



St. John Paul the Great  
**ACADEMY**  
**STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK**  
**2024-2025**

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St. John Paul the Great  
**ACADEMY**  
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Mr. Edward H. Goad  
Principal

September 2024

“The Sole Reason for the Existence of our Profession is the Pupils”

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the new school year at Saint John Paul the Great Academy! We are so happy that we will be here in our wonderful school in a safe and nurturing environment.

Your Saint John Paul the Great Academy Parent/Student handbook is an essential guide with very important information concerning our school policies, process, organizations, and some forms. Please be sure to read the handbook and retain it as a reference during the school year.

Parents are receiving a copy of the handbook via “e-mail” with additional digital copies available on the school’s website, <https://www.stjohnpaulthegreatacademy.org/>. Paper copies will be distributed by request only. Parents are required to review the handbook with their child(ren) and return the “Signature Form” acknowledging receipt to the school office by no later than October 2024.

Thank you for your support and being a member of the Saint John Paul the Great Academy community. We look forward to a productive, happy, safe and rewarding school year. May God Bless you always!

Sincerely,

Mr. Edward H. Goad  
Principal, St. John Paul the Great Academy

**Believe~Build~Become**



St. John Paul the Great  
**ACADEMY**

## Our Journey to St. John Paul the Great Academy

In August of 1893, upon accepting an invitation from the Reverend Patrick Duggan, the Sisters of Mercy from Meriden arrived to staff the newly founded St. Francis of Assisi Parochial School built behind the church. Sister Mary Josephine O'Keefe, R.S.M. was the first principal of over 1,200 enrolled students. Every child of school age in the parish was attending St. Francis. The school was very cosmopolitan at the time with students representing nearly every country in Europe and even some in Asia and Africa. Even in its formative years, one of the true strengths of St. Francis School has been in its diversity, accepting children of all races, ethnicities, and faiths.

In 1904, the Chapel building was erected which housed the administrative offices and some classrooms and was connected by tunnel to the original school building.

In 1949, the Parish Mothers' Club sponsored the establishment of a cafeteria in the Chapel building. While principal from 1949-1952, the Reverend John Finn was instrumental in getting the school into the national school lunch program. Also in that year, the gymnasium was established in the upper floor of the Chapel building.

Across town, also during this time, beginning in 1944, Monsignor William Botticelli of St. Peter Parish arranged for the Religious Teachers Filippini of New Jersey, a community dedicated to the Christian education of youth, to come and assist him in the instruction of the youth in the parish. For ten years, the Sisters were involved in catechetical instruction, parish census, adult education, music, and home visitations.

In 1954, a decision was made to open an elementary school for the purpose of providing Catholic instruction and education for the children of St. Peter Parish. Classes were to be held in the St. Peter Community House beginning with the Kindergarten class, adding a new grade each year until a full elementary school, Kindergarten through Grade 8, would be in operation.

In August of 1955, a devastating flood destroyed the Community House and other buildings in the heart of Torrington. This caused the 1955-56 Kindergarten classes of St. Peter Parish to attend other local schools.

In January of 1956, with much faith, courage, determination and sacrifice, the parish community launched a fundraising campaign to provide Catholic education for their children. Within two months, the initial goal of \$150,00.00 was surpassed and a total of \$252,000.00 in cash and pledges was received.

In September of that year, St. Peter School was opened with 91 students registered for Grades 1,2, and 3 and 40 Kindergarten students in attendance. Sister Mary Patti, M.P.F. was the first principal. The Most Reverend Henry O'Brien, Archbishop of Hartford, laid the cornerstone. Documents and a personal note from Monsignor Botticelli were cemented into the cornerstone of the school. For well over 50 years, the Religious Teachers Filippini of New Jersey staffed the school.



Meanwhile, at St. Francis of Assisi, in 1962, during the pastorate of the Right Reverend Monsignor John J. Loughlin, the current school was built at 360 Prospect Street complete with 16 classrooms, a full-size gymnasium, cafeteria, and kitchen. In December of that year, more than 600 students packed up their desks and carried their belongings up Main Street to the new school building.

During the 1960s and early '70s, St. Francis of Assisi School flourished and families from outside Torrington were not allowed to attend. A lottery was established for Torrington residents to select children to attend.

By the end of the 1970s, the Church was experiencing a decline in vocations and many remaining religious sisters chose to work in hospitals or prisons rather than schools. As a result, St. Francis of Assisi School hired more lay teachers that led to an increase in tuition. Enrollment was also declining. So in 1981, a half-day Kindergarten program was established which became full time in 1989.

The last Sister of Mercy to serve as principal of St. Francis of Assisi School was Sister Joan Marie Prisavage from 1978-1985. In the early 1990s, Principal Sister Margaret Mary Kennedy, O.P. initiated the Afterschool program. For the centennial celebration, a half-day Preschool program began for children age 3 and 4.

Many of the St. Francis of Assisi graduates are distinguished by their emphasis on community service. Many of the Alumni have been professionals and business owners who remain active in the City of Torrington and the surrounding towns. Families and support from the communities led to the success of the school. Several students have been the third and/or fourth generation of families from our community.

In 1982 and 1984, respectively, Sacred Heart and St. Mary Schools closed in Torrington and many students from these schools enrolled at St. Peter School changing the ethnic population of the school. By the late 1980s, the predominantly Italian population living near the church and school decreased and the student population became more culturally diverse. During the administration of St. Peter School, students were educated to be Christ-like leaders with a foundation rooted in Catholic truth and tradition blended with academic, social, and personal growth that provided an intellectually, socially, and spiritually alive atmosphere

In 1997, Mrs. Margaret Carabelli was appointed the first lay principal in the history of St. Francis of Assisi School.

In 2002, Mrs. Jo-Anne Gauger became the last principal at St. Francis of Assisi School.

In 2005, St. Francis and St. Peter Schools merged into one school with two campuses. St. Peter School educated Pre-K through Grade 2 students while St. Francis of Assisi educated Grade 3 through Grade 8 students.

In 2006, the school's name was changed to St. Peter/St. Francis School.



In July 2009, the two campuses merged into one and all grades were moved into the St. Francis campus. Mrs. Jo-Anne Gauger served as principal of St. Peter/St. Francis School from July 2006 to June 2019.

In 2015, St. Peter/St. Francis School transitioned to a “Multi-Age Educational Model” which supports students from more than one grade in the same classroom with the same teacher. There are many benefits to this model including fostering leadership and encouraging older students to learn at their own pace and level. A teacher becomes familiar with the student during the two years and is better able to access the student’s strengths and the areas for improvement.

In 2017, after almost two years of planning, the Archdiocese of Hartford made a decision to consolidate the Catholic community formerly known as the Torrington Cluster of Roman Catholic Parishes which included St. Francis of Assisi, St. Peter, Sacred Heart, and St. Mary churches, into one parish. In June of that year, this Catholic community became known as the St. John Paul the Great Parish.

In August of 2018, upon his arrival to St. John Paul the Great Parish as the new pastor, Father Emmanuel Ihemedu was advised that approval had already been given to close St. Peter/St. Francis School due to dwindling enrollment and lack of funds to keep the school open. After consulting with many church, school, and community partners, a new vision emerged for the school. It was determined that closing the school would not be in the best interests of the children, families, parish and town. Father Emmanuel wrote, “It would deny us the opportunity to help lay the foundation and raise the leaders of tomorrow by providing solid Catholic education and values to our children and their families. Closing SPSF School has the potential of endangering the future of our parish since a parish without children is a parish with no future. And the impact it might have on vocations to the priesthood, religious and married life cannot be underestimated. And this is not a risk we are willing to take at this time.”

In June 2019, the principal of St. Peter/St. Francis School, Mrs. Jo-Anne Gauger, retired.

On July 1, 2019, Dr. Nancy E. Testa began her tenure as principal. After visits to a few Connecticut Catholic academies that had already implemented the Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STREAM) curriculum, Father Emmanuel and Dr. Testa were convinced that this program would have success in Torrington. Father Emmanuel wrote, “Not only will STREAM make Catholic identity central in our school, empirical evidence show that it is an effective program to prepare children for high school and for the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.

Subsequent to this, Father Emmanuel made a formal request to Archbishop Blair of the Archdiocese of Hartford for approval to change the name of St. Peter/St. Francis School to Saint John Paul the Great Academy with STREAM curriculum.

In August 2019, Archbishop Blair and his cabinet approved the requested name change and STREAM curriculum and St. John Paul the Great Academy was established.



St. John Paul the Great  
**ACADEMY**

The Academy boasts innovative programs in the arts, science, and music and a stellar academic program designed to suit each student's learning style and pace. Students are challenged academically, inspired artistically, and enlightening spiritually in a stimulating environment nurtured in the Roman Catholic faith. With STREAM, creative instruction is fostered across all disciplines, and the Catholic faith is integrated throughout every facet of our curriculum. Through structured and guided inquiry, student-centered technology, interdisciplinary instruction, and social and emotional learning, students are motivated, inspired, and become critical thinkers and collaborators to best prepare them for the future.

To prepare for this transition, professional development for STREAM began in September 2019 and will continue through the 2019/2020 school year with a full transition to an academy by the beginning of the 2020/2021 school year.

**Believe~Build~Become**



St. John Paul the Great

**ACADEMY**

**TENETS**

## **ST. JOHN PAUL THE GREAT ACADEMY**

### **Our Mission**

“St. John Paul the Great Academy is a dynamic STREAM school rooted in faith, service and academic excellence where Pre-K to Middle School students are challenged and inspired to become collaborators, critical thinkers, future leaders and global citizens.”

### **Vision Statement**

Catholic schools educate diverse student bodies to form Catholic, person-centered learning communities; provide quality teaching through traditional and innovative educational programs infused with Catholic Social Teachings; involve students to serve and support parish life and the local civic communities; graduate students who are critical thinkers, productive moral citizens, and spiritual leaders; and recognize and appreciate parents as the primary educators of their children.

### **Philosophy**

St. John Paul the Great Academy is dedicated to the educational mission of the Catholic Church: teaching God’s message through the ministry of the Church; fostering a community of faith in the life of the Holy Spirit; advocating service to the Christian community and all of humanity. Through Christian witness and development of a faith community within the school, we strive to instill in our students a commitment to social justice and global peace. We affirm that St. John Paul the Great Academy is oriented to Christian service. We guide our students to treat each other with mutual respect and love and to demonstrate a willingness to sacrifice for the benefit of all God’s people. We undertake educating our students to seek responsible solutions to contemporary problems by developing self-discipline and critical thinking skills. We offer a strong academic curriculum grounded in Christian values to prepare students to meet future educational and vocational goals. It is the intent of this school to enable our students to develop and use their individual talents and gifts to work for God’s glory and the good of all God’s people.





St. John Paul the Great

## ACADEMY TENETS

### OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

#### **Mission**

Rooted in Gospel values and guided by the **Purpose and Vision for Catholic School Education**, the Office of Catholic Schools serves and supports the Catholic schools within the Archdiocese of Hartford as they cultivate excellence, transformational growth, and continued viability.

