

Faith...
IN EDUCATION



PARENT/STUDENT
HANDBOOK

2019-20

ST. SEBASTIAN REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL (SSRCS)

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PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

HISTORY

Parochial school classes opened for the first time at St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School, then St. Sebastian Parochial School, on September 11, 1956. Sisters of the Franciscan Order (who resided temporarily at St. Leonard's Convent in Monessen) greeted 67 first- and second-grade students in the beautifully modern classrooms on the ground floor of the new church building. Plans at the time called for adding a grade each school year until a complete eighth-grade curriculum was established. Construction on the school building began in 1958, and classes began in the present school building in 1960. St. Sebastian became a regional school in 2009, falling under the direction of a Board of Pastors of local parishes, now known as the Board of Trust Administrators. The name "Catholic" was unofficially added in 2017 to convey the mission of the School.

MISSION

St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School is dedicated to serving God through educating the minds, bodies, and souls of His children and their families. We live and teach our faith through a rigorous curriculum that is centered on Catholic Tradition and Scripture and focused on achieving academic excellence. Together, through service and leadership, we form disciples of Jesus Christ and strengthen the community of faith of our Church.

VISION

Inspired by our Catholic Tradition and Scripture, SSRCS will provide the highest quality programs to nourish the minds, bodies, and souls of many more pre-K through eighth-grade students and help them become disciples of Jesus Christ.

BELIEF STATEMENTS FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

We believe that:

- Catholic education is a responsibility **shared by all members** of the family, parish, school, and Diocese of Greensburg.
- Catholic schools are **centered in Christ's teachings and Catholic doctrine**.
- Each student is created with unique talents and intellect.
- SSRCS' STREAM (Science Technology Religion Engineering Arts Mathematics) curriculum challenges students to achieve their potential, striving for excellence within the formation of their faith, academics, and success in life.
- Students have a right to a safe, positive, nurturing learning environment with mutual respect evidenced throughout the school community. SSRCS nurtures the Whole Child.
- Catholic schools encourage students **to serve** the Church and the greater community, exemplifying and **modeling the teachings of Jesus** throughout their lifetime.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School emphasizes educating the Whole Child. We do this by combining a rigorous STREAM curriculum with the Scripture and Tradition of the Catholic faith. We model and expect of our students that our faith is incorporated into our/their daily lives, as we all are here to serve. Consequently, we intertwine an academic atmosphere with human compassion and dignity, and a discipline vital to the students' spiritual, intellectual, personal, social, and physical development.

The basis for St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School's Philosophy is to teach "as Jesus did," to create "Disciples of Jesus," and to foster encounters with "Jesus." Catholic education is intended to make our faith living, conscious, and active. We encourage those values taught in Scripture to be an integral part of daily education and interaction. In school our children can experience a community of faith lived out in the staff's daily interaction with each other, with the children, with their parents, and with the community at large. As a community of learning, and a family of faith, we encourage each person's self-worth as a child of God. In the classroom, in small groups, and with individual attention, we strive to differentiate instruction, so that we can develop the students' capabilities, talents, and critical thinking skills necessary for them to progress at their own pace. We do all of this, while recognizing that at the elementary level, **the parent(s) has the primary responsibility for educating their children.**

Together with parents who share in the responsibility, we seek to offset the forces (drugs, media, peer pressure, violence, etc.) within society. It is important that the children know that their choices can affect their relationships with each other, their family, and those in the community. As they mature, there will be an increased awareness that these choices will affect government, the homeless, the hungry, people of special needs, the oppressed, the impoverished, and the use of the world's resources.

ACCREDITATION

SSRCS is accredited through the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The faculty is expected to support the goals and action steps of the Middle States plan.

GOVERNANCE

- **BOARD OF TRUST ADMINISTRATORS**—The Board of Trust Administrators (BOTA) is comprised of all, or a subset of the pastors of parishes that are in proximity to an elementary school. The members of the Board of Trust Administrators select one of the members to be the Chairman. For SSRCS, the Board consists of Fr. Michael Crookston, St. Sebastian and Epiphany of Our Lord, Chairman; Fr. David Nazimek, St. Anne's; and Fr. Alvin Enal Cabungcal, St. John the Baptist, Perryopolis.

Board members consider the effects of any action upon students, employees, suppliers, families, and parishioners of the Trust and communities in which offices or other establishments of the Trust or an affiliated Trust are located, and all other pertinent factors (105.1a).

- **SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL (SAC)**—The School Advisory Council is made up of members (both parents and parishioners) appointed by the Bishop to serve the school along with the school Principal and Board of Trust Administrators to enhance our ability to market the school, increase the school enrollment, provide support for the School's development functions, and assist with the school's financial planning (Policy 112).

The SAC is advised by the Parent Advisory Council (PAC), PTG, and Enrollment Committees who meet monthly. All parents are invited to participate and serve on any of these three committees.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint the parents and students with the policies and practices of St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School. The contents of this handbook have been developed in cooperation with the Diocese and the SSRCS staff, parents, and students with the School's Mission in mind. Everyone's knowledge, support, and adherence to these policies, practices, and expectations is essential in the our ongoing work to form disciples of Jesus through the SSRCS program

To ensure the success of the educational program with St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School, parents and students are encouraged to consult this handbook and to become familiar with the policies and practices of the school. Parents must sign and return the last page by **September 20, 2019**, acknowledging their awareness of its contents.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

Parents must sign, electronically, the Acceptable Use Policy before their children can use the technology equipment and services of the School (<http://www.ssbv.org/familyresources/Pages/default.aspx>. School website>Family Resources>School Forms and Policies>Acceptable Use Policy). The purpose for this Policy is to ensure the equitable and optimal use of all technology-related equipment and to encourage the use of technology as a valuable learning tool. Inappropriate use exposes all of us to risks including virus attacks, compromise of network systems and services, and legal and safety issues.

ADMISSION

Students belonging to St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School or any other sending parish shall be given preference with regard to admission to St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School and must file with the school the appropriate diocesan admission forms (see list below). **Priority in admission shall be as follows: siblings, preschool, parishioners, non-parishioners, and non-Catholics.**

The school adheres to the age requirements of the Diocese (Policy 404.1). Any child who reaches the **age of five** by October 1st of the current school year, may be admitted to kindergarten unless there is evidence that the child is not ready to begin. Any child who reaches the **age of six** by October 1st of the current school year may be admitted to the first grade unless there is evidence that the child is not ready to begin (Policy 404.2). Parents/guardians must accompany their child to school for purposes of registration and verification of residency. Registration for the following school term will be held beginning with Catholic Schools Week—usually the last week of January or the first week of February and continue throughout the summer.

All forms and paperwork can be picked up or emailed to the parent before the date of registration. The following documents must be presented, along with a \$60 registration fee/family:

- **Documents needed for Registration**
 - Application—available online at www.ssbv.org
 - Home Language Survey
 - Immunization Records (if not in transfer records)
 - Copy of Birth Certificate (if not in transfer records)
 - Residency Papers
 - Custody Papers (if living with a guardian or if parents have a court-ordered custody agreement)
 - Parent Permission to Request and/or Release School Records—academic/health/disciplinary (if applicable)
 - Health Records (category A and B) if transferring from previous school
 - Sworn Affidavit—a sworn statement or affirmation stating whether the student previously was suspended or expelled from any public or private school for an offense involving weapons, alcohol

or drugs; for the willful infliction of injury to another person; or for any act of violence committed on school property. Any willful false statements concerning this registration shall be a misdemeanor of the third degree. This registration statement shall be maintained as part of the student's disciplinary record.

- Memorandum of Understanding must be signed by parents or guardians prior to admission and at the beginning of each school year. This Memorandum of Understanding pledges support for the Catholic identity and mission of the school and holds parents accountable for following the principles and policies of the school and the Catholic faith.
 - Family Survey
 - Tuition Payment Agreement
 - FACTS Agreement entered into the system if not paying with one payment.
- The **legal name of the student** shall be used on school records and documents which are deemed official. Changes in the child's name cannot be affected by an act of the parent, but must be authorized only through official court documents. Custody arrangements or a change in the marital status of the parent has no bearing whatsoever on the legal name of the child. Requests by the parent to have the child called by a name other than the legal surname or to have that name placed on official school papers cannot be considered.
 - Non-discrimination--Children of any race, color, religion, or national origin are eligible for admission to St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School (Policy 404). SSRCS is as inclusive as possible in welcoming all students for whom we can provide an appropriate program. The Principal will take the following steps when a student with **disabilities** applies:
 - Reviews all previous school records (academic, social, medical, behavioral etc.)
 - Interview the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the child to assess the child's potential for success in the school environment.
 - Consults with other knowledgeable persons to determine whether the school is an appropriate placement for the child.
 - Determine if the school is an appropriate placement, and notify the parent(s)/guardian(s). (Policy 404.5)
 - **Annual Renewal**--Continuance at St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School for each successive year will be **contingent upon all tuition and fees from the previous year having been paid in full**. A student who owes tuition at SSRCS **may not be accepted by another Diocese of Greensburg school unless permission is given by the Superintendent for Catholic Schools** (Policy 405).

AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM

The After School Care Program will be available for all students in grades prek-7 from 3:00—5:15 p.m. During that time, students complete homework, receive extra tutoring, complete special projects, or play educational games. The After School Care Program is not available on early dismissal days. The cost per child is: \$7 for care up to 4:15pm (1.25 hr) and \$10 up to 5:15 pm (2.25 hrs).

Please send in an envelope indicating which day(s) your child will be attending. In case something changes, please contact the secretary via telephone or email. **Repetitive lateness in picking up of a child, including from a noon dismissal will result in a late fee charge.**

ARRIVAL TO and PICK-UP FROM SCHOOL

AM Student Drop-Off

- On the first day of school, teachers will take a “First Day Picture” of your child that will be shared with you via an assignment or at Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences. PTG has a first day pictures backdrop for parents to snap a photo, as well.
- PreK-7 students arriving by car may be dropped off at door #2 beginning at 7:30 am. A staff member will be there to allow the student to enter the cafeteria where they may purchase breakfast and wait for the 8:10 am dismissal to their classrooms. Parents who need to enter the building must do so through the School office (front of the building entrance), which opens at 8:00 am.
- When a K-7 student arrives by bus (8:00 am or after) or PreK-7 student is dropped off (7:30 am or after) in the morning prior to 8:10 am, they go through door #2 directly to the cafeteria and find a seat. PreK has a special table near the parking lot entrance to the gym. All students may talk quietly to the students around them, use an iPad, and/or purchase breakfast (8-8:10 am). If they arrive between 8:10 and 8:20 am, they may proceed to their classrooms. Pre-K students will be walked to their classroom by the teacher from 8:10-8:20 am.

