determine if the administration of medication can be scheduled outside of school hours. If this were not possible, the ideal situation would be to have the parent or a responsible adult appointed by the parent, come to the school to administer the medication. A recent new Illinois law states "students are allowed to keep asthma inhalers with them". This should be carried in some type of

fanny pack. This would allow the child to have the medication with them at all times. In the event that this cannot be done, the parent and physician must complete a *Medication Authorization Form* available in the school office. Medication is stored in a locked drawer in the school office.

### **PHYSICALS AND DENTAL EXAMS**

The Illinois State Code requires physical examinations and immunizations for students entering Kindergarten, new First graders, and Fifth graders. Dental examinations are required for students in Kindergarten, Second and Sixth grade. State law sets an October 15th deadline for physical examinations and immunizations requirements and a May deadline for dental examinations to be completed and on file in the school. Pupils who fail to meet these requirements may not be admitted into the classroom.

### **PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS**

If a student cannot participate in a Physical Education class, a written note is required.

### **BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS, ROLLERBLADES ETC.**

For safety reasons, skateboards, roller blades and other similar forms of transportation are not allowed. Bicycles are not to be ridden on school grounds, they need to be walked to the bike racks and locked up. The school assumes no responsibility for bike theft or damage.

### **TORNADO DRILLS**

Tornado drills are held seasonally.

## ACADEMICS

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

We believe that the spiritual formation of the student is of primary concern at St. Patricia. Not only must we attain the knowledge of our faith, but we must also teach and model the spiritual values, attitudes, and traditions the students will exhibit in their daily lives. Some of the essential components of the Religious Education Program follow below:

Liturgy: Eucharistic Liturgy, the public worship of the church, is both the center of faith and the source of strength in our daily lives as Christians. We provide experience in liturgical celebration and prayer through actively involving children and teachers in planning and participating in church celebrations. On a rotating basis, students in grades 3-8 attend weekly mass on Friday. In addition all students take part in all school Masses through out the year. Families are expected to participate in Sunday Liturgy in accordance with the *St. Patricia Parish Agreement Letter*.

Prayer: Prayer is a necessary and valuable part of a person's spiritual formation and the means by which one recognizes the presence of God. Formal prayer is taught and used daily at each grade level. Student leaders offer morning prayer daily over the intercom.

Religious Education: The children extend their knowledge of our Christian traditions through daily classroom instruction. Students are encouraged to demonstrate care and concern for each other, helping to build an enriched and meaningful Christian culture within the school and extend that atmosphere into the larger community. The recognition and respect of different Faith backgrounds of our students is acknowledged. However, all students are expected to participate in the Religious Education classes.

Sacramental Programs: Sacramental programs are an essential part in the religious development of students. Parents working together with the teachers and priests share in this responsibility. Family programs to preparation for the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion in Grade 2 and Confirmation in Grade 8 are planned in conjunction with the parish Religious Education Program. Parents/guardians are expected to attend information meetings for each Sacrament.

### CURRICULUM

The curriculum includes: Religion, Art, Computer Science, Language Arts, Mathematics, Music, Physical Education, Reading, Science, Social Studies and Spelling. St. Patricia School follows the norms and guidelines of the Archdiocese of Chicago, as well as the State of Illinois with respect to the subjects included and timeframe mandates.

### SPECIALS

These programs generally meet once or twice per week.

Band- Band classes, held during the school day, are available for students in grades 4-8.

Computers- All students attend Computer class. K-4 students meet once a week. Grades 5-8 meet twice a week and are graded each semester. The school has a lab of 30 computers all connected to the Internet. The school library and all classrooms have an Internet connection. Students work with interactive software, learn skills related to word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software, experience the Internet and work on cross curriculum projects with the computer teacher and the classroom teacher.

Students are taught acceptable use standards. An acceptable use form is to be signed by each student and family. Any student who does not sign this form (even if the parent/guardian and other family members signed) will not be allowed to access the School's network or Internet.

Library- All students have the opportunity to check out books on a weekly basis.

Music- Music is a regular part of the curriculum. Grades K-8 attend music once a week.

Physical Education- Physical education is provided weekly for all children. Students in Kindergarten attend once a week. Students in grades 1-8 attend twice a week. All students are expected to participate in physical education classes unless there is a note from a physician.