The Office of Catholic Schools will:

- care for the People of God through servant leadership;
- advance the educational and catechetical mission of the Catholic Church;
- develop curriculum that will provide the foundation for students to think critically and globally, and to become productive, virtuous citizens;
- provide leadership, formation, and professional development;
- utilize research findings for making sound decisions;
- foster collaboration of resources among other Catholic agencies, parishes, and secular educational programs;
- advocate recognition of and support for Catholic schools;
- further the institutional advancement of Catholic schools; and
- seek avenues for equitable distribution of resources.

#### **Purpose and Vision for a Catholic School Education**

Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Hartford welcome students of all faiths, ethnic groups and socio-economic backgrounds. The fundamental purpose of Catholic schools is to:

- provide a safe, nurturing and secure environment in which students encounter the living God, who in Jesus Christ, reveals His transforming love and truth;
- partner with parents to support students in their learning and in their search for knowledge, meaning, and truth;
- create a Catholic climate that contributes to the formation of students as active participants in the parish community;
- foster a culture of educational excellence through critical thinking skills, innovation and rigorous curriculum standards, a global perspective, and an emphasis on moral education, community, and service;
- promote life-long learning that advances the development of the whole person; mind, body, and soul; and
- graduate students prepared to become productive, virtuous citizens and church leaders who will fashion a more humane and just world.



## **Philosophy**

The Office of Catholic Schools, a hope-filled community with responsibility for the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Hartford, is dedicated to dynamic educational leadership promoting quality Catholic education, proclaiming the word of God, and serving God's people by our actions. In administering and serving the schools, we seek the guidance of the Spirit as we face the challenges of contemporary society while we chart a strong course for the future.



St. John Paul the Great  
**ACADEMY**  
**ADMISSION CRITERIA**

**When enrolling your child in St. John Paul the Great Academy, you are agreeing to abide and be governed by the 2024/2025 Parent/Student Handbook.**

**Admission Requirements:**

- Health records/immunization records
- Birth certificate (original)
- Baptismal certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- Report cards from previous school
- Standardized test results from previous school
- Record of **Individualized Education Program (IEP)** where applicable

**Registration**

An Annual Registration Fee is collected from all new and returning families at the time of registration and re-registration, as the case may be. This fee is non-refundable.

**Please locate the Registration Packet in the Parent Portal.**

**Age Requirements**

**2024-2025 Requirements for Enrolling in a Kindergarten Program**

The Connecticut General Assembly has raised the minimum age for automatic entry into public school in Connecticut. Specifically, Section 1 of Public Act 23-208, states that children will need to turn five on or before September 1 of the school year in order to be automatically eligible to enroll in a school kindergarten program.

As a nonpublic school, this is a law with which we must comply. However, there are caveats that we can put in place that do not require approval from the CSDE or Department of Early Childhood.

The AOH Catholic early childhood programs will comply with the following state mandates:

Enrolling students for the 2024-2025 school year:

*Students must be five years of age by September 1 to enter kindergarten.*

*Students must be four years of age by September 1 to enter PK4.*

*Students must be three years of age by September 1 to enter PK3.*

Implications for 2024-2025 Early Childhood Enrollment in our Catholic Schools:

- Students enrolled in the 2023-2024 PK4 program **and** whose birthdays fall between September 1 and December 31, will have to repeat PK 4 for the 2024-2025 school year.



- Schools must make every effort to ensure those PK4 students who must hold before being advanced to kindergarten do not repeat the exact same experiences and activities during this one transition year.
- If in the assessment of a school, a PK4 student whose birthday falls between September 1 and December 31 **and** the student demonstrated high aptitude in PK4 **and** the school administers a formal assessment demonstrating evidence that the student can meet with success in kindergarten, **a waiver can be requested to advance that student into the school kindergarten program.**
- Families who wish to enroll a child in a school's PK3 program **and** whose birthday falls between September 1 and December 31, **and** the student meets the criteria for entry into a school's PK3 program, may enroll in PK3 with the understanding that the child will repeat the PK 3 program before advancing to the PK 4 program to ensure criteria is met for the state's and AOH kindergarten age.
- Early entry for PK 3 for children who meet entry criteria and whose birthdays are between September 1 and December 31 will continue for all consecutive school years.

### **Transfer Students**

Students in grade Pre-K3 through Grade 8 may transfer into St. John Paul the Great Academy at any time during the school year. Acceptance is based on a review of school records (both academic and behavioral), an interview with student and parents or legal guardians, a classroom visit, a conference with grade level teacher, space availability, and a willingness on the part of student and parent or legal guardian to assume the responsibilities outlined in this handbook.

### **Probationary Acceptance**

Upon acceptance into St. John Paul the Great Academy, all students remain in a probationary status for 90 days. During this time, the student's academic readiness or achievement, classroom demeanor, and social interaction will be observed. The family's ability to adhere to school rules and regulations, although always required, will be monitored. Upon successful completion of this probationary period, the student is accepted as a full member of the St. John Paul the Great community. The family will be notified in writing by the principal in the event of problems. Everyone who enrolls is admitted on one trimester probation. If you do not hear from the school after one trimester, you will be considered full enrolled in St. John Paul the Great Academy.

### **Nondiscriminatory Policy**

St. John Paul the Great Academy admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs. St. John Paul the Great Academy is a Catholic Diocesan Parish School; therefore, priority in the selection of students is given to 1) returning students, 2) siblings of current



students, 3) parishioners of St. John Paul the Great Parish, 4) parishioners of other Catholic Parishes without schools, and 5) non-catholic students.

Students with special needs will be given the same consideration as all applicants, however prior to admitting a student with diagnosed special needs, St. John Paul the Great Academy shall make a determination as to whether or not it believes it can provide an appropriate education for that child. Each child must be considered on an individual basis.

## **Withdrawal**

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. No student records will be forwarded to another school until notification has been received by the principal and the proper forms are completed. All accounts must be paid in full before any transfer of records occurs.

## **School Records**

Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the U.S. Mail. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school. Requests for records/transcripts/recommendations must be made at least five school days in advance to the school office. Completed requests will be sent via the U.S. Mail.

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATION POLICY**

Upon registration or re-registration, each family **MUST** sign a copy of the **Tuition Contract** and the **Statement of Fundraising Obligation and Volunteer Hours**. (Please locate these forms in the Parent Portal.) These forms must be returned to the School Office, along with the **Archdiocese of Hartford Common Admissions Application** (Please locate this form in the Parent Portal) and the \$150.00 per FAMILY non-deductible, non-refundable registration fee, and all other required paperwork that is included in their Registration Packet. Re-registration deadline is April 18th.

Tuition is due according to one of the following two payment options:

**Option 1:** Annual: Full tuition payable by July 1.

**Please note that cash, check, and credit card payments are acceptable.**

**Option 2:** Use of FACTS Tuition: An Automatic Payment Plan -There is a \$55.00 enrollment fee charged by the company. **All FACTS Tuition agreements begin July 20 and withdrawals will**



occur over the 10-month schedule. (Please locate the FACTS Confirmation Notice in the Parent Portal).

For tuition rates, payment plans, and due dates, please locate the Tuition Pricing and Payment Schedule, the Financial Obligation Policy, and the Tuition Contract form in the Parent Portal.

### **Multiple Child Discount**

1. Families that have more than one child attending the School will receive a multiple child discount.
2. Pre-**K3-4** is not included in the multiple child discount rates.

### **Delinquent Tuition**

1. For those families who choose to pay their tuition by Option 1, payment **MUST** be made in full by July 1. Payments not received by July 10 will be considered delinquent and will be assessed as a \$25.00 late charge. Your child may not return to school until your tuition account is brought up to date. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
2. A fee of \$25.00 will be assessed for each check returned by the bank.
3. No post-dated checks will be accepted.

### **Tuition Assistance**

1. Requests for tuition assistance must be made in writing and addressed to the principal, with proof of qualifying need.
2. After reviewing all requests with the Pastor, the Principal will notify the families before the close of school year.
3. All requests and information will remain confidential.

### **Tuition Refunds**

If a student withdraws from the school during the school year a refund shall be due according to the following:

1. Tuition is divided over 10 months, and a refund will be issued for dollars paid in excess of the calculated amount for the months enrolled. Any days enrolled in a month will count as a full month of enrollment.
2. Any other outstanding financial obligations (Fundraising, After School, Meals, etc.) will be deducted from the calculated refund due.



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Please locate the following forms in the Parent Portal: Registration Packet, Financial Obligation Policy, Academy Parent Association Fundraising Obligation and Volunteer Hours, Tuition Contract, Tuition Pricing and Payment Schedule, Tuition Cost Based on the Just-Shared Model, and FACTS Confirmation Notice.

## **ACADEMY PARENT ASSOCIATION FUNDRAISING AND VOLUNTEERING**

### **Academy Parent Association (APA)**

The Academy Parent Association is a vital part of our school and every parent by virtue of having a child enrolled in St. John Paul the Great Academy is a member. The APA plans activities for the school year including periodic parent meetings and all fundraising activities for the school. It is essential that all parents participate in and support the work of this organization for the future of the school.

It is the belief that all parents are vitally necessary to the total St. John Paul the Great Academy environment. Being an active participant in the work of the school, along with your child, is essential.

The APA will coordinate “fun” & “fund”raising activities. It will be the responsibility of each family for participation in these events. In addition to the APA fundraising, the school is also committed to raising funds through Advancement events. This is accomplished by means of an Annual Fund/Pledge Drive and various fundraising events deemed appropriate. Without your help and encouragement, these events will not be successful. All money collected through various fundraisers is non-refundable.

### **Volunteering opportunities include, but are not limited to the following:**

- DAILY CAFETERIA
- CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES
- ART, CRAFTS, DRAMA
- LIBRARY
- BOOK FAIR
- OFFICE
- SPECIAL PROJECTS
- ADVANCEMENT RECRUITMENT
- ALUMNI ASSOCIATION COMMUNICATIONS
- ROOM PARENTS (LEGAL GUARDIANS)
- ANNUAL EVENTS

All volunteers are expected to dress appropriately. Clothing should be modest and neat. The main responsibility of a volunteer is to assist the administration or teachers/staff. For this reason, pre-school siblings are not allowed to accompany parent volunteers to school for meetings, to serve lunches, to assist in office, etc.



## **Volunteering**

Every volunteer serving in a position where he/she may have regular contact with children or young people must undergo a background check which shall include a check of criminal convictions. No individual shall be permitted to volunteer in any position where there may be regular contact with children or young people without undergoing this background check. **VIRTUS** Training **MUST** be completed by volunteers who have regular contact with students. This is provided through workshops by specially trained individuals. Volunteers cooperate with the principal in providing a positive educational climate for the student. Volunteers are directly accountable to the principal. Volunteers agree to abide by the established policies and procedures of the Archdiocese. The administration reserves the right to accept or decline any offer of volunteer service.

The regulations stated in this handbook are NOT to be considered all-inclusive. The school reserves the right to act in a manner consistent with other rules and regulations of the Archdiocese of Hartford in any situation that might be considered contrary to the philosophy of St. John Paul the Great Academy. St. John Paul the Great Academy reserves the right to amend this handbook. Prompt notification of amendments will be sent to parents via email communication. Typographical errors and exclusions are inadvertent. Your understanding is appreciated.