If a student is being dropped off by a parent, there are a few important procedures to remember:

- If you park in the lower lot you must use the crosswalk nearest the Fine & Performing Arts Center (FPAC) and obey the crossing guard at all times.
- Keep all cars dropping students off outside of the coned-off area in front of the doors. This area is for “Drop and Go” not “Park and Walk.”
- Please exit the lot carefully and immediately after your child is let in the back door to avoid a long line of cars, causing others to be late. Do not park in the car line or upper church parking lot directly behind the Church/School.
- Please refrain from using cellular phones when driving in the school zone.

If you are **arriving late to school (after 8:20 am), you must park along the street and walk your child to the front door for admittance and to sign them in late.** Please do not drop off and leave your child(ren) if it is after 8:20 am. **No one will be at the back door to let him/her in. Please bring your child(ren) to the front entrance and sign them in.**

PM Student Pick-Up

- The first group of bus riders will be dismissed at 2:55 pm to exit to their buses. Please do not stand in the parking lot or let younger children run in the lot until the buses have departed.
- All PreK-7 car riders and walkers will be dismissed at 3:00 pm to exit to their parents from:
- Late bus riders and students staying for After School Care or a club/sport meeting/practice will be supervised in the Multi-purpose Room until all other students have been dismissed.
- Dismissals will be from the following doors:
 - #2 Youngest child in grades 3-7
 - #3 Youngest child in grades PreK-K
 - #4 Youngest child in grades 1-2

Door #1 Broad Avenue Entrance (front of bldg.)

Door #2	Multipurpose Room Entrance
Door #3	Church Entrance closest to the School
Door #4	Church Entrance closest to Fayette Street

ATTENDANCE

The Diocese of Greensburg, Office for Catholic Schools requires that school-aged students attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The educational program offered by the Diocese is predicated upon the presence of the student and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation by all students to improve students' opportunities for academic and social accomplishment (Policy 403).

The Compulsory Attendance Law holds parents/guardians legally responsible for the regular school attendance of their child. As part of their responsibility, parents are expected to provide the school with a written excuse for their child's absence. Parental excuses for "excused" absences will be accepted for up to five (5) separate incidents of absence due to illness. Cumulative absences for illness beyond five incidents, requires a written physician's note to be excused (Policy 403.2).

In the event of an absence, students must bring an excuse from their parent/guardian upon returning to school the first 3 days after an absence. The excuse must contain the following:

- date of the note;
- name and grade of the student;
- date of the absence or tardiness;
- nature of the absence or tardiness; and
- signature of parent/guardian.

Blank excuse forms are available on our school website at <http://www.sssbv.org/familyresources/pages>

- **Excused Absences**—The school recognizes a number of specific reasons for which a child may be **excused** from school for all or part of a school day, including, but not limited to:
 - Observance of religious holidays.
 - Religious Instruction—This is restricted by law to a maximum of 36 hours per school year.
 - Educational trips, not school sponsored, that have been **pre-approved** by the Principal.
 - Medical or dental appointments that cannot be arranged after school hours; and
 - Illness (up to 5 approved with parent excuse; beyond 5 require a medical excuse);
 - Death in the family;
 - Court appearance;
 - Other urgent reasons of an emergency nature.
- **Unlawful absence** is unexcused absence for all students under eighteen (18) years of age. They include, but are not limited to:
 - truancy;
 - parental neglect (includes not being able to get your child out of bed);
 - illegal employment;
 - students who run away from home;
 - illness without a medical excuse beyond five (5) parental excuses.
 - shopping, and
 - trips not approved in advance (403.5);

- **No excuse or Unlawful excuse**
 - (1) **First Unlawful Absence**—Parent/guardian receives a notice of unlawful absence from the school, stating the legal punishments.
 - (2) **Second Unlawful Absence**—Parent/guardian receives a second notice of unlawful absence from the school and once again, the legal penalties established by law for violation of compulsory attendance requirements and the name and telephone number of a school contact person, along with an offer of assistance.
 - (3) **Third Unlawful Absence**—Parent/guardian receives a third notice of unlawful absence by certified mail providing “official notice of child’s third illegal absence,” including penalties for violation of compulsory attendance requirements as they pertain to both the student and the parent/guardian- information that three days after giving such notice, the student or parent/guardian who again violates the compulsory attendance requirements shall be liable without further notice. The School will coordinate a school/family conference to discuss the cause of the child’s truancy and develop a mutually agreed upon Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP) to resolve truant behavior. At the end of the conference all parties should sign a comprehensive TEP that is agreed to by the school representative, the child, and the parents and/or family.
 - (4) **Subsequent Unlawful Absence**—After agreeing to a TEP, or if there is not agreement on a truancy elimination plan and 3 days have passed since the parent/guardian received the official notice of the child’s third illegal absence, if a child is unlawfully absent, **at any point within the school year**, an official notice of unlawful absence will be sent home. The purpose of this correspondence is to inform the child’s parent/guardian that the child has violated the TEP or, if there is not a TEP, to inform the child’s parent/guardian that the child has again violated the compulsory attendance requirements, and advise the parent/guardian that a citation will immediately be sent to the magisterial district judge.
 - (5) **Referred directly to the magisterial district judge** having jurisdiction in the region for all future absences.
 - (6) **Referral to County Children and Youth Agency**—Any child who has not attained the age of 13 who fails to comply with the compulsory attendance requirements and is habitually truant, shall be referred by the school to the local county children and youth agency for services, which may include addressing family issues that may be responsible for the child’s truant behavior, or possible adjudication as a “dependent” child under the Juvenile Act. The referral to the county children and youth agency may be in addition to proceeding against the parent/guardian by sending the citation to the appropriate magisterial district judge or the school may decide to refer a family to the local county children and youth agency instead of sending a citation to the appropriate magisterial district judge. If the parent/guardian provides written consent, a copy of the TEP will be forwarded to the county children and youth agency (Policy 403.6).
- **Early Dismissal:** All students are expected to be in school every day for the entire day. A student may be dismissed from school early only with the approval of the Principal. Children are released only for proper reasons and into proper hands. No student may be released into the care of a person who is not known or on the basis of an invalidated telephone call. Medical and dental appointments during

school hours are discouraged. Children of estranged parents may be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child and who is the parent/guardian registered on the school record (Policy 403.7)

Regular attendance is essential for good academic performance.

- In the event of an absence, **the parents will receive an automated call, letting them know their child is not in school.**
- On a day that the student has been absent at least a half day (til 11:30 am) for reasons of illness, the student may not attend or participate in extra-curricular activities.
- If a student becomes ill during the school day, the office secretary will contact a parent or the designated person on the emergency card to come and pick up the child at the office.
- Students who wish to leave school early for reasons other than a doctor's appointment, or be absent from school for an extended period of time, must request permission in writing to the Principal.
- **Tardiness:** A student is tardy if s/he is not in the classroom for the opening exercises at 8:20 a.m. Repeated cases of tardiness will be brought to the attention of the Principal so that parents will be notified. A student will not be sent home for tardiness. Any student who is tardy may be required to submit a note of explanation signed by a parent or guardian. Three unexcused instances of being tardy will be counted as a ½ day unexcused absence. The teacher is responsible for recording absences in Power School (Policy 403.8).

If you are dropping your child off late (after 8:20 a.m.) you must take him/her to the **office by way of the front entrance** to sign him/her in to school. A student will not be permitted to sign in late without a parent.

If a student arrives after 8:20 a.m., **it is the responsibility of the parent to sign the student in at the school office and add the child's name to the lunch list in the office.**

If a student arrives after 9:30 a.m. it is considered a ½ day absence until 11:30 am, at which time the absence is recorded as a full day absence.

- **School Work Missed During Absence--** The student is responsible for making up all assignments and tests missed during an absence from school. The student will be permitted to have **three school days** to make up work missed. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the assignments and return them to the teacher at the time designated. A parent may call in the day of absence and request assignments, handouts, and textbooks be collected for pick-up by the parent that day or check Homework Central.
- **Removal from School**
A student may either not be accepted for enrollment or be unenrolled from SSRCS at any time at the discretion of the administration consistent with but not limited to:
 - Conduct that is not consistent with our philosophy, mission statement, goals, objectives and code of conduct delineated in our handbooks and policy. This could include but is not limited to criminal arrest and conviction at the local, state, or federal level. As a nonpublic school, we have the right to consider all conduct internal or external to the school. SSRCS will take conduct into consideration

whether it occurs at the school, school event, or within the community at large. This includes conduct related to social media.

- Academic Apathy—lack of effort in the classroom such as failure to display appropriate classroom behaviors necessary for academic success. This may include but is not limited to completion of homework and class assignments, failure to come to class properly prepared, and/or behaviors that impede or disrupt the academic or social environment of other students.
- Attendance—excessive, unexcused tardiness or absenteeism. For instance, not providing proper medical documentation as defined in our Handbook.
- Financial—noncompliance with the diocesan and school tuition policy.
- Family Code of Conduct—a student’s family member, extended or immediate, causing disruption in the school community in any way. This would include a family member having conduct that is considered by the administration to be a detriment to the educational environment, spiritual environment, or school community. The administration will consider all disruptive or detrimental conduct that is not consistent with our philosophy, mission statement, goals, objectives, and code of conduct.

As SSRCS is a Catholic, nonpublic institution, the administration reserves the right to terminate enrollment of a student for any just reason at any time. Any disciplinary policies and procedures are simply guidelines that the school generally follows. These guidelines do not impede this right by administration to terminate the enrollment of a student.

CALENDARS

At the beginning of each school year, each family will find a copy of the school calendar on the school website under Family Resources: www.ssbv.org, which may be extended or altered in case of emergency, error, or weather-related closing of schools. This calendar will designate holidays, teacher in-service days, parent/teacher/student conferences and days of early dismissal. The school must adhere to state and diocesan guidelines concerning hours of instruction and number of days in session, and provisions for teacher in-service and staff development.

Monthly Calendars and School Activities Calendars are also posted on the website. Family participation in school activities is strongly encouraged.