Resources Rooms- Additional one-on-one or small group instruction in reading, writing and math is made available to students who can benefit from extra guidance. Parents are notified if a student participates in this program.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are regarded as an extension of our curriculum and considered a regular component of the educational experience. Such field trips are arranged by the classroom teacher throughout the school year with the approval of the Principal. Written consent of the parent/guardian is always required before a student is permitted to participate. A student who does not have a signed *Permission Form* will not be allowed to participate on the field trip.

Field trips are not optional "Free Days." A field trip is considered a regular school day. School uniforms are required to be worn on a field trip unless otherwise stated by the teacher. Any student who does not participate in this event is required to attend school and to complete a normal day's class work. The school reserves the right to refuse to allow a student to participate on a field trip when their behaviors or work habits are judged inappropriate.

## **GRADING**

### **Grading Scale:**

A	100-93	(Point Value = 4)
B	92-85	(Point Value = 3)
C	84-78	(Point Value = 2)
D	77-70	(Point Value = 1)
U	69-0	(Point Value = 0)

Honor Roll: The purpose of the St. Patricia School Honor Roll is to recognize those students who have excelled academically and have maintained acceptable social attitudes and skills.

- A Honor Roll 3.5 average or better in Religion, English, Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies and Spelling
- B Honor Roll 3.49 - 3.0 average in Religion, English, Math, Reading, Science, Social Studies and Spelling

Grades in Computer Science, Music, Art and Physical Education must be a C or better.

Progress Reports at the mid-quarter of each grading period are issued to students in Grades 4-8.

Report Cards are distributed four times per year. Student evaluations are based on examinations, direct observation, homework, projects, and effort.

### **GRADUATION POLICY**

A diploma will be given only if the student passes every major subject. If the diploma is denied, it may be earned by the successful completion of an appropriate summer school program. Participation in the ceremony, however, will not be denied to the student.

The Pastor and Principal reserve the right to deny participation in graduation ceremonies to a student for behavioral reasons, which are serious enough to warrant such denial.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework is a necessary and important supplement to the lessons taught in school. It extends learning activities beyond the classroom and reinforces learning by giving a child practice in using his knowledge at his own pace. Homework involves more than written assignments. It includes reading and studying. The object of homework is to strengthen and review skills already taught; to reinforce newly presented skills; and to enrich skills and lessons previously explained. Assigned activities should provide meaningful learning experiences.

We recognize that school is only a part of a child's daily activities, which include time for play, for relaxation and for family.

The teachers work together as much as possible to balance the workload, realizing that children work at varying paces and locations. Parental involvement is considered vital. Parents are highly encouraged to discuss concepts and ideas with children to prompt critical thinking; guide research; facilitate problem solving; and encourage and direct creativeness and learning.

Absence: Homework assigned during a student's absence must be completed in a reasonable timeframe established by the classroom teacher. It is the student's

responsibility to ensure that all assigned work and tests are completed.

Deficiency Reports: Deficiency Reports are given to students in grades 4-8 when they do not hand in their homework by the assigned due date. The Deficiency Report must be signed by the parent/guardian and return to the teacher by the following day.

### **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences are a process of open communication between home and school with regard to the school program and individual student progress. Parents are required to attend the formal Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences held at the end of the first marking period. The purpose of this conference is to: Ensure formal communication between the parents/guardians and the teacher(s), share the academic, social emotional, and behavior strengths and weaknesses of the student.

Parents/guardians may initiate a conference at any time they feel it is necessary. All conferences with teachers should be scheduled so as not to interrupt classes, conflict with other meetings or keep the teacher from his/her classroom teaching time. Please leave a telephone message or e-mail the teacher. Your message will be returned as soon as possible.

### **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

While the decision to promote or retain a student generally shall be a cooperative one made by parents/guardians, teachers and Principal, nonetheless, the Principal shall have the ultimate authority to make such a decision. Ordinarily, parents/guardians shall be notified of the possibility of retention no later than mid-school year.

The decision to retain a student shall be made only if there has been adequate evaluation and documentation, which would indicate that the student would most likely profit from retention.