## **A PARENTS' ROLE IN EDUCATION**

We, at St. John Paul the Great Academy, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life; physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of St. John Paul the Great Academy involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at St. John Paul the Great Academy, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Pre-K through Grade 8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have





positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits that provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential for a student to accept responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

### **Parents as Partners**

As partners in the educational process at St. John Paul the Great Academy, we ask parents to set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- gets to bed early on school nights;
- arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
- is dressed according to the school dress code;
- completes assignments on time; and
- has reserved/purchased hot lunch or has a nutritional lunch from home every day.

### **We also ask parents to:**

- actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences and APA meetings;
- see that the student pays for any damage to schoolbooks or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
- notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy;
- notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
- meet all financial obligations to the school;
- inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example;
- support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school; and



- treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

**Education of each child is a partnership between parents and the school. If the administration determines that partnership is irretrievably or irrevocably broken, the school reserves the right to require the withdrawal of their child.**

## **ACADEMICS**

The school will maintain a cumulative record that includes basic information, academic achievement, grade level, attendance, standardized test scores, and medical history. Student records are confidential. However, a parent or legal guardian has the right to examine his or her child's file and may arrange to do so by contacting the principal. The release of student information or transfer of records will take place only with the written consent of the parent or legal guardian.

### **Accreditation**

St. John Paul the Great Academy has received Accreditation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Archdiocese of Hartford, and the National Catholic Education Association.

### **Curriculum**

St. John Paul the Great Academy follows curriculum standards published by the Office of Catholic Schools. The curriculum is infused with Gospel values. The subjects included meet and/or exceed the requirements of Connecticut state law, as applicable to private schools, and Archdiocesan policies and procedures. The school maintains a balanced curriculum, including religion, language arts (English Grammar, Phonics, Writing, Reading, Vocabulary, Spelling, Oral Language, and Handwriting), Science, Mathematics, Geography, Social Studies, Health/Wellness, Physical Education, the Arts, World Languages, and service learning. Technology is also integrated into all curricular areas. Through the curriculum, students are taught to be critical thinkers, effective communicators, productive moral citizens, and spiritual leaders.

### **Religious Participation**

All students are expected to attend and participate in scheduled religion classes. All students are expected to participate in both liturgical and non-liturgical celebrations. All students are expected to participate in First Friday Masses.

### **Sacramental Program**

The sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at St. John Paul the Great Academy. Preparations for two sacraments, Reconciliation and Eucharist, form the core of instruction in Grade 2. In accordance with the diocesan guidelines, candidates for First Eucharist will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation



prior to First Eucharist. Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The sacrament of Eucharist is conferred to baptized students after they have received the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Students of St. John Paul the Great Academy's second grade class will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and First Eucharist through a traditional faith formation program. Families can choose a faith formation program either through their home parish or St. John Paul the Great Academy.

## **Standardized Testing**

**St. John Paul the Great Academy** administers standardized testing according to the guidelines established by the Office of Catholic Schools. Ordinarily, elementary/middle schools test Grades 3 through 8 and are given The NWEA MAP series of tests. But it can be offered to kindergarten as well as Grades 1 and 2. Standardized tests shall gauge general achievement, cognitive, and scholastic ability. This balance should provide local schools and the system as a whole with sufficient data for making realistic decisions about the future goals of the curriculum, the system's individual schools, and individual students. The composite of standardized test scores is shared with parents.

## **Awards**

### Pre-K through Grade 8

Principal's List- Character Excellence

The Principal's List will be read monthly with certificates being mailed home.

## **Homework**

Homework shall be designed to serve a positive purpose, shall be assigned on a regular basis, and shall be closely integrated with class work. It is not a substitute for what should be taught in the classroom but rather serves as a review or enrichment of material learned during the school day.

Homework may be assigned to all students on Monday through Thursday. **Teachers may use discretion on assigning homework on Friday; a reasonable amount of homework is allowable. No tests or quizzes will be given on Mondays or the first day of the school week. No homework will be given during NWEA MAP Testing.**

Missed or incomplete assignments will be reflected in the overall grade each quarter. Students in Grades K through 4 are encouraged to work on homework under the guidance of a parent. A conference between the teacher and parent should be held if the child is unable to complete daily homework.

### **AVERAGE TIME FOR HOMEWORK (Time on Task)**

Kindergarten.....	¼ hour
Grades 1-2.....	½ hour



Grade 3.....	¾ hour
Intermediate Grades (4,5,6) .....	1 hour
Junior High Grades (7,8) .....	2 hours

If a student does not complete classroom assignments within a specified time period, this assignment may be sent home, and the child is expected to complete this assignment at home in addition to homework. **THIS SHOULD NOT BE A REGULAR OCCURRENCE.** If this happens regularly, teacher and parents should meet to assess the student’s performance. Parents will receive ONE written notification of incomplete homework or class work from the teacher. It is the parent’s/student’s responsibility to turn in the completed assignment with the signed homework notice the next day. If it is not turned in, a 10% reduction in the grade can be given each day it is not turned in and the grade will be recorded as M (missing=0). Students who do not turn in homework following one written notification may be expected to complete it during recess. If not turned in within 7 days, M (missing) will remain as the recorded grade. A second notice will NOT be sent for the same assignment **and** the missing work will be reflected in the student’s overall grade. Students who receive 5 such notifications in one marking period may be issued a detention. Any grade below a 65 (in grades 3-8) will require a parent signature.

### Report Cards/Interim Grades

The report card is one of the school’s most important forms of evaluation. It indicates a student’s academic progress and evaluates some personal and social traits and work-study habits. Report cards for students in Grades 1 through 8 are distributed three times a year, during the months of December, March, and June. Pre-K progress reports are distributed in January and June. Kindergarten progress reports are distributed three times a year, in December, March, and June. All report card/progress report envelopes are to be signed and returned to the school. Grades can be viewed on the Parent Portal by parents of students in Grades 4 through 8 at any time. The purpose of the online grades is to communicate the child’s progress to the parent, allowing time for the student to improve overall academic standing if necessary.

### Grading

#### Pre-K and Kindergarten Progress Codes

- M = meets grade-level expectation; P = progress noted toward grade-level expectations; T = time and experience required for skill to develop; ED = experiencing difficulty; and
- NI = not introduced at this time.

**Primary Grades 1 through 3** outcome-based **Grades 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, I, \***, reflect the philosophy of assessment and grading appropriate for this early developmental level.

#### Grading Scale:

- 5 = consistently exceeded grade level expectations;
- 4 = consistently achieved grade level expectations;
- 3 = approaching mastery of grade level expectations;



2 = approaching proficiency toward grade level expectations;

1 = difficulty meeting grade level expectations.

I = incomplete; and

\* = improvement needed in this skill area.

Subjects that meet one time per week (Music, Art, Physical Education, and World Language for Pre-K **through** Grade 5, will be graded as:

- O (Outstanding),
- S (Satisfactory), or
- U (Unsatisfactory)

**Grades 4 through 8** Report Card grades use a five-point-scale (A, B, C, D, F) grading system. On this level, letter grades are awarded to document student progress made toward learning objectives. Percentages may not be used.

Grading Scale: A+ = 100 – 98; A = 97 – 94; A- = 93 – 90; B+ = 89 – 87; B = 86 – 83; B- = 82 – 80; C+ = 79 – 77; C = 76 – 73; C- = 72 – 70; D = 69 – 65; F = below 65

Subjects that meet one time per week (Music, Art, Physical Education and World Language for Pre-K through Grade 5 will be graded as:

- O (Outstanding)
- S (Satisfactory), or
- U (Unsatisfactory)

## **Honor Roll**

Each student is encouraged to strive for his or her best performance within the school setting. Honors are given to students in Grades 6 through 8 who have shown outstanding academic progress within a trimester. Honors are as follows:

**High Honors:** ‘A’ or higher in all MAJOR and MINOR Subjects and ‘S’ or higher in Music, Art, Physical Education.

**First Honors:** ‘A-’ or higher in all MAJOR Subjects and a minimum of ‘B’ in MINOR Subjects with an ‘S’ or higher in Music, Art, Physical Education.

**Second Honors:** ‘B-’ or higher in all subjects and ‘S’ or higher in Music, Art, Physical Education.

## **Subjects**

**Major Subjects:** Religion, Reading or Literature, Language Arts, Spelling, Science/Health, Mathematics, Social Studies, History and Geography, World Language for Grades 6, 7 and 8.

**Minor Subjects:** Handwriting.



## **Promotion, Placement, and Retention**

Promotion to the next grade in St. John Paul the Great Academy is based on a student's overall performance in his/her current grade. Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Administration may recommend repetition of a grade, tutoring, or the completion of summer work as a requirement for promotion when it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

Sometimes it is necessary that a child repeat a certain grade. Such a decision is made only after consultation with the principal, parents, and the teachers of the child being considered for retention and any outside support staff provided by the Torrington Board of Education for testing, if necessary. If a student is failing two or more major subjects, retention may be necessary. When a student is promoted over the advice of the professional staff, parents are required to sign a statement that they realize that the transfer is against the professional advice of the staff.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Technology provides previously unimagined services to the students. With that availability brings responsibility. The following actions will not be permitted in school:

- sending, displaying or downloading offensive messages or pictures;
- using obscene language;
- harassing, insulting, or threatening others;
- damaging of computer systems or computer networks;
- violating copyright laws;
- submitting documents from the Internet as a student's personal work;
- using another person's sign-in and or password;
- trespassing in someone else's folder, work, files, or email;
- intentionally wasting limited resources;
- using the network for commercial purposes;
- revealing a personal phone number, age, name, or address of oneself or another; and
- disregarding iPad usage policies.

### **Technology Policies**

**Blogging**—Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to, MySpace.com®, Xanga®, Friendster®, Facebook®, etc., may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish.

**Sexting**—Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices face suspension and/or expulsion.



**Texting**—Students should at no time be involved in texting during the course of the school day. Students involved in texting at school face confiscation of cell phones, incident report, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

**Virtual Reality Sites**—Virtual Reality Sites such as, but not limited to, [www.there.com](http://www.there.com)® and [www.secondlife.com](http://www.secondlife.com)®, pose a developmental and moral risk to the life of a student. Parents are cautioned to be aware of the online sites visited by their children, knowing that often predators are not living in a neighborhood, but within the home via a computer.

**Social Media** – Conduct whether inside or outside the school that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, including social media, may result in disciplinary actions including suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from school.

**To Have Access to Our Computers:**

**All students and parents/guardians must read, sign, and return our Electronic Information Resources Use Agreement and Student Acceptable iPad Use Agreement. (Please locate these forms at the end of this handbook and in the Parent Portal.)**

## **LIBRARY & MAKERSPACE**

The primary purpose of the library and maker space is to learn, collaborate, and share. Makerspaces allow us to explore, create new things, or improve things that already exist. The library provides access to resources that enable students to locate, evaluate, apply, and synthesize information.