CLOSING OR DELAY OF SCHOOL

School closings or delays generally follow the Belle Vernon Area School District. These announcements are made over the radio on **KDKA (1020 am)** or television stations **KDKA or WPXI**, as early as 5:30 a.m. Watch or listen for “**St. Sebastian . . .**,” as it is possible that Belle Vernon could have a non-weather-related delay or closing and St. Sebastian will not.

St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School will send out a text (make sure you’re signed up) if we are delayed and/or closed and place the information on the website. No one will be at the school to answer a call, as staff is delayed as well.

In the event of a 2-hour delay, **please do not bring your children to school before 9:45 a.m.** The staff at St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School follows the delay schedule and will not be on site or available to supervise your children before this time. *Again, please do not leave your child without first making sure they are safely inside the building.*

If there is a 2-hour delay on a noon dismissal day, dismissal will be at 12:30 pm.

COMMUNICATION

Open communication among parents, teachers, and administrators is important for student progress and for maintaining a healthy school climate.

Attempts should be made to solve problems on the closest level possible. Only when this is proven unsuccessful should higher authority be contacted. If there is a classroom problem, please contact the classroom teacher. If there is a school problem or contact with the classroom teacher has not helped, please contact the building Principal. **Please do not contact teachers at home for school issues.**

Scheduling an Appointment—A parent may make an appointment to speak with a teacher by emailing the teacher at his/her school email address. **Because of the interruptions in the teaching-learning process, spontaneous visits to the classroom are not permitted.** Please keep in mind that not all of the teachers employed at SSRCS are full-time employees. It may take a day or two for some of them to receive and respond to phone and email messages. If there is an emergency situation, please contact the Principal.

Email—first letter of FirstnameLastname@sssbv.org

Website— www.sssbv.org

Parent Envelope—At the end of each week, the youngest child in each family will take home the **Parent Envelope**. This envelope contains the Principal's Weekly Reminders and other communication between the school and home. One parent or guardian is to sign the front of the envelope, and return it to the homeroom teacher the following school day. Duplicate Parent Envelopes may be obtained upon request.

PowerSchool Parent Portal (you need a username and password)/School Messenger. You will be able to see your child(ren)'s grades, attendance, and remaining lunch money. The Power School Student Information system is accessible through both a web-based portal and mobile device application.

The integrated notification product, *School Messenger*, is used to broadcast important school information, attendance notifications, weather delays, and emergency information via voice, e-mail and SMS broadcast channels. Please ensure that we have an updated email address and cell phone number to receive regular updates at intervals of your choosing.

Homework Central—found on our website at www.sssbv.org under the Parents/ Guardians section. This is updated regularly to show assignments, tests, and reminders for the week.

Telephone—It is important that the school telephone be available for office calls (724.929.5143). Children may use the school telephone only with the permission of the Principal and only for school related business.

Teachers and children will not be called from the classroom to receive a telephone call. A message for the child or teacher may be given to the secretary. Arrangements concerning transportation and after school activities are to be made before the child leaves in the morning.

DAILY ROUTINE

Because of transportation restrictions, the time schedule will be adjusted to coincide with any revisions by the public school districts in which SSRCS is located. The school will adhere to the following schedule, except on delay or early release days, to the extent practical.

- Doors open at 7:30 am for parents on their way to work.
- PreK-7 students should arrive at least **ten minutes before the school starting time of 8:20 a.m.**
- Breakfast will be available for purchase from 8-8:10 am.
- Morning prayers, announcements, and salute to the flag are required.
- Class periods/time allotments for specific subjects shall follow the recommendations of the Office of Catholic Schools.
- Pre-lunch prayers are prescribed
- Lunch and playground with supervision
- Class periods
- Sustained Silent Reading (SSR)
- Closing prayers
- Dismissal under supervision

On occasion, variations exist.

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99)

SSRCS adheres to FERPA in regard to student records. FERPA protects the privacy of student education records and gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records (Policy 316). Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. SSRCS does so through this Handbook.

See student records and rights of the non-custodial parent in the Student Records section of this handbook.

LOST AND FOUND—All items discovered about the building or on the bus should be brought to the office. A Lost & Found bin exists in the Office. Any student who has misplaced an item should check with the Office to

see if it has been found. On occasion, pictures of items will be placed in the Principal's Reminder, to alert parents to items such as: glasses, coats, jewelry, etc.

LUNCH PROGRAM

SSRCS participates in the National School Lunch Program. Students may take advantage of the program by filing an application for free and reduced lunch, **annually** (found on the website: www.sssbv.org). Applications will be reviewed accordingly. Rules for acceptance and participation in the program are the same for each student without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or religion.

Breakfasts and hot lunches may be purchased through the school cafeteria. A menu will be posted on the website. The monies sent in will be deposited into your child's cafeteria account and a bar code will be scanned for every lunch or breakfast s/he takes, reducing the balance.

Parents who choose the school lunch program are to pay for lunches in a timely fashion (i.e., weekly, monthly) by online FACTS, cash or check. Parents/guardians will be contacted when their child(ren) have a balance owed the school, so that parents/guardians can replenish the account. Students will continue to receive a regular school lunch even if there is no money in their lunch account, up to a total of \$20.00. When the amount owed reaches \$20.00, students will be given an alternate lunch until the balance owed has been paid.

Students will not be able to purchase ala cart items from the cafeteria if their outstanding balance is over \$20.00 or if they do not have monies in their account.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

We, at SSRCS, 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 duty to be the primary role models for the development of your child's life—physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of SSRCS involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. 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 SSRCS, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Pre-K to 7), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Both parents and teachers must sincerely challenge and nourish the student to reach his/her potential. **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/principal will model mature collaborative behavior and relationships. Talking negatively about a child's teacher, principal, other students in the class, or school at home will only create an attitude of distrust that serves no valuable purpose.

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 which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades s/he has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. Parents are encouraged to let their child experience a logical consequence and even failure for an inappropriate action or behavior. 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 s/he is capable of becoming.

As partners in the educational process at SSRCS, **we ask parents to:**

- Set rules, times, and limits so that your child:
 - Gets to bed early on school nights;
 - Puts all technology away at least one hour before bedtime;
 - 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 lunch money or nutritional packed lunch every day.

 - Actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences;
 - See that the student pays for any damage to school books 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;
 - Read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;
 - 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;
 - Treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.
-
- Parent-Teacher Guild (PTG)—All parents are encouraged to join and participate in the PTG. The PTG meets the first Monday of each month at 3:30 pm, phone conferencing is available. The PTG provides many opportunities for our students, such as holiday lunches, picnic and treat opportunities, transportation and supplies for most competitions and field trips, necessary equipment for the school, book fairs, and much, much more. Join today by contacting the PTG President listed on the website.

TUITION

Parents and parish share responsibility for the cost of Catholic education. The four Regional Parishes (St. Sebastian, St. Anne, Epiphany of our Lord, and St. John the Baptist) are assessed a percentage of their income to support the schools. Parents must also pay a reasonable amount of the per-student cost of education as established by the school and set forth in the Diocesan Memorandum of Understanding. Although the cost of

a quality Catholic education is higher than the tuition, parents are asked to pay \$5,100 of that cost per child in grades K-7, minus any financial aid or fundraising credits received.

By the end of January/beginning of February, the application process for the upcoming school year is opened, and FACTS Grant and Aid application online is available for parents/guardians to submit for financial aid. If families have applied to **FACTS Grant and Aid by March 15**, and their child attends the school during the upcoming school year, the FACTS application fee will be deducted from the student's tuition. It is the obligation of the parent to complete the FACTS application for financial assistance and contact the Principal if need still exists (Policy 500.2).

By the end of May, the FACTS Grant and Aid financial aid application will be verified, financial aid award letters are disseminated to parents/guardians noting the tuition amount with any scholarships and financial aid awards (Policy 500.2).

Payment of tuition must be submitted in accordance with the tuition payment agreement signed annually.

If a payment is not made, for whatever reason, the following process will be followed:

- The parents/guardians will be notified in writing of the payment not being received.
- The parents/guardians will be given **20 calendar days** to bring the account to current status or meet with school administration to have an adjusted payment contract approved (not a guarantee).
- If the account is not brought to current status, or an adjusted payment contract is not agreed upon and approved by school administration, the student enrollment will cease at the end of the current quarter.
- The parents/guardians must agree to the following, to:
 - Pay all amounts due under the tuition payment agreement/policy. If another person is responsible to pay any part of the amount due for the child(ren), and she/he fails to pay when due, the parents/guardians must agree to pay all amounts due immediately upon notification by the school;
 - Pay for the entire semester if the child(ren) leave before that semester is completed;
 - Abide by the student-parent handbook and know that if the child(ren) violates any portion of the student-parent handbook and/or is removed or expelled from school for any reason consistent with the student-parent handbook or Office for Catholic Schools policy, then the parents/guardians are not entitled to a proportionate refund of tuition. In addition, the parents/guardians are legally responsible for paying any tuition owed at the time the child(ren) stopped attending the school. To be legally responsible for paying the tuition described above according to the tuition payment agreement and within the applicable timeframes. The school may take any action available and consistent with applicable law in order to collect unpaid tuition owed by the parents/guardians including but not limited to withholding academic transcripts and diplomas.
 - Understand that their child(ren) may be subject to restriction of school activities or events while tuition is in default (Policy 500.3).

Certain staffing decisions and textbook, technology, and supply orders are based upon enrollment, payment for the entire semester is expected if a student is withdrawn prior to the end of the semester. Transcripts will

not be forwarded to the sending school until all tuition is paid in full. Report cards will not be given at the end of any given school year if tuition and/or other outstanding fees are not paid in full. No student will be accepted at any Catholic School within the Diocese of Greensburg if they are carrying a past due balance from any other Catholic School within the Diocese of Greensburg (Policy 500.4).

SAFETY & SECURITY—Multi-Hazard Plan

- **Doors**—After 8:20 a.m. all doors to the school will be locked. Students and parents in the building are instructed not to open the doors for anyone but a staff member. **All visitors must report to the front entrance of the school to be buzzed in. There are no exceptions when the safety of the children is at question.**
- **Safety Drills**—Fire drills will be held monthly as required by State law, without prior announcement. To ensure safety, students are to move quickly, quietly, and in order according to the fire exit directions posted in each classroom and given by the classroom teacher.