Generally if a student receives two "Unsatisfactory" (U) grades in any subject, promotion to the next grade or graduation will be denied until evidence of a successful Summer School course has been completed.

If summer school or retention is a possibility, the following process will take place:

- Parents are kept informed of the student's progress via reports and parent/teacher meetings
- A formal written confirmation will be sent home no later than the third quarter to inform student and parent of the possibility of summer school or retention.
- A parent/teacher/Principal conference is held.
- Final written notice confirming the decision to retain a child or send him or her to summer school is sent home during the last quarter of the school year.

### **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Terra Nova Tests are given in March to children in Grades 3, 5 and 7. These achievement tests are one important indicator of a student's progress in the basic mastery of Language Arts, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and Social Studies.

The testing data is used in assessing our instructional planning and curriculum development. The tests are one means to help students identify their academic strengths as well as the areas where they need to put forth more study and effort. Parents/guardians are cautioned, however, to understand that test results are only one aspect of the child's learning and potential. These test results must be placed in the context of the child's day-to-day output in the classroom.

### **T.A.T. TEAM (Teacher Assistance Team)**

This team of teachers meets regularly to assist each other in best meeting the needs of our students. We recognize that each child has a variety of abilities and talents, learns at a different pace and has a particular learning style unique to that child.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **CARE OF LIBRARY AND TEXTBOOKS**

All students from Kindergarten through Eighth grade are allowed to use the library on a weekly basis. Generally, students check out one book at a time unless they are working on a school project or have a note from a teacher. The use of library books is a privilege. Students with overdue books or who owe significant fines are not allowed to check out books.

Students are expected to use care with their textbooks as well as library books. Textbooks are very costly and are often used for more than one year. Students are responsible for the payment of lost or damaged textbooks or library books.

### **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Students are expected to take care of their personal belongings as well as respect the property of other students. Students are not permitted to use any item from another student's desk unless the individual or the teacher has specifically given permission. Parents are asked to label all uniforms, sweaters, scarves, gloves, hats, boots and gym clothing, as well as all books and school supplies for students.

Students are asked not to bring radios, CD players, I-POD's, PDA's game boy, cell phone's, cameras, etc. or toys to school without a teacher's permission.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

In order to carry out the philosophy of St. Patricia School, students are expected to conduct themselves in a Christian manner. This includes respecting individual rights and the rights of others and maintaining proper behavior during class hours and during school related activities. Students attending school related social and athletic functions are considered representative of St. Patricia and are subject to the discipline code of the school. Courtesy and respect are expected at all times.

Our goal is to help children learn to make good behavioral choices, learn from their mistakes and accept the consequences of his/her actions. In order to help the student

become accountable and more responsible for his/her actions, the following conduct code has been developed.

### **DETENTION**

A detention is normally not the first line of correction. Before a detention is assigned, the teachers may use verbal warnings or other intervention strategies to provide students with an opportunity to self-correct their actions. Our goal is to correct any problems and help the student realize that their actions have consequences when they disregard guidelines.

Minor infractions are handled at the discretion of the Principal/teacher. However, if a child receives a detention a Parent Notice is sent home. Notices must be signed and returned to the teacher, thus indicating their knowledge of the detention. Parents, therefore, can make arrangements to pick up their children. The teacher-supervised detention is held from 2:15 P.M. until 3:00 P.M.

Generally, detentions are given for repeated minor or a single, more serious infraction related to school and classroom expectations. The following are examples of some infractions that will be looked upon as inappropriate in our school and will be dealt with accordingly: inappropriate language, class disruptions, missing assignments, defacing property, cheating, fighting/threats, throwing objects, chewing gum, and disrespect to others.

### **SUSPENSION and or EXPULSION**

It is important that the school share with students and their parents/guardians, the guidance and direction necessary to correct serious problems or difficulties related to school. Therefore, after situations of repeated detentions or a single very serious offense, parents will be called and/or will be required to attend a conference.

The purpose of the conference is to discuss and clarify the problem and then prescribe a program to bring about change. The conference will also outline further consequences to follow if the behavior or academic problem of the student continues.

Possible further consequences are probation, in-school suspension, suspension at home and/or expulsion.