The library is designated to research work, homework completion, and reading. Conversations between students in the library should not be distracting to others. The makerspace, most importantly, is a safe place for students to “fail.” At a time when test scores and getting the right answer often trump the process of learning, makerspaces allow students to learn by trial and error, improving with each attempt.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Physical Education class is a requirement for all students in grade Pre-K through Grade 8, unless there is a WRITTEN DOCTOR’S NOTE indicating the reason for non-participation. This note should also indicate the duration of time for non-participation. All students are to wear sneakers for physical education class along with their uniform gym clothes. Gym uniforms are to be worn to school on gym days only unless instructed otherwise.



St. John Paul the Great

**ACADEMY**

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES SPORTS PROGRAMS, CLUBS, ETC.**

Sports and extracurricular activities and clubs are an enjoyable and important part of the total development of the child. In order for a student/athlete to be eligible to represent the school on a team, clinic, or activity/club, he or she must receive passing grades in every subject. If a child receives an 'F' in any subject on his or her report card, he or she will be suspended from a team, clinic, or activity/club until the following report card is sent home showing passing grades in ALL subjects.

Sports may include, but are not limited to, Girls and Boys JV/Varsity Basketball Teams, Cheerleading Squad, Basketball Clinic, Soccer Clinic, and Extracurricular activities/clubs may include, but are not limited to, Newspaper Club, Coffee House, Tennis Club, Singing and Sewing Club, and Student Council.

Any student/athlete (participant or observer) whose conduct is not sportsmanlike is subject to administrative disciplinary action.

Parents of team members are responsible for: 1) providing transportation to and from practices and games, 2) helping with team needs as required by coaches and 3) performing volunteer hours as required by the Sports Association, which is to volunteer for at least **two** home games either working in the kitchen, collecting admissions at the door, running the clock for games, or keeping score (parents only).

Students/athletes who are in the school building for team practices or games must remain in the gym area and must be supervised by the team coach. The coach sets the arrival time of a player.

Parents of Clinic or Club members are responsible for: 1) providing transportation to and from practices and 2) helping with Clinic or Club members' needs as required by the coaches. Clinic or Club members who are in the school building for practices must remain in the gym area and be supervised by the coach. The coach sets the arrival time of the members.

Any student absent from school or dismissed during the school day due to illness will not be permitted to participate in any sports programs or extracurricular activities or clubs for St. John Paul the Great Academy on that given day. This includes events taking place after school and/or during the evening at school or any other location. In the event the absence is due to extenuating circumstances, the parent or guardian may contact the school principal who will make a final decision in regard to waiving the above policy.

**STUDENTS ARE NOT COVERED BY THE SCHOOL FOR MEDICAL EXPENSES RESULTING FROM AN INJURY RECEIVED AT SCHOOL OR IN CONJUNCTION WITH THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL SPONSORED EVENTS AWAY FROM THE SCHOOL PREMISES. ANY MEDICAL BILLS OR INJURY CLAIM SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE**





MAJOR MEDICAL COVERAGE IN FORCE FOR YOUR CHILD. (A copy of any insurance form submitted must also be submitted to the coach.) ANY INJURED STUDENT MUST FILL OUT A FIRST REPORT OF INJURY FORM SUPPLIED BY THE COACH TO KEEP ON FILE.

## STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

The school nurse is onsite Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 2:30pm unless an off-site emergency arises. The nurse holds all medical history and immunization records. She is responsible for screenings, medical care plans, and first aid. A sick child must NOT be sent to school. Students must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Students who are sent home during the school day with a fever will not be allowed to return to school the next day as this would not allow for the 24-hour protection of the entire school community. If a child becomes ill at school, the school nurse or school secretary will contact the parent. If the parent cannot be reached, then the person or persons designated on the child's emergency information form will be contacted to take the sick child home as soon as possible.

School personnel can ONLY give or apply any prescription and non-prescription medications in the following circumstances:

When a written instruction form from the child's physician has been submitted to the school nurse or principal. The forms are available at the school nurse's office.

**Please note that parents are required to sign this form.**

1. Once the form is complete, then medication may be given to a student by the school nurse, principal, or in the principal's absence, a designated teacher. A written record is kept of the administration of such medication.
2. Children are NOT to take any medication on their own at school. Medication must be delivered to the school nurse or principal by the parents.
3. No more than a 45-day supply of medication is to be delivered. Non-prescription medications must be delivered by the parent in a NEW and UNOPENED bottle.

Any physician's orders that restrict a child's physical activity pertaining to Physical Education class or any other activity must be presented to the school nurse or principal.

All students entering Pre-K, Kindergarten, and Grade 7 are required to have an updated physical (within one year before entering this grade) that includes written proof of proper immunizations as required by the State of Connecticut Public Acts 80-440 and 91-327.

**Please note that parents are required to sign this form.**

Any child recovered from a contagious disease must secure admittance permission from the school office before returning to class.



Control of communicable diseases is the joint responsibility of parents, principal, teachers, and nurses. This outline of the most common communicable diseases and the time a student must not attend school will serve as a guide.

**DISEASE**

**EXCLUSION PERIOD**

<b>Chicken Pox</b>	<b>When the lesions are crusted or off</b>
<b>Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)</b>	<b>After properly using medication for 24 hours</b>
<b>Strep Throat</b>	<b>After 1 full day (24 hours) of treatment with medication= out of school for 36 hours.</b>
<b>Scarlet Fever or Scarlatina</b>	<b>Same as Strep Throat</b>
<b>Impetigo</b>	<b>When all lesions have crusted, are not draining or have disappeared. or with verification from a doctor stating the child is non-communicable.</b>
<b>Ringworm</b>	<b>After 1 full day of treatment</b>
<b>Scabies</b>	<b>24 hours after completion of treatment</b>
<b>Head Lice</b>	<b>Subsequent to being examined by doctor or school nurse, student can return. Live lice are not allowed, but nits may be.</b>
<b>Fever</b>	<b>After 24 hours, and, if temperature is normal.</b>
<b>Fifth's Disease</b>	<b>After rash appears, child is no longer contagious</b>

**Common colds** can be serious and, for this reason, no child with acute respiratory symptoms (runny nose, watery eyes, cough) should be sent to school.

**Head Lice** is common among children. Parents who suspect head lice are urged to contact the school nurse to help prevent spreading. The nurse can also give advice on treatment.

**All non-prescription medication** (cough drops, lip balm, etc.) should be taken to the school nurse with the following information: child's name, frequency, dose, and date.



## **Breakfast, Lunch, and Snacks**

**Breakfast is available for all students.** Breakfast can be received on a cart located just inside the downstairs hallway when you walk into the building at drop off. The EdAdvance kitchen staff requires tracking of who eats breakfast and will be stationed at this cart. Breakfast will be available between 7:25 – 7:50 (Drop-Off). It is recommended that all students eating academy provided breakfast be dropped off as early as possible. Any student receiving breakfast at or around 7:50 will have the ability to eat their breakfast at their normally scheduled snack time.

**Snack** Students may bring a healthy, midmorning snack. It should be SMALL so that it does not interfere with a well-balanced lunch.

**Lunch** Students may bring lunch each day. A Hot Lunch is available at our school cafeteria. Students/Families should sign up and pay for lunch via the EZ Lunch Digital Application. Instructions for use of the **EZ Lunch Digital Application** can be found in the Parent Portal. Soda, candy, and chewing gum are not permitted in the building, on the bus, or on the school grounds and should not be sent to school in the student's lunch. Parents should not drop off fast food lunch for their child(ren).

**Calendar** Breakfast and Lunch Calendars can be found both on the St. John Paul the Great Academy website as well as on the EZ Lunch Digital Application.

## **EXPECTATIONS, GUIDELINES AND DISCIPLINE FOR OUR STUDENTS**

The faculty and administration of St. John Paul the Great Academy expects the students of the school community to behave in a responsible and caring way. The students shall:

- accept the leadership and authority of teachers, the principal, and staff members;
- cooperate with teachers and other students;
- cooperate with parent volunteers;
- be courteous;
- be honest in all class work and homework;
- use acceptable language;
- remain on school property until dismissed by a teacher or the principal;
- not chew gum in the building, on the school bus, or on school property;
- not eat or drink in bus lines, the library, or hallways;



- be in the school building before or after school only with the permission of a teacher or the principal;
- be in proper school uniform while on school property;
- show consideration and care for school property;
- complete all assignments on time;
- not carry matches, knives, guns, tobacco, alcohol, or illegal substances of any kind (Failure to comply may result in expulsion);
- obey all rules and regulations pertaining to transportation;
- not verbally or physically abuse another student at any time; (If an act is severe, with the intent to humiliate, harass, ridicule, or intimidate a child, it may be reported in a log that may be used over time to prevent and/or identify a pattern of bullying behavior. Information in the log is confidential and will not be part of a student's school record.)
- return any test or assignments requiring a parent's signature;
- assume responsibility for learning;
- be attentive in class;
- come to school prepared and ready to learn;
- be organized;
- come to class with all required materials;
- use time wisely; and
- cooperate with peers and teachers.

## **Cheating**

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, incident report, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. A student athlete who is involved in cheating will also be unable to participate in sports.

## **Drugs and Alcohol**

**Students who possess drugs and/or alcohol at school or at any school function face suspension and/or expulsion.**

## **School Property**

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor or replacement. Textbooks used by the student must have a proper book cover (no sticky covers) at all times and should be carried to and from school in a backpack (book bags on wheels are not allowed as they pose a safety issue). No writing in textbooks is permitted. Each student is responsible for his/her textbooks and must pay for replacement for damaged or lost texts.



## **Off-Campus Conduct**

The administration of St. John Paul the Great Academy reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day. This off-campus behavior includes, but is not limited to, cyber bullying.

### **Inappropriate behavior may be handled in a variety of ways.**

#### **Based on the misdeed, the student may:**

- be denied recess time;
- be removed from the class for a specified period of time;
- be required to remain after school to complete work (parents will be notified);
- receive an incident report;
- receive a detention;
- be suspended from the school; and
- face expulsion.

## **Invitations, Gifts, Birthdays**

Invitations of any kind cannot be distributed in school unless every student in the class is invited. We do not want to hurt the feelings of any child. Student birthdays are celebrated each First Friday Mass of the month with a birthday song dedicated to students whose birthday falls within the month the mass is being celebrated. Summer birthdays will be celebrated at the last First Friday mass. In addition, birthdays can be celebrated within the student's classroom at the discretion of the teacher and classroom policy. Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students.

**Please note: to avoid classroom disruption, no special deliveries of balloons, flowers, etc. will be allowed for students' birthdays.**

It is a goal of St. John Paul the Great Academy to join the parents in developing standards of conduct that will foster students' growth in virtue and Christian values. Additionally, we will assure an atmosphere of safety in which that growth will take place and mutual respect is shown. Students are expected to understand that each child is free to be himself or herself while at the same time allowing all to be free. Rules are necessary for this freedom and, therefore, it is essential that students and parents cooperate with basic school rules and regulations. The principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

Items such as, but not limited to, questionable books and pictures, white-out, knives, guns, matches, cigarettes, radios, pagers, laser lights, palm pilots, CDs, iPods or other mp3 players,



cameras, or anything that will detract from a learning situation are not allowed at school at any time without prior permission from the principal or teacher. Cell phones are allowed in backpacks only and must be turned off during the school day.