Drills for other emergencies, such as weather, bus, and non-fire emergencies (e.g., lockdowns, intruder-in-the building, etc.) will be held periodically throughout the year. The teachers will review procedures with the students. Students are to remain quiet and give attention to the teacher during all safety drills. Some drills may entail lockdowns or campus evacuation. Parents should ensure that they have their cell phone numbers on the Emergency Card for notification, AND that the school's phone number is not blocked. A text message will be sent to these numbers when a drill or actual emergency is in progress.

STUDENT RECORDS

Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, custody, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

Only that information about students which is essential to promoting their welfare and accomplishing the educational objective of the school shall be collected and maintained under the general supervision of the school administration.

Each student has permanent record card/file that is maintained in the School Office. Older records are being scanned into electronic files. Student record files contain grade and attendance information, as well as educational testing and disciplinary information.

A student's records maintained under this policy, shall be available for inspection to the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) or other person(s) having control or charge of the student, to district officials and to state and local law enforcement officials as provided by law (Policy 406.4). Approved individuals wishing to review the records should make a request for review in writing at least 24 hours in advance. Student record information will not be disseminated by telephone (Policy 406.5). No teacher, counselor, secretary, or administrator may give any information about any pupil by telephone even though permission has been granted by the pupil or her/his guardian (Policy 411).

Transfer Students—Parents/guardians of students transferring to or from SSRCS are not required to sign a written release of records, but must notify the school the students are transferring from to send the records to the school students are transferring to. Student records will only be released from SSRCS upon receipt of the

receiving school's request and if the tuition and fees balance is paid in full. No student will be accepted at any Catholic school within the Diocese of Greensburg if they are carrying a past due balance from any other Catholic school within the Diocese of Greensburg (Policy 500.4).

School personnel will not furnish lists of students' names and addresses to anyone other than school officials except as authorized by the Principal, or as may be permitted pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) after consultation with the Superintendent for Catholic Schools (Policy 410).

Non-custodial parent—is that parent who does not have primary custody as determined by a court of law. In the absence of a court order, State's statute or legally binding document relating to such matters as divorce, separation, or custody that specifically revokes these rights on file with the School, a non-custodial parent will be given access to the academic records and other school-related information regarding their child in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). If there is a court order specifying responsibility of the custodial parent or otherwise limiting or eliminating the rights of a non-custodial parent with regard to a child's education, the custodial parent shall provide the school with an official copy of the court order. All other requests for student information will be referred to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, the Diocese of Greensburg, for approval (Policy 401.1).

Persons in the school building responsible for the children are to be informed of the circumstances.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parents. Public schools where your children reside will transport up to 10 miles from the borders of their School District. They are not required to transport those who live within one and one-half miles from SSRCS, nor are they required to transport your child to or from a school district area in which your child does not live (Policy 520.9).

Students are expected to behave properly on the bus and follow the same Code of Conduct as if in school. The safety of all is the primary concern. All rules that apply to behavior in school apply to the bus. A lack of cooperation of safety rules established by the local public school district, the transportation provider, and/or SSRCS may result in suspension from riding the bus, and may result in disciplinary action against the student by SSRCS or transportation providers up to and including possible suspension and/or expulsion from school.

If for any reason a student needs to change transportation arrangements, the parents must write, sign, and submit a note to the School Office. All issues dealing with transportation should be directed to the providing district.

VISITORS—PARENTS, CONTRACTORS, AND PARISH PERSONNEL

Anyone entering or leaving the building during the school day must first report to the School Office by way of the front doors. Use the buzzer and intercom located on the wall to the left. Everyone must report directly to the office to sign in, receive a visitor's badge, and be escorted to your destination (Parish personnel do not need an escort). All visitors must also sign-out (Policies 215, 610). For reasons of safety, the Principal must know who is in the building. Any person not following this procedure may be asked to leave the building.

Parents are not to take lunches, shoes, books, homework, backpacks, or late children to the classroom. Any such transaction must be made through the School Office by School Personnel. This practice helps to eliminate interruptions to the teacher and the students during class hours. Lunches are delivered directly to the cafeteria.

Students who need to be dismissed early *for medical or health reasons* will be met by the parent/guardian in the School Office.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are always needed at the school to help it run smoothly. Lunchroom helpers, playground supervisors, chaperones, classroom helpers, and party helpers are just some of the ways that parents can help in the school. Classroom helpers and party helpers must be PTG members. All volunteers are expected to follow the same guidelines as if visiting by signing in/out and wearing a visitor's pass.

To volunteer in/with the School, all clearances must be on file in the School Office and are valid for a period of five years. Clearances must be renewed prior to the five-year expiration date in order to be able to continue to volunteer. The links may be found at: <https://www.dioceseofgreensburg.org/youth-protection/Pages/childservices.aspx>

- [Diocesan Code of Conduct](#)
- [PA Mandated Reporter Training](#)
- [VIRTUS Training](#)
- [PA Criminal History Check Form](#) - Every Five Years
- [PA Child Abuse Form](#) - Every Five Years
- [FBI Fingerprint Check](#) - Every Five Years. Initial submission must be done through screening agency. Then every five years screening agency submission **OR** an [Affidavit for volunteers](#) only.

WELLNESS POLICY

The vision for Catholic education in the Diocese of Greensburg is one where the environment of every school physically, mentally, morally, spiritually, and socially nurtures children to feel and be secure and loved, to love and respect themselves as children of God, to love and care for one another, and to love coming to school and learning, doing, and succeeding.

To ensure the health and well-being of all students, the Office for Catholic Schools establishes that the schools in the Diocese of Greensburg shall provide to students:

- A comprehensive nutritional program consistent with federal and state requirements.
- Access at reasonable cost to foods and beverages that meet established nutrition guidelines.
- Physical education courses and opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day.
- Curriculum programs for grades PreK-7 that are designed to educate students about proper nutrition and lifelong physical activity, in accordance with PA curriculum regulations and academic standards.

Wellness Committee (Policy 608.2)

SSRCS has a Wellness Committee comprised of principals, teachers (including Physical Education teachers), parents/guardians, advisory board members, representatives of the school food authority, school health officials, students, and community members. This committee advises SSRCS regarding student health issues and is responsible for developing, implementing, reviewing, and updating the wellness policy. All parents are welcome. We meet the second Tuesday of most months during the school year at 6:30 pm (608.2).

Nutrition Education (Policy 608.4)

Nutrition education will be provided within the sequential, comprehensive health education program in accordance with curriculum regulations and the academic standards for Health, Safety, and Physical Education.

- Nutrition education shall teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Promoting student health and nutrition enhances readiness for learning and increases student achievement.
- Nutrition education shall provide all students with the knowledge and skills needed to lead healthy lives.
- Nutrition education lessons and activities should be age appropriate.

Nutrition Promotion (608.5)

Nutrition promotion and education positively influences lifelong eating behaviors by using evidence-based techniques and nutrition messages, and by creating food environments that encourage healthy nutrition choices and encourage participation in school meal programs.

- Schools shall promote nutrition through the implementation of Farm to School activities where possible. Activities may include, but not be limited to, the initiation/maintenance of school gardens, taste-testing of local products in the cafeteria and classroom, classroom education about local agriculture and nutrition, field trips to local farms, and incorporation of local foods into the school meal programs.
- Consistent nutrition messages shall be disseminated and displayed throughout the school.

Physical Activity (Policy 608.6)

- Schools shall strive to provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day for all students.
- Physical activity breaks shall be provided for students during classroom hours.
- Physical activity shall not be used or withheld as a form of punishment.

Physical Education (Policy 608.7)

A sequential physical education program consistent with curriculum regulations and Health, Safety, and Physical Education academic standards shall be developed and implemented.

- Quality physical education instruction that promotes lifelong physical activity and provides instruction in the skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong participation shall be provided.
- Physical education classes shall be the means through which all students learn, practice, and are assessed on developmentally appropriate skills and knowledge necessary for lifelong, health-enhancing physical activity.

Other (Policy 608.8)

Drinking water shall be available and accessible to students, without restriction and at no cost to the student, at all meal periods and throughout the school day (608.8).

- Schools shall provide adequate space for eating and serving school meals.
- Students shall be provided a clean and safe meal environment.
- Students shall be provided adequate time to eat: ten (10) minutes sit down time for breakfast; twenty (20) minutes sit down time for lunch.

Nutrition (Policy 608.9)

All foods and beverages available in the schools during the school day shall be offered to students with consideration for promoting student health and reducing obesity (608.9).

Foods and beverages provided through the National School Lunch and/or Breakfast programs shall comply with established federal nutrition standards.

Food and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day, such as athletic events and dances, shall offer healthy alternatives in addition to more traditional fare.

Competitive foods available for sale shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School). These standards shall apply in all locations and through all services where food and beverages are sold to students, which may include, but are not limited to: a la carte options in cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, snack carts, and fundraisers. Competitive foods are defined as foods and beverages offered or sold to students on school campus during the school day, which are not part of the reimbursable school breakfast or lunch (608.9a).

Fundraising activities held during the school day (from midnight before school begins until 3:30 pm) involving the sale of competitive foods shall be limited to foods that meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards (Policy 608.9b).

Competitive Foods (Policy 608.9c)

- Foods and beverages offered as rewards and incentives, at classroom parties and celebrations, or as shared classroom snacks, shall meet or exceed the standards established by the school.
- Classroom parties shall offer a minimal amount of foods containing added sugar as the primary ingredient.
- When possible, water, 100 percent fruit juice or 100 percent fruit juice diluted with water, and/or low-fat or non-fat milk will be served at classroom parties.
- Food celebrations shall not occur until thirty (30) minutes after the end of the last lunch period.
- The school shall provide a list of suggested nonfood ideas and healthy food and beverage alternatives to parents/guardians and staff.
- Any foods and beverages marketed or promoted to students on the school campus during the school day shall meet or exceed the established federal nutrition standards (USDA Smart Snacks in School) (608.9d).

Management of Food Allergies (Policy 608.10)

SSRCS regulates food allergy management in order to reduce and/or eliminate the likelihood of severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reactions and ensure a rapid and effective response in case of a severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. The school protects the rights of students by providing them, through accommodations when required, the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities.

II. CURRICULUM

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School provides a rigorous curriculum, infused with the Catholic faith and aligned to meet and exceed the Pennsylvania State and National standards. The curriculum is a living document, which is continually updated and reviewed. Currently, SSRCS is using an experiential, instructional strategy to engage learners in STREAM (Science Technology Religion Engineering Art and Mathematics) thinking and creating.

Courses include religion, reading, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, music, art, theater arts, world language, health, physical education, and technology.