The following are examples of what would be considered very serious infractions and may be subject to an automatic suspension. This list includes, but is not restricted to:

- Disrespect and/or disobedience towards the staff
- Intent to inflict bodily harm, fighting, tormenting, or inappropriate touching of another student
- Possession or use of alcohol, cigarettes, matches, lighters of any type, drugs, weapons, smoke bombs, or pornographic (or offensive) material
- Use of vulgar or obscene language which is oral, written or represented by gestures
- Theft
- Setting false fire alarms or bomb threats
- Vandalism or damage to school property (including textbooks), (Cleaning,

repairing and/or payment must be made for all damages.)

- Repeated misconduct on the District school bus
- Truancy from school or from any class
- Leaving the school premises during school hours/functions without permission
- Cheating, (If a student is guilty of cheating, his/her paper is collected and a grade of zero is issued. The Principal and parents/guardians are then notified. A second offense may result in a suspension.)
- Displaying and/or wearing gang/cult signs, issued, symbols or colors
- Repeated acts of misconduct or misbehavior, which may or may not merit a suspension, but which illustrate the student's disregard for regulations

After a suspension, the student may at the Principal's discretion, be excluded from certain school-related activities.

If an out-of-school suspension is issued, the child will be required to remain at home with a parent/guardian during the regular school day and complete all assignments given for the period of time determined by the Principal. All assigned work is to be completed prior to returning to the classroom.

In certain cases, an in-school suspension will be given.

After a suspension is issued, the child's behavior will be closely monitored. When a child continually lacks respect for others, property or school regulations, the parents/guardians will be notified that the child cannot remain at St. Patricia School.

The Principal is the final recourse in all-disciplinary situations and may waive any disciplinary rule or procedure for "just cause" at his/her discretion.

### **BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES**

- The student will respect and obey all members of the staff (teachers, administrator, substitute teachers, secretary, custodian, teacher-aides, lunchroom personnel, student teacher or visitor).
- The student is expected to demonstrate respect for each other and all the members of the school community.
- The student will respect all school, public and personal property.
- The student will be responsible for personal supplies, including books, uniforms and assignments.
- The student will be on time for school and all classes.
- The student will complete his/her assigned work
- The student will promptly return to his/her room after using the washroom facilities or returning from other assigned tasks.
- The student will remain quiet and respectful in the hallways/stairways and cooperate with the Principal and teachers in maintaining a pleasant learning atmosphere.
- The student will refrain from chewing gum or eating candy during the school day and while on the school property.
- The student will keep his/her desk and classroom clean, neat and in good order.

## **LUNCH CONDUCT**

Lunchroom parents supervise students.

Students are encouraged to eat balanced and nutritional meals. Students who skip breakfast will often tire by the middle of the morning. Eating habits of children can affect their energy level as well as their disposition to learn.

Proper manners are required during the lunch period. Students are expected to talk with friends in conversational tones. Students are expected to clean up their places after finishing their lunch.

Unacceptable behavior will be reported to the teacher and notification of misconduct if warranted will be sent to the parent/guardian. If a student continually displays unacceptable conduct, he/she will be suspended from the lunch period for a number of days determined by the Principal.

Lunchroom Supervisors are to be respected and obeyed at all times. No one is allowed to leave the classroom without permission during the lunch period.

Students should be ready to line up for outdoor recess and leave when dismissed. Students are asked to stay away from any parked or moving cars. Students are to play in their designated areas and may not leave the school property. Food, candy or gum is not allowed outdoors during recess time.

Weather permitting all students will go outdoors for fresh air and exercise. When the bell rings, students are to stop playing and line up quietly by homerooms in the designated places and be ready to walk back in a quiet and orderly manner into their classrooms.

On days when the weather does not permit outdoor recess time, students will remain in their classrooms and may play quiet games.

## **AMENDMENTS**

In order to keep our handbook current, periodic revisions will be needed. Therefore, statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school will attempt to keep you informed of all changes as soon as it is practical. However, some changes can be made immediately due to unforeseen circumstances.

## ST. PATRICIA SCHOOL PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

Please return this form to the school office.

I have read and understand the guidelines outlined in the St. Patricia School Parent Handbook. I will support the school by encouraging my child(ren) to follow these guidelines.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE:

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Family Name: (please print)

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Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment.

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