The school Administration, in accordance with state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school. Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) at the discretion of the principal.

**Students are expected to:**

- show politeness, courtesy and respect at all times to each other, the staff, faculty, and visitors to the school;
- follow the guidance and regulations of each teacher;
- be in uniform at all times;
- refrain from running in the school building or school yard;
- refrain from rough play during recess periods; and
- remember they are a role model of our school community at all times in and out of school.

Conduct, whether inside or outside the school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school can and may result in student expulsion.

**Discipline Policy**

The faculty and staff of St. John Paul the Great Academy are committed to helping, working with, and caring about each student as an individual person, and providing a wholesome Christian environment, which exposes students to Catholic principles, values, and attitudes. Incident Reports will be sent home to parents when a teacher feels a situation requires parental involvement or notification. The principal will be aware of these reports. When conduct unbecoming a Christian student continues, disciplinary action will be taken.

The following conduct is punishable by **Detention**:

- excessive talking during instruction time;
- rudeness, bad manners, talking back;
- possession and/or use in class during school hours of: Headsets, Game Boys, cell phones, pagers, virtual pets, iPods, cameras, or other similar devices in class;
- marring, defacing, or destroying school or Church property;
- ignoring school policy;
- bullying, fighting, or threatening;
- foul language or inappropriate gestures;
- disrespect of others;
- sexual harassment;
- possession or lighting of matches or lighters;
- possession of any illegal substance or device;



- leaving school property without permission.
- any incident causing harm to oneself or others, including excessive roughness at recess; and
- any other inappropriate behavior that the principal deems offensive.

Parents will be notified of a detention first by phone call from the individual issuing the detention. Additionally, *detention notices* are sent home to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school the next day. Detentions are held from 2:15PM-3:15PM and should take precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, games, etc.

Students who receive detention must serve it on the assigned day. A student who fails to attend a detention will automatically receive an additional one. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to arrange transportation home after a detention.

Should inappropriate behavior continue after being cited *incident reports* or detentions, a conference must be held with principal, teacher, parent, and student present.

### **Suspension Policy**

Full Suspension (out of school) will be considered when, in the judgment of the administration, a serious offense occurred or after lesser disciplinary measures have been ineffective. Parents will be notified of the reason and length of the suspension before it takes place. Suspension will last no longer than one week. Students will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the principal, in conjunction with the pastor, reserves the right to remove any student and/or family from enrollment at St. John Paul the Great Academy without notice if, in their absolute discretion, they determine that such immediate action is necessary for the preservation of the safety, educational process, and/or mission of the school community.

The penalty of **Expulsion** will be imposed when, in the estimation of the administration, a student presents a danger to the moral or physical well-being of other students or is guilty of prolonged and open disregard for school authority and rules. Expulsion will be considered only after conferences with parents or guardians to make them fully aware of the seriousness of the student's conduct. The Office of Catholic Schools will be consulted by the administration before a final decision is rendered.

The administration has the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and reserves the right to waive disciplinary action for just cause at their discretion. Parents are expected to be supportive of all disciplinary action taken by the administration and faculty. The Discipline Policy is in effect to ensure St. John Paul the Great Academy operates efficiently, safely and productively for the benefit of all students.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance is essential for a student to succeed. Prolonged and frequent absences may result in a child repeating a grade. If a child is ill or will not be present at school on a given day, the parent or legal guardian must inform the school by phone by 8:15 AM. A message left on the school's answering machine is acceptable. If the school does not receive this required notification, the administrative assistant will make a reasonable effort to confirm absenteeism by placing a courtesy call to the home phone number. These efforts will be logged. When a student is absent, a parent may call the school office prior to 9:00AM to arrange for missed work and homework assignments. They may be picked up at the school office after dismissal. Requests made after 9:00AM may not be honored until the next day at dismissal. A student will be allowed 5 days from his/her return to school to make up all missing assignments. All tests must be made up within one week of the original test date without exception. Please be aware that if a child is absent from school or is dismissed during the school day due to illness, he/she cannot participate in or attend any after-school activities on that day.

When the child returns to school after an absence, a written note from the parent or legal guardian must be given to the child's teacher. These notes will be kept until the end of the current school year. For an absence of four (4) consecutive days or more, a written note from a Medical Doctor must be provided on the first day back to school. Any student who is absent from school for 35 days or more will be subject to a review of classroom performance, homework completion, comprehension test, quiz grades, and past and present records before that child may be promoted.

Dentist and doctor appointments should be made for after school hours. However, if a student must be dismissed during the school day, he or she should bring a written note specifying the reason. The parent or legal guardian must meet the student in the school office. No student will be permitted to leave school during regular class hours unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. Any student leaving during the school day must be signed out in the office by the parent or legal guardian. If the student returns to the school during the same day, he/she must be signed back into school by the parent or legal guardian. Students who are away from school for an appointment for 3 ½ hours or more will be counted as absent for ½ day. Three early dismissals of a student, each of which is less than 3 ½ hours, will be considered a ½ day absence.

An annual list of pertinent dates that affect the school calendar will be issued to each family before the beginning of the school year. This will indicate all of the four (4) hour days with noon dismissal, teacher in-service days, holidays, and school vacations that are scheduled **at that time**. Any change to that schedule will be issued in the weekly Thursday information that is sent via email to parents as soon as possible prior to the implementation of the change. Student absences





for other vacations are considered unexcused absences. In such cases, teachers will NOT issue advance work – NO EXCEPTIONS. All work missed due to unexcused absences must be completed within five (5) days of the student’s return to school. All tests must be made up within one week of the original test date without exception.

All students in grades Pre-K through Grade 8 should be at school before 7:50AM. Students arriving after this time are considered tardy and must report to the school office for a tardy slip. Punctuality is important for the students’ readiness for learning and the general operation of the classroom. Three tardy days will be considered a ½ day absence. Arriving to school tardy excessively will have a direct impact on a student’s academic evaluation and promotion to the next grade. Tardiness should be the exception, not a regular occurrence.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

### **School Office Hours**

The school office is open on all full school days from 7:25 AM – 3:00 PM

### **School Hours**

At St. John Paul the Great Academy, we work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their children to enter the school building on their own each morning. Students should not arrive before 7:25AM. Students will enter the building from 7:25AM – 7:45AM. The morning bell will ring at 7:50AM. The school day begins at 7:50AM. Students who arrive at school after 7:50AM are considered late and must report to the OFFICE through the Prospect Street entrance for a tardy slip to enter their class.

Punctuality is important for the students’ readiness for learning and the general operation of the classroom. Tardiness should be the exception, not a regular occurrence.

Regular dismissal will be at 2:00 PM. On scheduled early dismissal days, classes will be dismissed at 12:00 NOON. Any change to an individual child’s regular dismissal procedure MUST be received in writing and signed by the parent or legal guardian. If written notification is not received, regular dismissal plans will be followed. A telephone call is not sufficient except in the case of emergency.

Students are not permitted to return to the school building or premises after 2:00PM unless accompanied by a teacher or coach.

St. John Paul the Great Academy offers an After-School Care Program from dismissal until 5:30PM. Students who attend this program must have the proper forms completed before being allowed to attend. This is a prepay program; payment is required along with the sign-up sheet. Parents are to make arrangements for their child(ren) to be picked up no later than 5:30PM. Please



locate the **St. John Paul the Great Academy Afterschool Registration Form** in the Parent Portal.

### **Returning to School After Dismissal**

Students are not permitted to return to the school building after the 2:00PM dismissal unless accompanied by a teacher or coach. Students should not be returning to the school building to retrieve forgotten books or homework.

## **SAFETY RULES**

### **Visitors**

For safety and security reasons, All VISITORS ARE REQUIRED to report to the school office upon entering the building. At all times, all doors to the school building are locked. Entrance can be gained via PROSPECT STREET for St. John Paul the Great Academy by ringing the buzzer at the doors. There is a Visitor/Volunteer Sign-In Book in the office for anyone who enters the building. Each person is required to sign in when he/she enters the building and obtain a visitor pass. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out and return the visitor pass at the time of departure. Parents or visitors ARE NOT to visit the classroom area without a specific appointment. THIS INCLUDES PARENTS WHO VOLUNTEER DURING THE SCHOOL DAY. This is an interruption to the teacher and to the educational process.

### **Child Abuse Laws**

St. John Paul the Great Academy abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Connecticut. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline.

### **Custody and Divorce Rules**

In cases where parents are separated and/or divorced, the principal should be informed about such situations. The school must have accurate custodial information on file at all times. The school must also be provided with a LEGAL DOCUMENT regarding the custody and visitation program for the child. This is necessary for the safety and protection of the child.

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school information regarding his or her child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the custodial parent's responsibility to provide the school with a court-certified copy of the court order. Unmarried parents should also have custody documents on file, as needed. This information will help school officials in determining when, if ever, the child can be released to the non-custodial parents. Such information is considered confidential and will be held in strict confidence by the principal.



## **Bullying and Harassment**

St. John Paul the Great Academy attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students involved in harassing behavior or found to be making threats face detentions, suspension, and/or expulsion.

## **Policy**

Bullying is prohibited in all Catholic schools in the Archdiocese. It will not be tolerated during the school day nor during any school-sponsored activities on or off school grounds. Bullying and intimidation are actions that are contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ. This behavior is against the fundamental tenet of “Love your neighbor as yourself”, and destroys respect for the dignity of the student, undermines the Christian atmosphere of the school, and deprives the student a safe and caring learning environment.

## **Scope**

This bullying policy is to be applied to Kindergarten through Grade 8 at St. John Paul the Great Academy. It addresses bullying and does not replace any policies that deal with individual student misconduct or behavior. Student behavior is already addressed in the “Expectations of the Student” section of this policy.

This policy will not apply to the Pre-Kindergarten program. It is recognized that these children are very young and are learning social skills. Unkind acts that occur at the Pre-Kindergarten level will be handled by the child’s teacher. The teacher will work with the student, family, and principal (as needed) to address these situations.

## **Definition of Bullying**

Bullying is defined as any overt acts by a student, or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds, at a school sponsored activity or on a school bus, which acts are repeated against the same student over time. Such policies may include provisions addressing bullying outside of the school setting if it has a direct and negative impact on a student’s academic performance or safety in school. Bullying includes but is not limited to physical intimidation or assault, extortion, oral or written threats, teasing and putdowns, name calling, threatening looks, gestures or actions, cruel rumors, false accusations, and social isolation.

In accordance with this definition, the following factors should be considered before identifying conduct by a student or group of students as bullying in violation of school policy. The



determination that conduct does not constitute bullying under state law and school policy, however, does not restrict the right of the administration to impose appropriate disciplinary consequences for student misconduct.