The religion course is the most important component of the curriculum. Each grade level receives 40 minutes of direct instruction, along with opportunities for prayer, sacramental preparation and participation in a

community of faith and community service. Our Catholic faith and beliefs are infused in all other subject matter areas and lived through all that we do. The goal of religious instruction is to help the child develop a relationship with Jesus Christ and lead a lifestyle based on the Gospel values.

All students, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, are required to study religion and to participate in the religious activities.

Academic Plan

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic improvement plan. The plan will be developed with support of the parent, teacher and administration. The plan will be reviewed periodically during the grading period.

- **Deficiency/Progress Reports**

All student grades are available online via PowerSchool. The passwords will be assigned and communicated to the parents within the first few weeks of school. Please do not share your passwords with anyone else. Access to the Parent Portal can be found at <http://powerschool.dioceseofgreensburg.org/public/>. Parents will be notified by their child's teacher(s) should a significant grade slip occur. Always feel comfortable checking Power School and contacting your child's teacher if you have any concerns or questions.

- **Report Cards**

Report cards showing the student's progress shall be issued in accordance with the dates established on the official school calendar. Progress is determined by the degree to which the child progresses in his/her learning of the subject matter according to his/her ability. Students are expected to participate in daily work, class discussion, and group/class research and projects. Students are expected to submit all homework assignments. The official Diocesan Report Card shall be utilized unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

PreK-7Parent/Student/Teacher conferences shall be used in conjunction with the report card as a means of communicating your child's progress. The student and the parent are expected to meet with his/her teacher or team of teachers to discuss his/her academic, behavioral, spiritual, and emotional progress. Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice each year. Standardized test results will be discussed in the first conference for K-7and the second conference for K-3.

Grading

Teachers use many combinations of assignments to stimulate learning. Parents should be aware that in computing quarter grades, teachers give varying "weights" to tests, essays, quizzes, and projects. Cheating, late work, and missing work is recorded as "incomplete" rather than a zero. There is an opportunity to replace an "incomplete" with a score without penalty. Since the purpose of grades is to communicate a child's academic performance, homework, participation, and behavior are not part of a student's grade, although each contributes to his/her performance.

The school year is divided into four quarters. Formal grades for each quarter appear on the report card.

If you have any questions concerning your child's grade, please contact the teacher in question. Parents will have access to view student grades via our school's student management system, **PowerSchool**.

Grading Scale

First through Third Grade

O – Outstanding Progress
G – Good Progress
S – Satisfactory
H – Having Difficulty

Fourth through Sixth Grade

A – 93—100%
B – 85—92%
C – 75—84%
D – 65—74%
I – Below 65% (Incomplete)

PreK-Kindergarten

Kindergarten students will receive four quarterly, standards-based report cards. The students will be assessed on benchmarks throughout the year according to the following scale:

K – Demonstrates Kindergarten or PreK Skills with Ease
P – Progressing
IN – Improvement Needed

Honor Roll—Grades 5 & 6

Highest Honor—All As with no negative comments (an O in a Special = A in Core Subjects)

High Honor—All As, 1B with no negative comments (a G in a Special = B in Core Subjects)

Honor—All As and Bs with no negative comments (all Os and Gs in Specials)

Students making the honor roll all four quarters will be invited to participate in the SSRCS Honors Reception at the end of the year.

Any student receiving an “S or U” in a special class (Music, Art, Computer, Spanish, Theater Arts, Health, or Phys. Ed.) or an “I” in any class will be disqualified from honor roll eligibility. Likewise, any student receiving a negative comment on their report card will be ineligible for honor roll.

Retention and Summer School

After third grade, students will not be retained. Promotion plus remediation improves student achievement. Parents will be notified early in the school year when there is question of retention of a child for children in grades PreK-3.

*Please note that the **first time** a child is asked to repeat a grade (PreK-3) and a parent refuses to allow it to happen, the parent will be asked to sign a statement to that effect. This document will be kept in the student’s Permanent Record file. The **second time** a child is asked to repeat a grade, they will be required to repeat unless the child withdraws from the school.

Even for PreK-3, remediation alternatives must be considered before retention of a student, such as providing extra instructional help within the context of normal grade promotion; providing remediation through government programs during the school day or tutoring before and after school hours; providing remediation through summer school; using instructional aides to work with the child in the regular classroom; encouraging peer tutoring, as well as other identified recommended strategies (Policy 407).

Any student in grades 4-6 who receives a final average of “I” in any of the core subjects must take a summer school credit recovery course and/or successfully complete the incomplete work/assessments. If a private tutor is used, s/he must meet with the administration regarding what is expected of the student. More than one “I” in any of the core subjects may result in the student being asked to repeat the grade.

AFTER- and OUT-OF- SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- **Academic and Graded Activities**

- Forensics and English Fest are part of the ELA curriculum and will require competition outside of the school for students in grades 4-7. Certain registration fees and costs will be required by the parent to sponsor these activities. Certain fundraising efforts of the PTG may help defray the costs of certain activities. Forensics is for seventh graders only.
- Performances—The “Arts” programs are performance-based. Music, Theater Arts, and Visual Arts programs will require one or more evening performances as part of the K-7 students’ grades. Dates are available on the School Calendar for planning purposes.

- **Athletics**—SSRCS sponsors a cross country, basketball, volleyball, soccer, and cheerleading program. Any student attending St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School or any other sending parish may participate in these programs. Consent forms to participate are on the School Website. The fee to participate covers insurance and team registration fees: \$75 first sport, \$100 second sport, \$125 three sports. Fundraising for team equipment, uniforms, and supplies may occur.

All students must be in good academic standing in order to participate in the athletic program. If a student is currently unsatisfactory or incomplete in any subject area, they will not be permitted to participate until cleared by the teacher or Principal.

Improper behavior in school that results in multiple detentions or a suspension will keep the student athlete from their next event(s), as will poor attendance. Absence on the day of a practice or event will exclude the athlete’s participation that day.

- **Clubs**—Students may stay after school to participate in Club Activities, such as yearbook, robotics, or chess. Clubs offered vary each year, depending upon the Staff. Parents are responsible for transportation home from activities. Grades, behavior, and attendance are all considerations, like in athletics, for student participation in clubs.
- **Dances**—Dances are limited to the sixth and seventh grade students. It will be at the discretion of the Principal whether to invite guests. The time of the dances will be announced for parent information; they are typically from 6:00 pm-8:00 pm. Once a student has entered the School Multipurpose Room to attend the dance, s/he must remain there until the dance is ended or an adult comes for him/her. The teacher in charge will enforce the dress code. Students are to be orderly and courteous toward all supervising personnel. For improper conduct at a school dance, parents will be notified to come and get their child; school discipline may follow.

- **Field Trips**

All field trips relate to the instructional program. Each child participating in any field trip must submit to the school the field trip participation form established by the Diocese of Greensburg, signed by a

parent or guardian. No student may participate unless a signed field trip participation form for the specific event is on file with the Principal.

The permission form is to be submitted to the teacher at least three days before the scheduled trip. Parents may be asked to provide part or all of the costs involved. When possible, bus transportation will be provided. Any person volunteering to provide private passenger transportation must submit a signed volunteer driver form to the Principal for each vehicle used. If a private vehicle is being used, two adults must be in the car with the students and have their clearances. The driver and/or chaperon must have a copy of the approved itinerary including the route(s) to be followed and a summary of their responsibilities (Policy 420).

Participation in field trips is a privilege. Students may be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavior requirements of the school. Students who do not participate in field trips will be provided alternative assignments during the period of the field trip.

Each driver and/or chaperone will be given a copy of the approved itinerary, including the routes to be followed and a summary of their responsibilities.

Permission slips **must be turned in by the due date**. Verbal permission will not be accepted over the phone the day of the trip. Students not participating in the field trip will be marked absent for the day and an excuse will be required.

- **Non-Mandatory Activities**—SSRCS students march in North Belle Vernon Parades (e.g., Halloween and Memorial Day), caroling at the NBV Community Bank Park, community service at the Park, community service activities through the Church and the Community. Although community service hours are mandatory, as part of the religion grade, certain other opportunities are acceptable—see community service.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Integral to the Catholic faith, is a faith that practices loving concern and practical care. It is in this spirit that every class shall be involved in some kind of community service outreach. These activities need not be a burden financially to the family. Presence, rather than presents, is the true gift in these situations. Students in grades 3-7 will be required to complete service hours each year for Religion class. See community service forms on the school website.

HOMEWORK

Meaningful homework is essential for the full scholastic development of the child. Children are expected to do a reasonable amount of home study, and it is the responsibility of the parent to supervise this work while not promoting dishonesty or inhibiting learning that results from actually doing the homework for the child. Homework may consist of written work, reading, and study for review, memorization, practice of skills, flipped classrooms, or work on special projects. It is the responsibility of parents to provide time and a quiet place for homework to be done.

Parents should look at their child's Assignments Notebook on a daily basis to make sure work is being completed. Parents and students also have access to Homework Central found at www.sssbv.org under the Parents & Guardians section. Homework Central will be updated regularly.

LITURGY

All students, PreK-7, regardless of their religious affiliation will attend Mass and religious services scheduled within a school day. Opportunities are provided for the children to celebrate together at the Liturgy of the Word and to participate in the Eucharist, receive the blessing of throats, reception of ashes, and participate in the Stations of the Cross. If School is in session on a Holy Day of Obligation, students will attend Mass that day. Parents are encouraged to attend. All students will be in school uniform on Mass days. Masses are typically on Tuesday or Thursday at 10:00am; there are no PE classes scheduled on Tuesday or Thursday, but should a special Mass or ceremony occur on your child's PE day, please send a school uniform for him/her to change into to wear to Church.

TESTING

SSRCS follows the testing program established by the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools. The tests include: IOWA (grades two through seven), and DIBELS Next (grades K-3). Results of the test programs will be sent home and discussed at a Parent/Student/Teacher conference. A comparison of data will be analyzed to guide instruction and curriculum (Policy 213).

TEXTBOOKS and OTHER SCHOOL PROPERTY

School property, including textbooks, are on loan to students who attend SSRCS. Textbooks loaned to the student must have a proper book cover. Unless the textbook is a consumable, no writing is permitted in the textbooks. It is the financial obligation of the parents/guardians to compensate the school for the replacement of any textbooks, electronic devices, furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property damaged by their child.