### **Location**

Bullying in violation of school policy must occur on school grounds, or at a school sponsored activity (which includes transportation services). Conduct that occurs off-campus, e.g. harassment over the Internet, physical intimidation in the community, is not bullying under this policy unless it has a direct and negative impact on a student's academic performance or safety in school.

### **Repeated Misconduct**

Bullying is in violation of our school policy and is defined by acts that are “repeated against the same student over time.” An isolated incident, however egregious, may **Not** be defined as “bullying” under state law or school policy. Similarly, numerous acts of misconduct against different students do not constitute “bullying” under state law and school policy. While serious, both isolated incidences of bullying behavior and numerous acts of misconduct against different students will be appropriately addressed under the school's discipline policy and will be entered in a log to ensure a pattern of bullying behavior does not develop.

### **Ridicule, Harassment, Humiliation, Intimidation**

Bullying is more than misconduct. Bullying is marked by the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate the victim. In evaluating whether conduct constitutes bullying, special attention should be paid to the words chosen or actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the student accused of bullying interacted with the victim, and the motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred, of the alleged violator.

### **Complaint Process**

#### **Formal Complaints**

Students and/or their parents or guardians may file written reports of conduct they consider to be bullying. These written reports shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the conduct alleged, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. These reports can be filed with any teacher who will forward them to the principal, or directly to the principal, for review and action.

#### **Informal Complaints**

Students may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbal report to a teacher or administrator. Such informal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the conduct alleged,



the number of such incidents, the target of the suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. The individual who receives the informal complaint shall promptly forward a written complaint, including the information provided to the principal for review and action.

### **Anonymous Complaints**

Students who make an informal complaint as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the teacher or administrator who receives the complaint. Should anonymity be requested, the principal or his/her designee shall meet with the student to review the request for anonymity and the impact that maintaining anonymity of the complaint may have on the investigation of the complaint and/or possible remedial action. At such a meeting, the student shall be given the choice as to whether to maintain the anonymity of the complaint. Anonymous complaints shall be reviewed, and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that does not disclose the source of the complaint and is consistent with the due process rights of the student alleged to have committed acts of bullying.

### **Staff Responsibilities and Interventions**

Teachers, administrators, and other staff such as teacher's aides, the school nurse, etc., who witness bullying, as defined above, shall promptly notify the principal of the events observed and shall promptly file a written incident report concerning the events witnessed.

Teachers and other professional staff members are encouraged to address the issue of bullying in other interactions with students. They may find opportunities to educate students about bullying and help eliminate bullying behavior through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. Teachers and other professional employees should intervene promptly (unless intervention would be a threat to the staff member's safety) whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, harassing, humiliating, or intimidating another student, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of bullying.

### **Investigation of Complaint**

Once a complaint has been reported, the principal shall promptly investigate to determine if bullying has occurred. The principal will review the log referred to in #16 of the "Expectations of the Student" section to also see if there is a pattern of bullying behavior and will use that as a tool of investigation. Investigation of alleged bullying may also include interviews and conversations with students (including witnesses, the victim(s), and the student(s) accused of bullying), parents, faculty, staff, and school records. Parents of children filing a complaint and named in the complaint will be made aware of the investigation.

An investigation of an anonymous complaint shall be limited as appropriate. Such limitation of the investigation may include restricting action to a simple review of the complaint, discussing the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged violator) subject to further receipt of



information, and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition his/her report be anonymous.

A written report of the investigation shall be prepared when the investigation is complete. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of bullying were verified and when acts of bullying were verified, and a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action.

### **Consequences of Actions**

Once the investigation is complete, the school principal shall determine the consequences for the individual(s) on a case-by-case, age-appropriate basis. Bullying can take many forms and can vary dramatically in how serious it is and what impact it has on the victim and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of bullying, as defined above, will generally warrant disciplinary action against the student responsible for bullying, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action is a matter for the professional discretion of the principal. It is the goal of the administration, faculty, and staff to have the child achieve redemption, learn, and stop bullying. The following are possible interventions to enforce the prohibition against bullying.

### **Non-disciplinary intervention**

When verified acts of bullying are identified early and/or when acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of bullying, its prohibition, and their duty to avoid any conduct that could be considered bullying.

### **Disciplinary intervention**

When acts of bullying are verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. Children who participate in bullying acts may be asked to perform some type of community service within the school or parish, make amends with the child(ren) that are victims of the bullying acts, and will be issued an age appropriate consequence. Community service may include, but is not limited to, tasks in the classroom, cleaning up grounds or the building. Making amends shall include, but is not limited to, making a card or writing a letter to the child, apologizing to the child, performing an act of kindness. Punitive action may include the loss of recess, detention (Grades 5 through 8), suspension at home, and expulsion. An in-school/out-of-school suspension given as a result of bullying shall be reported to the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Schools, Office of Catholic Schools. Parents of all disciplined children will be notified of the consequences.

Depending upon the severity of the situation, the administrator may also take steps to ensure student safety. These may include implementing a safety plan, separating and supervising students involved, providing staff support for students as necessary, requesting a parent conference,



requiring that a student/family obtain professional counseling, developing a supervision plan with parents, and notifying law enforcement in the most severe cases.

### **Educational Measures**

The faculty of St. John Paul the Great Academy will include education about the harm, culture, and injustice caused by bullying into their curriculum where it is possible and appropriate. The religion program in Grades K-8 will integrate issues about bullying behavior into the classes.

### **Reporting Obligations: Report to the parent or guardian of the student involved in acts of bullying**

If after investigation, acts of bullying by a specific student are verified, the principal shall notify the parent or guardian of the student in writing of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against the student, a description of the discipline shall be included in the notification.

### **Reporting Obligations: Reports to the victim and his/her parent or guardian**

If after investigation, acts of bullying against a specific student are verified, the principal shall notify the parent or guardian of the victim of such finding. In providing notification, the statutory privacy rights of the person responsible for bullying must be respected. The specific disciplinary consequences imposed on the violator, as reflected in the student's educational records, shall not be disclosed to the parents or guardian of the victim, except as provided by law.

## **PROTOCOLS FOR EMERGENCIES**

### **Crisis Response Plan**

A Crisis Response Plan was developed in accordance with Archdiocesan Guidelines. Copies of this plan were reviewed and amended by the Torrington Fire Department and the Torrington Police Department. Copies of the final document were then provided to both agencies. Any parent can review this plan by appointment with the principal. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedures to follow to keep your children safe. In the event of an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated, and students will be moved to the secure designated location.

### **Drills**

State Law requires that **Fire Drills** be held monthly. During the fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

- 1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;**
- 2. Listen to instructions from the teacher;**
- 3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence;**
- 4. Stand in a single file line, by grade, facing the building; and**



5. **Return to building when signal is given.**

**Lockdown Drills** are held periodically during the school year. During these drills, students should follow these regulations:

1. **Rise in silence when the signal is given;**
2. **Listen to instructions from the teacher;**
3. **Walk to the “Hot Spot”, the nearest protective wall out of sight of doors/windows; and**
4. **Sit quietly until instructed otherwise.**

### **Weather Emergencies**

#### **Inclement Weather, School Cancellations, and Early Dismissal Guidelines**

The school will follow the NO SCHOOL or EARLY DISMISSAL DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER announcements made by the City of Torrington when there is a storm or natural occurrence that may force the closing of schools. If the announcement indicates the Torrington Public Schools are closed, then St. John Paul the Great Academy is also closed. Please watch WVIT CH. 30, WFSB CH. 3, or WTNH CH. 8 for any weather-related announcements. When school is dismissed early due to a weather emergency, an email will be sent to the family email on record. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL SCHOOL.**

Students will be dismissed according to the Student Information Form that we have on file. If school is dismissed early or cancelled due to weather, all after-school activities, including aftercare are cancelled for that day.

### **Emergency Information Forms**

Emergency information forms are kept in the school office. Each parent is required to complete one of these forms for each school year for each child in attendance. The school will provide these forms, and it is expected that they be completed and returned to the school immediately. It is vital that the school have these on hand should an emergency occur during the school day. The parent/guardian is responsible for informing the school if there are any changes to emergency contact information.

## **COMMUNICATION RULES**

### **Communications Sent Home**

In order to ensure that all communication from school reaches home in a timely manner, St. John Paul the Great Academy sends weekly emails to the family email address. These emails contain important information regarding school activities. It is the responsibility of the parent to read the information that is sent.





## **General Telephone Use**

Students are not permitted to use the telephone except in emergency situations. Forgotten homework, clothes for sports practices/games, etc. do not constitute emergencies. Arrangements for after school visits to friend's homes should be made at home, not at school. The principal, therefore, will grant permission to use the phone when necessary. All coaches are required to give the students, parents, and the principal a written copy of both the practice and game schedules, thus eliminating the need for telephone calls to parents or legal guardians to inform them of those practices and games. Parents will be informed of the approximate time events will end. Cell phones must be turned off and kept in backpacks during the school day.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

If a student needs a cell phone after school due to entering a house where no one is home or attending sport practices or games, the cell phone must be turned off and kept in the student's backpack during school hours. At no time during the school day should a cell phone be in a student's possession; it will be confiscated, and a parent or guardian must come to the school at the end of the school day to retrieve the cell phone.

In addition to this policy, any student caught using their cell phone/electronic device in school will have it confiscated and will lose the privilege of bringing it to school. As for usage on the bus, students are not prohibited from appropriate usage of cell phones/electronic devices on the bus, but any inappropriate usage will result in confiscation and loss of the privilege of bringing their cell phone/electronic device to school.

## **Search and Seizure**

Upon reasonable suspicion of inappropriate activity that may subject a student to any level of discipline, or in the interests of safety of students and staff, the Principal and/or his designee, may search students desks, lockers, personal belongings, and anything brought onto school property including, but not limited to, handbags, briefcases, purses, backpacks, clothing, cell phones or other electronic devices and the content within such devices such as emails, photos, messages, or other information. The school administration may seize any such items and retain them until the end of the school day or longer. The school administration will have the prerogative to turn over any such items to the police if there is evidence of illegal activity.

## **Expectations Between Parents and School**

Open communication between the parent and teacher helps to create a more effective educational environment for the student. Parents are requested to bring their concerns about their child to the APPROPRIATE person. Proper protocol requires initial contact be made with the teacher. Either the teacher or the parent can initiate a parent/teacher conference. The inability to reach a mutually acceptable resolution will result in a meeting that includes the parent, the teacher, and the principal.



Spontaneous visits to the classrooms are not permitted. All visitors must report to the school office upon entering the building. Please call the school to set up these meetings. Teachers should NOT be called at home to set up appointments.

All school communications will ordinarily be sent to the parents via email. Appropriate notices should be returned with the student to the homeroom teacher. The principal approves all communications.

### **Confidentiality**

The Academy Parent Association Officers, School Board, and room parents may be provided with a list of names and phone numbers in order to contact parents about class activities, volunteer opportunities, or any other emergency situations involving all of the students.

Photographs of students may be taken from time to time for the purpose of maintaining the integrity of any given event for posterity. Some photos may be used for promotional purposes. Photos will only be used with permission of the student's parent or guardian.