The replacement cost for any damaged or lost items must be paid before any final reports, transcripts, or awards are presented.

III. BEHAVIOR

CLASS CELEBRATIONS/PARTIES

Parents sending in a birthday celebration snack must adhere to the School's Wellness policy, be cognizant of all classroom food allergies, and know that food celebrations may not occur until at least thirty (30) minutes after the end of the last lunch period (Policy 608.9c). **Students are able to dress down on their birthday or half birthday.**

- **Invitations for parties**--should be sent to the homes of students unless an invitation is being given to *every student in the entire grade*.
- **Gifts**--Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students.
- **Valentines**—If choosing to send valentines, they are to be distributed to every child in the class. A class list will be supplied.

DRESS CODE

All students must be in uniform (School or PE uniform) at all times.

Exceptions occur throughout the year:

- First Friday Dress Down days, fundraiser dress down days, dances, and certain field trips.

- Even on dress down days, students must be in appropriate attire. Spaghetti straps, tank tops, mid-riff showing, open-back shirts, or sleeveless shirts; open-toed or backless shoes; heels higher than 2", spandex/yoga pants, jeggings, jeans with slits/holes, or shirts with inappropriate advertisements (e.g., drugs, alcohol, tobacco, promiscuity, etc.) are NOT permitted.

Parents will be called to bring appropriate clothing for children who are out of uniform. Those not in their PE uniform may not participate in physical education classes. This is an unexcused absence. After **three unexcused absences, children will report to the principal, and their grade will be affected.**

Students in preschool through grade seven must wear their PE uniform to and from school on physical education days, unless there is a Mass that day.

PreK 3 (2-day preschool)

Uniforms are not required for PreK3

GIRLS – PreK 4 (3 Day) TO GRADE 3

- Uniform plaid jumper with choice of short or long sleeve white uniform shirt (no scalloped edging, piping, etc.) White turtlenecks may be worn in the winter. The School Emblem must be worn on the left side of the jumper.
- Uniform plaid double kick pleat skirt; uniform plaid kilt skirt; or uniform plaid culottes with flap. This is worn with the RED Emblem-embroidered, banded bottom, short or long sleeve polo
- Uniform style DARK khaki walking shorts/skirt/culottes or DARK khaki uniform style pants. No cargo shorts/pants, denim material, or jeggings permitted. This is worn with the RED Emblem-embroidered, banded bottom, short or long sleeve polo (Size 2T and 3T only are the RED pique polo's—no banded bottom).

(Khaki items **must be the DARK colored khaki.**)

- The length of all jumpers, culottes, and shorts must be no shorter than two inches above the knee. This policy applies when a student is in uniform and also on designated dress-down days.
- Socks must be black or white knee socks, or tights; white, black, or khaki anklets; No athletic socks; no low cut, no print or show style socks.
- Black cardigan button down sweater for cool days. Emblem optional. No hoodies, sweatshirts, or any other style sweaters are permitted to be worn on uniform days.

BOYS – PreK 4 (3 Day) TO GRADE 3

- Uniform style DARK khaki walking shorts or DARK khaki uniform style pants. No cargo shorts/pants, denim material, or jeggings permitted.
- Only the RED Emblem-embroidered, banded bottom short or long sleeve polo shirt may be worn (Size 2T and 3T only are the RED pique polo's—no banded bottom).
- Black or khaki socks; no athletic socks; no low cut, no show style socks

(Khaki items **must be the DARK colored khaki.**)

- Black cardigan button down sweater for cool days. Emblem optional. No hoodies, sweatshirts, or any other style sweaters are permitted to be worn on uniform days.

GIRLS – GRADES 4 TO 7

- Uniform plaid double kick pleat skirt; uniform plaid kilt skirt; or uniform plaid culottes with flap. Uniform style DARK khaki walking shorts or uniform style DARK khaki pants.
- Choice of short or long sleeve **RED** banded bottom polo's with school emblem.
- Black or white knee socks or tights or black, white, or khaki anklets; no athletic socks; no low cut, no print socks
- The length of all skirts, kilt shirts, culottes, and shorts must be no shorter than two inches above the knee. This policy applies when a student is in uniform and also on designated dress-down days.
(Khaki items must be the DARK colored khaki.)
- Black cardigan button down sweater for cool days. Emblem optional. Hoodies, sweatshirts, or any other style sweaters are not permitted to be worn on uniform days.
- Black uniform blazer with School Emblem after November 1 for grades 6-8 only (under consideration)

BOYS – GRADES 4 TO 7

- Uniform style DARK khaki walking shorts or uniform style DARK khaki pants. No cargo style shorts or denim pants permitted.
- Only the RED Emblem-embroidered, banded bottom short or long sleeve polo shirt may be worn
- Black or khaki socks; no athletic socks; no low cut, no print or show style socks
(Khaki items must be the DARK colored khaki.)
- Black cardigan button down sweater for cool days. Emblem optional. No hoodies, sweatshirts, or any other style sweaters are permitted to be worn on uniform days.
- Black uniform blazer with School Emblem after November 1 for grades 6-8 only (under consideration).

FOOTWEAR – ALL STUDENTS – Preschool TO GRADE 7

- Students in preschool through eighth grade are expected to wear appropriate school type shoes. Rubber bottoms (no athletic/tennis shoes) for protection during recess. No boots of any type; clogs; sandals; flip flops; heels higher than two inches; or Heelies permitted to be worn in school (even on dress down days). Snow boots are permitted during the winter months, but must be removed once the student arrives at school (change of shoes should be sent to school for the student to change in to).

Physical Education UNIFORM – ALL STUDENTS – Preschool TO GRADE 7

- Students are expected to dress in a PE uniform for physical education class. The uniforms may be purchased from our school's line of spirit wear or a plain white or red tee shirt (during the warmer months) or a plain white or red sweatshirt (during colder months) and plain red or black PE shorts (warmer months) or plain red or plain black sweatpants (colder months) may be worn. Students are also permitted to wear shirts promoting St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School (such as cheerleading, club shirts, our sports teams, etc.). Tennis shoes are permitted on PE days.

Short shorts, yoga pants, or leggings "are not permitted" to be worn for PE class. All shorts must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee.

Tennis shoes and white athletic socks are required as part of the PE uniform.

PE uniforms are worn to school by students in grades PreK-7.

Accessories: (PreK-7)

Hair

- Natural in color; no highlights or streaks
- No hair feathers
- Boys' hair length is to be no longer than the top of their shirt collar.

Nails

- No press-on nails
- Clear or a single light shade of polish only

Jewelry

- Small, stud earrings, no hoops/dangling earrings
- Watches and small religious necklaces are acceptable (No pins on the sweater or uniform top)

Make-up for Girls

- Modestly applied (not distracting) and natural in color

DISCIPLINE AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Discipline is an integral part of a learning process. In order to develop self-control, the student must be helped to understand his/her emotions and impulses to live in harmony with others, to respect the rules of family, to keep the laws of the country, and to obey the laws of God.

Every teacher and the Principal shall have the right to exercise the same authority as to student conduct and behavior as do the parents or guardians of the student. Student responsibilities include regular school attendance, conscientious effort and classroom work, and conformance to school rules and regulations. Students share with the administration and faculty the responsibility to develop a faith-filled climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living.

No student has the right to interfere with the education of his fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of self, teachers, students, administrators, and all others who are involved in the educational process. Students should express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner so as not to offend or slander others.

Any discipline imposed, including reproof, loss of privileges, and detention should be calculated to be a positive vehicle for the student to develop self-control and adhere to the rules and regulations of the school. Humiliating, embarrassing, or physical punishment does not achieve that goal. After-school detention should be utilized to reinforce with the student that she or he is expected to adhere to the rules and regulations of the school, and also to supplement the child's education by providing appropriate class assignments. More severe penalties include suspension and, as a last resort, expulsion. Physical punishment is prohibited. Of course, teachers and administrators are permitted to take appropriate action, including physical restraint in order to quell a disturbance, for the purpose of self-defense, for the protection of students and staff, or to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object which poses an immediate threat to the safety and welfare of the school community.

Because it is impossible, to foresee all problems that arise, administration and faculty are empowered to take disciplinary action for any behavior that violates the spirit and philosophy of the school even though it is not specified in the Discipline Policy. The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any regulation for just cause, at his or her discretion.

Standards of Conduct

Every teacher and principal has the right to exercise the same authority as to conduct and behavior during the time students are in attendance, including the time required in going to and from their homes, as the parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to such pupils may exercise over them.

Conduct, whether inside or outside of school, that is detrimental to the welfare of the school may result in disciplinary action (Policy 412.1).

- **Cafeteria Conduct**

The school cafeteria is operated as a service to students and teachers. Students may purchase a lunch, ala Carte items, or may bring a lunch from home. All students will eat in the cafeteria.

- Walk quietly to the cafeteria.
- Walk to assigned lunch tables and sit quietly if you packed a lunch.
- Walk to have your card scanned and pick up your lunch if purchasing a school lunch that day.
- Do not “save” seats.
- Sit at the “Allergy Free” table if you have food allergies; do not sit at the allergy-free tables if you are eating foods with nuts or that have been processed in a facility with nuts.
- Be polite, courteous, and mannerly (e.g., do not play with or throw any food or beverage, pick everything up off of the floor that you dropped, keep area neat and clean, etc.)
- Use soft voices to talk to your neighbors. Do not talk across the cafeteria.
- Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
- After eating, leave the table clean, and put empty milk cartons and all lunch paper in the proper containers.
- Remain at the lunch table until instructed to throw empty beverage containers or throw away garbage.
- Empty left-over fluids into the bucket
- Throw all paper/plastic products into the garbage
- Bring dirty trays and silverware to the kitchen
- Remain in seats until dismissal to recess

Infractions of the rules will be left to the discretion of the persons on lunch duty. The teachers on lunch duty are in charge of the students during that time.

- **Electronic Devices**

Unauthorized use of technological/electronic devices such as cellular phones, electronic games, media players, ipads, and laptops, etc. are not permitted. All such devices must be deposited in the School Office upon arrival to homeroom and not accessed until dismissal. Failure to do so will result in confiscation of the device. A parent will need to retrieve the device from the office. Detention will be assigned for repeated offenses.