Teachers will keep confidential information entrusted to them so long as no one's life, health, or safety is at stake. Parents will be promptly notified of teachers' concerns.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **Drop Off, Pick Up, Parking**

Main Street is the official parking lot of the school for TEACHERS AND STAFF ONLY during school hours. There is to be no parking or driving into the school parking lot during school hours. This regulation is for the protection of all students who will be using the playground before and during school. ALL PARENTS AND VISITORS are asked to park on Main Street or Prospect Street if visiting the building. The driveway along the side of the school building is ONE WAY ONLY FOR TRAFFIC FROM PROSPECT STREET TO MAIN STREET and for buses only and is closed to through traffic during school hours.

### **Student Drop-off**

Two faculty members are on duty at 7:25AM. You may drop your child off at the school between 7:25AM and 7:45AM. A car line system will be followed to allow for drop off directly at the back door of the Main Street side of the school building. Drop Off will occur between 7:25 AM and 7:45AM. Morning announcements will begin approximately between 7:45AM and 7:50AM. Parents/Guardians are asked when dropping students off to pull through the Main Street entrance closest to the Ciesco Memorials and Torrington Insurance Agency (199 Main Street). Please follow a one-way single file system. Further school personnel as well as traffic cones will be stationed to ensure compliance. Students will exit the car and immediately proceed to their homeroom. Parents/Guardians will then, continuing a one-way system, exiting the school



parking lot utilizing the "driveway" exit onto Main Street. Please be aware that when turning from the parking lot, school buses will also be utilizing the "driveway" for drop off. If arrival after 7:45, please drop off at the Main Entrance located off Prospect Street. If it becomes necessary to exit the vehicle, parents/guardians will be asked to move from the car line to the parking lot with an eventual return to the car line.

## **Student Pick Up**

All parents picking up their children (referred to as walkers) at the end of the school day must do so in the Main Street playground. Please enter the parking lot NO EARLIER than 1:50PM using the entrance to the parking lot off Main Street, not the driveway. Cars should line up in rows parallel to the school building. Please take note of the cones in the parking lot and do not pull ahead of them as the bus students will be using the parking lot area closest to the driveway to access the buses. The bell at 2:00PM will dismiss the bus students. Once the buses have all departed, the walkers will be dismissed out the back door on the Main Street side of the building. The row of cars closest to the school building will exit the driveway to Prospect Street; the rows closest to Main Street will exit the driveway to Main Street. Please note, no students will be allowed to exit the building on Prospect Street. Your cooperation will help to ensure the safety of all our students.

## **Riding the School Bus**

Bus transportation is provided within the City of Torrington. The city determines the bus routes and bus stops for students. Any questions or clarification regarding the school bus policy are to be directed to ALL STAR TRANSPORTATION @ 860-489-3444. If you have any concerns about observed behavior of either the bus driver or a student, please contact the bus company and the school principal. The following safety information is provided for your general knowledge:

### **Students Riding the School Bus: (Code of Conduct)**

1. Be at the bus stop at the designated time; help to keep the bus on schedule.
2. Always wait for the bus on the shoulder of the highway or on the sidewalk.
3. Do not stand on or play in snowbanks at the bus stop; you could slip in front of the wheels of the bus.
4. When boarding the bus, stay in line; crowding is dangerous.
5. Remain properly and quietly seated while the bus is in motion.
6. As a passenger, keep your head, arms and hands inside the bus at all times. Never throw objects off the bus.
7. Obey the instructions of the bus driver promptly.
8. Do not deface or mark in any manner, bus seats or equipment.
9. Be courteous to fellow passengers and to the bus driver.
10. Do not distract the attention of the bus driver at any time.



11. Do not eat or drink while on the bus.
12. Do not operate or use the emergency door except in case of emergency.
13. When leaving the bus, stay in line; do not crowd or push or lag behind. If you need to cross the street, walk ten giant steps in front of the bus until you can see the driver's eyes. Wait for his or her signal to cross and look both ways for cars.
14. Stay away from the side of the bus. If you can touch it, **YOU ARE TOO CLOSE!**
15. If you drop something in front of the bus or near it, **DO NOT BEND DOWN TO PICK IT UP!** Flag the bus driver or an adult to retrieve it for you.

**BUS DRIVERS CANNOT ALWAYS SEE STUDENTS OUTSIDE OF THE BUS.  
STUDENTS ARE NOT TO BEND DOWN IN FRONT OF THE BUS.**

Drivers are to notify the school of any student failing to comply with the bus code. Any infraction of the rules of conduct as stipulated above will be reported immediately to the school for disciplinary action. It will be the responsibility and decision of the school to take away bus privileges.

### **Field Trips**

Field Trips are privileges given to students; no student has an absolute right to a field trip. Any student can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic and/or behavioral requirements. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.

Field trips are an important part of the student's academic education. They are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals. For a student to participate in specific field trips with his or her class, a permission form as required by the Archdiocese must be completed and returned to the school. A child may not go on a field trip without this written permission form returned. Written notes that do not contain the exact language of the form will not be accepted. A parent or guardian may not give verbal permission for a field trip.

Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend a field trip will remain at home with their parents and will be marked absent for the day. Students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus to and from the field trip with their class. Students not on the bus may not participate in the field trip and will be counted absent for the day.

Please note that a unique St. John Paul the Great Academy Permission Form will be sent to parents when each specific event is scheduled/offered.

All monies collected for the field trip are non-refundable. All monies paid for field trips must be in the form of a check made payable to St. John Paul the Great Academy.



Cell phones are not allowed on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.

## **DRESS CODE AND GROOMING POLICY**

**Uniforms must be neat, clean, ironed and in good repair at all times.**

All students must be in complete uniform every day. There will be dress down/dress up days that will be announced during the course of the school year (a dress code for such days is included in this section). If there is a time when the prescribed uniform cannot for some legitimate reason be worn, a note from the parent/guardian must be written to the principal. Any dress deemed inappropriate by St. John Paul the Great Academy personnel may result in the parent/guardian being notified with the intention of proper attire being brought to school for the student to change into.

### **General Guidelines**

#### **DRESS UP DAYS: NOT ALLOWED**

- Jeans (including jean Capri's)
- Sneakers
- Flip-flops
- Heels
- T-shirts
- Sweats
- Attire that includes spaghetti straps or are strapless tops
- Attire allowed on dress down days

#### **DRESS DOWN DAYS: ALLOWED**

Sport clothes must be neat, clean, and tasteful. Allowable clothing includes:

- Neat/clean jeans (no holes or rips)
- Uniform shorts, skorts, skirts, or other shorts, skirts that are the same length as the uniform
- Sweatshirts
- Appropriate T-shirts
- Capri pants
- Dresses and skirts (must be knee length)
- Sneakers
- Short socks
- Jogging suits
- Wide strap sleeveless tops
- Jewelry



- Pants/slacks
- Nail polish

### **DRESS DOWN DAYS: NOT ALLOWED**

**Clothing must cover skin on shoulders, mid-drift, thighs, and undergarments. The following clothing is also not allowed:**

- Mini - skirts, shorts, skorts, skirts, dresses
- Spandex
- Halter/tube tops
- Attire that includes spaghetti straps, thin straps, or is strapless
- Low cut blouses/tops
- Clothing that is extremely tight
- Pajama pants
- T-shirts with inappropriate sayings, or alcohol/cigarette ads, or political ads/sayings.
- Heels, dirty sneakers, hee-lies, cleats, clogs, open-back sandals/shoes, flip-flops, combat boots, work boots
- Hats
- Make-up

Haircuts and hairdos are to be of a sensible nature. Hair should be neat with bangs above the eyebrows. Boys' hair should be above and not touching the shirt collar and trimmed around the ears. No initials or designs are to be cut into the hair. No Mohawks are allowed. Hair coloring and bleaching is not permitted. No beads, scarves, or feathers should be worn in the hair. Girls are permitted to wear STUD-TYPE pierced, NON-DANGLING earrings, no more than TWO per ear. Hoop and dangling earrings are not permitted. Ear cuffs are not permitted. **NO OTHER BODY PIERCING IS PERMITTED.** Students are permitted to wear a watch and no more than TWO bracelets.

Beeping devices on watches should be turned off during school hours. ONE ring on each hand will be permitted. ONE necklace will be permitted. Ankle bracelets are not permitted. No cosmetics, lip gloss, colored chap stick, colored nail polish, or artificial nails may be worn. Tattoos of any kind, permanent or temporary, are NOT allowed. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings. The school reserves the right to decide whether a student's dress code and grooming are in accord with the school norms.

Students who are out of uniform will be issued *Out of Uniform notices* for violations of any Dress Code/Grooming policies including uniforms in need of repair. After three notices, a detention will be issued.

**NOTE:** Hee-lies are not allowed at any school function. This is a safety issue.



## **Official School Uniform Dress Code**

**Full Dress Uniforms are worn from September to June and at any time requested by the principal.** Every child must have at least one Full Dress Uniform (except for PreK)

- Optional Summer Uniforms are worn only during the months of September, October, April, May, and June (exact dates determined each year).
- Optional “Winter Uniforms” are worn only during the months of November through March (exact dates determined each year).
- “Full”, “summer”, “winter”, and “Gym” uniforms are not to be mixed.
- All school uniforms, including any sweater, sweatshirt, or fleece jacket to be worn in school, are to be purchased through Tommy Hilfiger school uniforms.

Direct Link: <https://www.globalschoolwear.com/school/STJP01>

### **OFFICIAL SJPTGA DRESS CODE**

**Every K-8<sup>th</sup> grade student will need (1) Full Dress Uniform and the gym uniform**

#### **Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4**

Gym uniform every day, sneakers

#### **Kindergarten - Grade 8**

"Full Dress Uniforms" are worn on the First Friday of the Month, Holy Days, at Principal's request A change from years past: When students are not required to be in full dress uniform, they can still wear the full-dress uniform or the everyday uniform which is a combination of the following: Skirt, Skort, Pants, Shorts (boys only), Long or short sleeve polo shirt w/logo (blue or yellow)

#### **Girls Full Dress Uniform**

Jumper, Skirt, or Skort with white long or short sleeve blouse and tie, Navy or white tights or knee socks Black leather mary janes, brown or tan boat shoes, tan bucs

#### **Boys Full Dress Uniform**

Long or short sleeve white dress shirt, tie, navy pants, black belt, navy or black socks, black leather slip on or tie shoes, brown or tan boat shoes, tan bucs

\*\* Items that require the mandatory logo have it listed underneath the picture of the item

\*\* Boys tie and girls jumper do not require the emblem

#### **Gym Uniform**

Navy sweatshirt or I-shirt w/logo, navy sweatpants or shorts

Sneakers (no light up sneakers allowed) White socks (no no-show socks allowed) ankle length or higher.



St. John Paul the Great  
**ACADEMY**

Shoe options: Boys - Black leather slip on or tie, brown or tan boat shoes, tan bucs Girls - Black leather mary janes, brown or tan boat shoes, tan bucs

### **ASBESTOS**

In compliance with AHERA regulations, all parents, teachers, and employees associated with St. John Paul the Great Academy are informed of the Asbestos Inspection Report and Management Plan. This report/plan is on file in the school office and is available for review by any parent, teacher, etc. during normal business hours of the school. Please make your request for reviewing this file to the principal.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be brought to the school office to be placed in the Lost and Found box. Items placed in the Lost and Found remain there for 30 days. After 30 days, items are donated to charity.

Students who lose a library book, textbook, or workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping.

### **STUDENT/PARENT DIRECTORY INFO**

The school will not publish parent/student directories with names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses without written parental permission. The names and addresses of students and/or their parents/guardians will not be released to salespersons, commercial organizations, or to any unauthorized person or agency. The names and addresses of Grades 6, 7, and 8 students may be forwarded to Archdiocesan high schools serving that region for the purpose of student recruitment.





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## **REQUIRED FORMS**

**PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE FOLLOWING FOUR FORMS AND RETURN TO SCHOOL BY THE DUE DATE STATED ON EACH FORM**

- 1. PARENT/STUDENT SIGNATURE PAGE**
- 2. ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES USE AGREEMENT**
- 3. WEBSITE/ PUBLICATIONS PHOTO PERMISSION AND GUIDELINES**
- 4. iPad AND CHROMEBOOK USE AGREEMENT**



## Parent/Student Signature Page

When enrolling your child in St. John Paul the Great Academy, you are agreeing to abide and be governed by the **2024/2025 Parent/Student Handbook**.

**Family Name** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

***\*Parents and students must both sign.***

Please Return This Signed Form No Later Than October 2024.

\*By not returning this document by October 2024, it is agreed upon by all parties that you have read the 2024- 2025 Parent/Student Handbook and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.



**ST. JOHN PAUL THE GREAT ACADEMY**  
**Electronic Information Resources Use Agreement**

Each student who utilizes the school's computer system and other school electronic devices will be instructed in the proper use of the network, and the student and his/her parent or guardian must read and sign this use agreement before the student will be allowed to use the school's computer system and electronic information resources.

The use of the school's computer system and electronic information resources must be in support of education and research, consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Students using the school's network or computing resources must comply with the appropriate rules for that network or resource.

I agree to follow the rules in all of my work with St. John Paul the Great Academy's computers while attending St. John Paul the Great Academy:

1. I will not use the computer resources for non-academic purposes. I will not waste or take supplies such as paper, printer cartridges, and discs that are provided by the school. I will keep my computer work area clean and will not eat or drink in the computer lab.
2. I will not make unauthorized copies of software, and I will not give, lend, or sell copies of software to others. I understand that I will not be allowed to bring software applications, games, or CD-ROMs from home to be used on school equipment without proof of licensure and prior approval of appropriate school personnel.
3. I will not copy, change, read, or use files from another user without prior permission from that user. I will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school's system programs for computer equipment.
4. I will not do anything that may disrupt or damage the school's computer system or electronic resources. I will not bring in or allow access to materials or websites that I believe may contain viruses.
5. I will not use the school's computer systems and electronic resources to disturb or harass other computer users or use inappropriate language in my communications. I will not use obscene, lewd, vulgar, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language when using the school's computer systems and electronic resources. I will not harass or bully other individuals. I will not use the school's systems to spread falsehoods or defamatory statements.
6. I will promptly disclose to my teacher or other school official any messages I receive or view which I feel are inappropriate or which make me feel uncomfortable.



7. I will not agree to meet anyone that I have met online without my parents' permission.
8. I will not use the school's computer system or electronic resources to engage in any illegal act.
9. I will honor my school's procedures for the storage of information. I realize that after prior notice has been given to me, files may be deleted from the system to protect the integrity of the network or because of space limitations on the computer's hard drive.
10. I will not use bulletin boards, chat rooms, or social networks for personal use when using St. John Paul the Great Academy's computers.
11. I will not reveal my personal information, home address, or personal phone number or those of students, teachers, or other staff members. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. The use of school computers and networking resources for commercial activities is not permitted. Their use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.
12. I understand that I have no expectation of privacy in my use of school computers. I understand that school officials may search and examine my use of school computers at any time, and without notice.
13. Parents must realize that their child may encounter material on a network/bulletin board that they do not consider appropriate (i.e., vulgar jokes, statements of belief that some might consider immoral, etc.) The student is responsible for not pursuing material that could be considered offensive.
14. The use of the computer is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of these privileges. Vandalism or intentional modification of system settings will result in cancellation of privileges and/or school disciplinary action. The school reserves the right to seek financial

restitution for any damage caused by a student or other user. The system administrators will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. The administration, faculty, and staff of the school may request that the system administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges. Violations of the rules and code of ethics described above will be dealt with seriously.

Student

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



As parent/legal guardian of the student signing above, I grant permission for my child to access computer service networks such as electronic mail and the Internet. I have read and agree to the rules and code of ethics. I understand that some materials found on the Internet may be objectionable; therefore, I agree to accept responsibility for guiding my child and conveying to him/her the appropriate standards for selecting, sharing, and/or exploring information and media. I agree to hold harmless St. John Paul the Great Academy and employees of the school system for any misuse of access to the computer services networks that my child commits. I understand that once signed this agreement is legally binding on me.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please print)*

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Return This Signed Form No Later Than October 2024.

\*By not returning this document by October 2024, it is agreed upon by all parties that you have read the 2024- 2025 Electronic Information Resources Use Agreement and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.



St. John Paul the Great

**ACADEMY**

2024-2025 Electronic Information

**ST. JOHN PAUL THE GREAT ACADEMY**

**Website and Other Publications**

**Photo Permission/Guidelines**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

St. John Paul the Great Academy hosts a website at: [stjohnpaulthegreatacademy.org](http://stjohnpaulthegreatacademy.org) Occasionally we wish to post a picture of a particular school activity such as a science project, a play, artwork, sporting event, or other activity. This may involve posting a picture showing a student, a group of students, or a sample of a student’s work. We may also use these photos in brochures, posters, and various other means of publication.

If students’ pictures or works are used:

- Only first names shall be used if referencing student pictures or scanned classroom work.
- Personal information will not be published.
- Documents will not include information that indicates the physical location of any student at a given time other than attendance at a particular school or participation in an activity.

Before posting pictures of students or samples of student work, we require that the parent(s)/guardian(s) sign the permission form below. We will keep this signed form on file for this school year.

**Photo Permission Form**

Please **initial a statement in each section below** to indicate which permission(s) you grant OR do not grant, and sign and date as indicated.

**PHOTO:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I grant St. John Paul the Great Academy permission** to use photo images of my son/daughter on St. John Paul the Great Academy’s website, or in other print or electronic media.

\_\_\_\_\_ **I do not grant St. John Paul the Great Academy permission** to use photo images of my son/daughter on St. John Paul the Great Academy’s website, or in other print or electronic media.

**WORK:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I grant St. John Paul the Great Academy permission** to use samples of my child’s work such as a poem, story, artwork, etc. on St. John Paul the Great Academy’s website, or in other print or electronic media.



St. John Paul the Great  
**ACADEMY**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I do not grant St. John Paul the Great Academy permission** to use samples of my child's work such as a poem, story, artwork, etc. on St. John Paul the Great Academy's website, or in other print or electronic media.

Print Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent(s)/or Guardian(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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

NOTE: This agreement will be in effect as of the date signed and may be revoked at any time by contacting your son's or daughter's school principal.

Please Return This Signed Form No Later Than October 2024.

\*By not returning this document by October 2024, it is agreed upon by all parties that you have read the 2024- 2025 Website and Other Publications Photo Permission/Guidelines and agree to **grant St. John Paul the Great Academy permission** to use photo images of your son/daughter on St. John Paul the Great Academy's website, or in other print or electronic media. As well as agreeing to **grant St. John Paul the Great Academy permission** to use samples of your child's work such as a poem, story, artwork, etc. on St. John Paul the Great Academy's website, or in other print or electronic media.





**ST. JOHN PAUL THE GREAT ACADEMY**  
**Student Acceptable iPad and Chromebook Use Agreement**

**General Care**

- Heavy objects should never be placed or stacked on top of the iPad and/or Chromebook. This includes books, musical instruments, sports equipment, etc.
- Any inappropriate or careless use of the iPad and/or Chromebook should be reported to the teacher immediately.
- iPads and/or Chromebooks should not be removed from the classroom
- Do Not do anything to the iPad and/or Chromebook that will permanently alter it in any way.
- Use both hands when using the iPad and/or Chromebook.
- iPads and/or Chromebooks will not be placed on the floor.

**Student Pledge for iPad and Chromebook Use**

1. Follow all of the rules as stated in the Acceptable Use Policy.
2. Any inappropriate use of the iPad and/or Chromebook will result in school discipline that may include the loss of iPad and/or Chromebook use and school suspension.  
Inappropriate use includes but is not limited to:
  - a) Visiting inappropriate websites;
  - b) Possessing inappropriate pictures and or media files;
  - c) Cheating;
  - d) Installing unapproved applications;
  - e) Deleting installed applications;
  - f) Jail breaking the iPad and/or Chromebook; and
  - g) Changing the background.
3. Take good care of the iPad and/or Chromebook assigned to me.
4. iPads and/or Chromebooks are to be used for academic purposes only. Any game playing/Web browsing, or media use will be connected with the grade level curriculum.
5. Personal emails will not be configured or used on the iPad and/or Chromebook.
6. iPads and Chromebooks are the property of St. John Paul the Great Academy and anything done or stored on the iPads and Chromebooks can be accessed and seen by the technology staff.
7. All student use of iPads and/or Chromebooks will be under the direct supervision of subject or classroom teacher(s).
8. Transferring iPads and/or Chromebooks from room to room will be done via the iCart or Charging Station. Teachers will be responsible for directing the movement of the cart.
9. Keep food and beverages away from my iPad and/or Chromebooks since they may cause



damage to the device

10. Not disassemble any part of my iPad and/or Chromebook or attempt any repairs.
11. Use my iPad and/or Chromebook in ways that are appropriate, meet school district expectations and are educational.
12. Do Not deface any part of the iPad, or Chromebook, or labels/asset tags.
13. The only 'Apps' available to students will be the ones approved for.
14. Unless specified by an educational plan, students may not bring their own personal iPads and/or Chromebooks to school.
15. I understand that the iPad and Chromebook are the property of St. John Paul the Great Academy.

### **Responsibility/Liability**

1. Costs of repair and/or replacement due to accidental damage at no fault of the students will be covered by Apple Care or school.
2. Accidental damage due to student negligence will result in a 50/50 split (by parent and school) of the cost to repair/replace the iPad and/or Chromebook.
3. Any act of willful destruction of the iPad and/or Chromebook will result in parents or students being fully liable for repair or replacement costs and loss of iPad and/or Chromebook use for the remainder of the school year.

**I have read, understand, and agree to follow all responsibilities as outlined in the iPad and Chromebook Acceptable Use Agreement.**

**Student Name (Please Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Name (Please Print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

Please Return This Signed Form No Later Than October 2024.

\*By not returning this document by October 2024, it is agreed upon by all parties that you have read the 2024- 2025 Student Acceptable iPad and Chromebook Use Agreement and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.