Inappropriate use, such as sexting, cyberbullying, hacking, etc. will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

- **Off-Campus Conduct**

The administration of SSRCS 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* (PA Act 26 of 2015),

- **Teacher Discipline Plan**

All classroom and itinerant teachers will have their own rules to be followed in addition to the school wide discipline policy. The rules and regulations for each teacher will be distributed, read, signed, and returned to the teacher the first week of school. All individual classroom rules will have been approved by the Principal and enforced accordingly. A copy of each teacher’s rules and procedures will be available on the school website at <http://www.sssbv.org>.

BULLYING POLICY

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, HAZING OR BULLYING (Policy 619)—The Office for Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Greensburg is committed to providing a caring, friendly, safe, and respectful environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and visitors of our schools. A safe, secure, and respectful educational environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards and build appropriate relationships with others. Acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation, and bullying (including cyberbullying) are unacceptable behaviors and are prohibited in our schools.

Administration, faculty, staff, and volunteers are to demonstrate appropriate behavior by treating others with civility and respect, and being aware of and not tolerating harassment, intimidation, hazing, and bullying. If incidents do occur, students should be able to report and know that the inappropriate behavior will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

- **General Statement of Policy**—An act of harassment, intimidation, hazing or bullying (which collectively shall be referred to in this document as “bullying”) by either an individual student or group of students is expressly prohibited on school property; at a school-sponsored activity or event off school property; on a school bus; on the way to and/or from school; or off school grounds if these actions are intended to and/or do adversely affect the safety and well-being of students while in school (including cyberbullying). This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in such an act but also to students who, **by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student’s unacceptable behavior.**
- **No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee** of the schools of the Diocese of Greensburg **shall permit, condone, or tolerate such acts.**
 - Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
 - Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.
 - The principal (or designee) will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will discipline or take appropriate action against any individual who is found to have violated this policy.
- **Definitions**—

- Bullying involves conduct by a person, including verbal conduct that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student’s physical or psychological well-being.
- Harassment, hazing, intimidation, and bullying are any acts, words or other behaviors, by an individual or group against another individual or group, characterized by:
 - **Intent to harm**--Intensity and duration over a period of time
 - An interpersonal relationship where there is an imbalance of power, not mutual or intentional provocation by the victim
 - Inflicting physical or emotional harm or discomfort or damage to the person’s reputation and/or relationships.
 - A level **so severe, persistent, or pervasive** that an intimidating or threatening educational environment is created or the orderly operation of the school is substantially disrupted.
- Bullying **can take many forms** including but not limited to: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendo, demeaning comments, cartoon drawing, graffiti, pranks, gestures, staring/leering, physical attacks, flashing a weapon, physical restraining, threats, taunting/ridiculing, stalking, malicious teasing, name calling, relationship undermining, social isolation or exclusion, other written, verbal and/or published items including cyberbullying, destroying/damaging property, or other physical actions.
- **Responsibilities of Administrators, Supervisors, Teachers and Others**—To the extent that a person has supervision of other persons, activities and environments, each administrator, principal, teacher, aide or volunteer shall have the responsibility:
 - For maintaining a work place, work area, learning area and/or activity area free of harassment, intimidation, hazing, and bullying. Teachers should establish a positive, friendly, and trusting relationship with the class and each individual student. The best results are obtained through a combination of generous verbal praise or other social reinforcements for positive activities and consistent negative consequences for aggressive, rule-violating behavior.
 - To ensure that all information concerning the policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation, hazing, or bullying is disseminated to all subordinates, to all families, and to all students. This information may be in the form of rules, regulations, orders, procedures, policies, or other written or oral directives. All parties are to be instructed as to the full meaning and application of all such directives.
 - to be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that may lead to or constitute bullying and immediately report to his or her immediate supervisor: any actions viewed by him or her which, in his or her opinion, may be construed as falling within the definition of bullying as contained within the policy; and/or any instances, reports or allegations of bullying which come to his or her attention.
 - Upon receiving an allegation of bullying, to complete the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation school investigating form.
 - Document incidents in the Diocesan PowerSchool student management system for the purpose of program evaluation and planning, as directed by the Superintendent and the Office for Catholic Schools.

- **Reporting Procedures**—Any student, employee, staff member, aide or volunteer who believes s/he has been the victim of bullying or any such person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall report the alleged act(s) immediately to the building principal (or designee). A student may report bullying anonymously. The reporting party or complainant should use the reporting form available from the Principal. An oral report shall be considered an official report and must be documented.

The Principal (or designee) is responsible for receiving oral or written reports of bullying at the building level. If the report is given verbally, the principal (or designee) shall reduce it into written form using the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation school investigation form.

All other members of the school community, including parents/guardians, students, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy to a school employee. While submission of the report form is not required, it is encouraged.

Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant's or reporter's: grades, educational environment, future employment, work assignments or work environment.

The privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witness(es) shall be respected, as much as possible, consistent with the school's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations. Reports of bullying are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or as confidential investigative data, and will not be disclosed except as required by law.

Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on an anonymous report, but only when validated.

If the complaint concerns alleged conduct by the Principal, the report form shall be delivered to the Superintendent.

- **Investigation Procedures**—Upon receipt of a report or complaint that alleges harassment, intimidation, hazing or bullying, the Principal (or designee) will undertake a prompt, thorough and complete investigation of the alleged incident in as confidential a manner as possible. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint.

The Principal (or designee) may take immediate steps to protect the complainant, student(s), or others, pending completion of an investigation of bullying, consistent with applicable law.

Whether a particular action(s) or incident(s) constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and the surrounding circumstances.

The Principal (or designee) is not obligated to disclose to a victim any educational or personnel data, including any disciplinary action taken against an alleged perpetrator. To the extent permitted by law, the Principal will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student(s) involved in a bullying incident and the remedial action taken, based on a substantiated report.

A full written report shall be completed by the principal (designee) upon completion of the investigation. Such report may include, but shall not be limited to written and/or transcribed:

- Verbal statement(s) of the reporting or aggrieved party.
- Verbal statement(s) of the accused party.
- Verbal statement(s) of all witnesses.
- Factual findings and recommendations.

All written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) shall be signed by the person offering such statements.

- **Discipline and Remedial Action**—The response to students, teachers, aides, and staff who commit one or more acts of bullying should be determined based on the totality of the circumstances. In all cases, the school should attempt to actively involve parents/guardians in the remediation of the behavior(s) concerned.
 - Initiate immediate talks with the bully or bullies to include:
 - Documenting involvement of participation
 - Sending a clear, strong message that the behavior is not acceptable
 - Warning that future behavior will be closely monitored
 - Warning that additional negative consequences will be administered if the behavior does not stop
 - Immediate consequences may be warranted for inappropriate actions in their first occurrence
 - Talk with the victim and his/her parents/guardians to include:
 - Documenting specifics of the incident
 - Providing information about the plan of action to be taken by school personnel and parents/guardians to deal with the behavior
 - Encouraging the immediate reporting of any new episodes or attempts to school personnel

In determining the appropriate response to students who commit one or more acts of bullying, school administrators should consider:

- The development, maturity levels, and/or special learning needs of the parties involved
- The levels of harm
- The surrounding circumstances; The nature of the behaviors; Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior; The relationship between the parties involved; The context in which the alleged incidents occurred

It is only after meaningful consideration of these factors that an appropriate consequence should be determined, consistent with the diocesan policies and school procedures.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Principal (or designee) will take appropriate action. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying **may range from** positive behavioral interventions, referral to school and outside resources, detentions, up to and including suspension or expulsion. In summary, action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the applicable statutory authority, and the school and diocesan policies and regulations.

The parents/guardians concerned should be contacted. Depending on the situation, meetings can be held together with parents/guardians of both sides, or to minimize tensions, meetings can be held with each family separately. To support the teacher convening this meeting, school counselor or Principal.

- **Protection for those Reporting Incidents**—Intimidation, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged bullying, any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation; or any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying is prohibited. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement may be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the person who reported the incident. Disciplinary action may range from positive behavior intervention up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

- **False Accusations**—Students, school employees, visitors or volunteers who are found to have falsely accused another of bullying shall receive consequences in accordance with diocesan policies, procedures, and agreements. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement may be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the person who was falsely accused. Consequences shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, and may range from positive behavior intervention up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

- **Cyberbullying**—Cyberbullying is when someone is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by a peer using information and communication technologies. The policies and procedures herein related to other forms of bullying, and in the Diocese of Greensburg Schools Technology Resource Acceptable Use Policy, also apply to cyberbullying. However, because the motives, methods, profile, and demographics of cyberbullies are varied and sometimes different from the traditional bully, the solutions and prevention messages must address their special issues.
 - Act 26 makes cyberbullying a criminal offense for a person to:
 - Intend to harass, annoy, or alarm a child
 - Use electronic means to directly address a child or indirectly through social media; and
 - Engage in a continuing course or conduct which either
 - **Makes a seriously disparaging statement or opinion about a child’s**
 - Physical Characteristics,
 - Sexuality,
 - Sexual activity, or
 - Mental or physical health
 - *Threaten to inflict harm on the child

Punishment for Cyberbullying—A third degree misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum \$2500 fine and/ or one year in prison.

*Juveniles charged with the crime may be referred to a diversionary program, which might include an education program on cyber harassment. Once completed, the juvenile’s record may be expunged.

The schools have a valid concern and legal obligation to maintain discipline and protect their students while in their care in the classroom, on school grounds, and at school-sponsored activities. However, if cyberbullying originates or occurs off school grounds and outside of school hours and does not directly impact the school itself, schools have limited authority to react to cyberbullying. Each school's Technology Resource Acceptable Use Policy, signed by the student and parent, must include a provision reserving the school's right to discipline the student for actions taken off school grounds if these actions are intended to and/or do adversely affect the safety and well-being of students while in school. Documentation on how the incidents affect the school should be kept.

Children should be counseled to immediately tell a responsible adult. Depending on what they are doing, how they are doing it, and if repeated, cyberbullies' actions might escalate from annoyance, to bullying, or to the school's disciplinary code, to criminal acts.

If the cyberbullying is **repeated and threatening**, the victim and the parents/guardians should contact the school so the situation can be monitored in school for the safety of all. School authorities must respond to allegations of cyberbullying:

- **By gathering information** using the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation school investigation form and procedures detailed in this policy, including the telecommunication method used and the effect of the threat at school. Collecting and preserving electronic evidence is important to facilitate the investigation and any eventual prosecution. Do not:
 - 1) Install or allow to be installed any programs;
 - 2) Remove or allow to be removed any programs; or
 - 3) Take or allow other remedial action on the involved computer or communication device during this process.

These actions may adversely affect the investigation and any eventual prosecution.

- **In one or more of the following ways:**
 - Contact law enforcement if the victim is in danger of physical harm
 - Contact both sets of parents/guardians and try to mediate the situation and reiterate applicable policy
 - Institute an educational and awareness program to help stop further cyberbullying by students, and to help educate parents/guardians about the problem
- **Policy Dissemination, Prevention Programs, and Curriculum**—Information regarding the policy against bullying shall be incorporated into the school's employee in-service program and policies. It is the responsibility of the administration and staff to ensure that each child is made aware and understands definitions, conditions, and examples of bullying. The schools will provide annual education and information to students and parents/guardians regarding bullying, including information regarding the Office for Catholic Schools' policy prohibiting bullying. Intervention programs may also be delivered by Intervention Specialists, School Counselors, SAP Liaisons, and/or professional school personnel.
- **Sexual Harassment**—Recognizing the dignity of all employees and students, the Diocese of Greensburg is committed to making a good faith effort to maintain a safe and healthy workplace and learning environment through the implementation of these policies dealing with sexual harassment.

- Policy on Sexual Harassment (Staff)—It is the policy of the Diocese of Greensburg that all employees should enjoy a working and learning environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment.

There is hereby established a policy **strictly prohibiting all forms of sexual harassment in any work area**, learning area, activity area or any other place under the permanent or temporary control of the Diocese of Greensburg, or in any school located within the Diocese (hereinafter referred collectively as the “Diocesan School Community”) by or toward any administrative or professional staff member, full or part-time employee, contracted services employee, job applicant, visitor, student, aide or volunteer of the Diocese of Greensburg.

All persons associated with the Diocesan School Community, including, but not necessarily limited to, the administration and staff are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community will be in violation of this policy.

Appropriate sanctions shall be applied against all proven offenders of this policy.

- Definitions:
 - *Academic*: is defined to include any school-sponsored activity, whether as a participant or as a spectator, including clubs or special events.
 - *Allegation*: is defined as an unproven claim being asserted or declared and which the asserting party undertakes to prove.
 - *Explicit*: is defined as being unambiguous in expression, or as being so plain and distinct that there is no reason for ambiguity or difficulty in interpretation.
 - *Implicit*: is defined as being implied, or capable of being understood from something else though unexpressed.
 - *Sexual Harassment*: is defined to include:
 - Any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
 - An explicit or implicit requirement of submission to sexual advances as a basis for an employment decision.
 - An explicit or implicit requirement of submission to sexual advances as a condition of employment, promotion, grades, or academic social status.
 - Any case in which submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for any employment or academic decision affecting any individual.
 - Any case in which such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering unreasonably with the individual’s personal, professional, work, or academic performance.
 - Any case in which such conduct creates or tends to create an offensive, hostile, or intimidating work or academic environment.
 - Actual or threatened retaliation against a person who complains or intends to complain of sexual harassment.
 - Furthermore, the following behavior, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment.
 - Sexual comments
 - Sexually-oriented, verbal “kidding” or joke telling.
 - Explicit or implicit pressure to engage in sexual activity of any nature.
 - Repeated remarks to a person, if such remarks have sexually demeaning implications.

- Non-verbal gestures of a sexual nature.
- Physical acts such as touching, pinching, patting, hugging, fondling, brushing up against, assault, or restricting an individual's movement.
- Use of unwelcome terms of endearment. *Unwelcome*: is defined as being undesirable or unwanted or offensive to the harassed individual and not solicited or incited by the individual.

The Diocese hereby affirms its resolve to protect the rights of all accused parties, to fairly and accurately investigate all allegations coming to its attention, and to apply all appropriate disciplinary or administrative sanctions when necessary.

- Criteria for Determining Whether an Action Constitutes Sexual Harassment—The Diocesan School Community shall use, and hereby establishes, three (3) criteria for determining whether an action constitutes sexual harassment.
 - 1) Submission to the conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment, promotion, grades, or academic or social status; or
 - 2) Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as a basis for any decision affecting the person who did the submission or rejection; or
 - 3) The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work force or academic environment.

- Responsibilities of Administrators, Supervisors, Teachers, and Others—To the extent that such person has control over other persons, activities, and environments, each administrator, principal, teacher, aide or volunteer shall have the responsibility:
 - For maintaining a work place, work area, learning area and/or activity area free of sexual harassment, intimidation and bullying.
 - To ensure that all information concerning sexual harassment which they may receive in the form of rules, regulations, orders, procedures, policies, or other written or oral directives, is or has been disseminated to all subordinates under their supervision, and that such subordinates are instructed as to the full meaning and application of all such directives.
 - To immediately report to his or her immediate supervisor: any actions viewed by her or him which, in her or his opinion, may be construed as falling within the definition of sexual harassment as contained within the policy; and/or any instances, reports, or allegations of sexual harassment which come to her or his attention.
 - Upon receiving an allegation of sexual harassment to distribute a complaint form to the complainant and instruct her or him to deliver the same to the Superintendent; or, in the alternative, personally deliver the completed complaint form to the Superintendent on behalf of the Complainant.
 - Of notifying the Superintendent in writing that a complaint was received and that a complaint form was distributed to the complainant.

- Reporting Procedures—Any employee, staff member, aide or volunteer who feels she or he is or has been a victim of sexual harassment shall bring the matter to the immediate attention of an administrator, principal, pastor, or to the Superintendent.

Any such reports of sexual harassment shall be forwarded to the Superintendent, as soon as possible, in writing, by the person who received such a report. The report shall be signed by the complainant and the person who received the report.

If the complaint concerns alleged conduct by the Superintendent, the complaint form shall be delivered to the Vicar General of the Diocese of Greensburg.

- Investigative Procedures—The Superintendent and/or his designee(s) shall promptly and thoroughly investigate all matters or allegations of sexual harassment in as confidential a manner as possible.

A full written report shall be completed by the Superintendent or his/her designee(s) upon completion of the investigation after the complaint is received. Such a report may include, but shall not be limited to:

- Written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) of the reporting or aggrieved party.
- Written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) of the accused party.
- Written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) of all witnesses.
- Factual findings and recommendations.

All written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) shall be signed by the person offering such statements.

If the allegations are verified by the investigation, the Superintendent shall take appropriate corrective action as soon as practically possible after his/her receipt of or completion of the investigative report.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Superintendent shall notify the complainant, in writing, as to:

- Factual findings, recommendations, and conclusions as to the accuracy of the charges alleged.
- If appropriate, any decision as to disciplinary measures which have been, or are contemplated to be meted out.

In all cases where the investigation has verified the allegations and a decision has been made to take disciplinary action against the accused, the complainant will be supplied with a form that:

- Clearly spells out the nature and extent of the disciplinary action.
- Provides space for a response from the complainant as to whether she/he agrees with the disciplinary action that was or is to be taken. This form is to be dated and signed by the complainant and returned to the Superintendent.

If, after a complete and thorough investigation, the allegations remain unsubstantiated and unverifiable, but the Superintendent has reason to believe the accused's version of events, the Superintendent shall carefully record her or his conclusions in writing, and shall document all the steps that were taken in an attempt to verify the allegations. The Superintendent shall also document the basis for his/her decision regarding the allegations.

- Disciplinary or Administrative Measures—If it is determined that any employee has engaged in sexual harassment in violation of these policies, rules, and regulations, she or he shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or discharge.

If it is determined that any other associate of the School (such as a contracted service employee, aide, or volunteer) not employed by the school on a full-time basis has engaged in sexual harassment in violation of the policies, rules and/or regulations of the school, she or he shall be subject to appropriate administrative action, up to and including suspension or termination of the existing association.

The procedures contained in the Policy are not intended to supersede or circumvent any procedures for redress of grievances outlined in collective bargaining agreements made with the Diocese.

The provisions of the Policy shall not be construed to supersede any state or federal laws regarding discipline or separation of employees, nor shall this Policy in any way be construed as to limit the intent of any other policies of the Diocese.

If it is determined that any employee or other associate has, with intent, falsely accused another of engaging in sexual harassment, she or he shall be subject to appropriate administrative or disciplinary action, at the discretion of the Superintendent.

Upon receipt of any complaint or report of sexual harassment, the Superintendent shall immediately consult with the Diocesan School Solicitor with regard to investigation and disciplinary procedures.

- Rights of the Accused—The Diocese hereby recognizes that all allegations of harassment are not necessarily true, and acknowledges that employees, supervisors, and associates may be unjustly accused.

The Diocese hereby affirms its resolve to protect the rights of all accused parties, to fairly and accurately investigate all allegations coming to its attention, and to apply all appropriate disciplinary or administrative sanctions when necessary.

All matters involving **sexual harassment complaints shall remain confidential to the full extent possible.**

- Superintendent's Rights and Responsibilities—In addition, the Superintendent shall:
 - Provide or arrange to provide adequate education to all affected parties as to the existence, meaning, purpose and effect of this policy;
 - Make sure that all affected parties are aware of the complaint procedure for reporting possible violations of this Policy; and
 - Make sure that complaint reports are readily available to all appropriate parties at all times.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY

A student on school grounds, during a school session, or anywhere at a school-sponsored activity (including athletics) who is under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or mood altering substances or possesses, uses, dispenses, sells or aids in the procurement of alcohol, narcotics, restricted drugs, mood altering substances or

any substance purported to be a restricted substance or over the counter drug shall be subjected to discipline up to and including expulsion. Police and parents will be contacted, upon discovery. Each case shall include a referral to the SAP team and an immediate D&A evaluation, at the parents' expense. The results of the evaluation must be shared with the Principal.

The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property, if reasonable suspicion exists that contraband (e.g., drugs, alcohol, weapons, etc.) may be present (Policy 618, 22 Pa. Code 12.14).

TOBACCO and E-CIGARETTES POLICY

SSRCS is designated a Non-Smoking campus. Smoking and tobacco use is prohibited on School and Parish grounds, facilities used for education or school-related activities, including conveyance vehicles and the parking lots. This policy includes smokeless tobacco and e-cigs (Policy 606.1).

Students violating (possessing/using) this policy are subject to disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion. These measures are in addition to any fines imposed by the Magistrate for violation of local Building Officials and Code Administrators (BOCA) codes, fire codes, and possession of tobacco, etc.

WEAPONS POLICY (24 Pa PS 1317.2)

No person other than public officers in uniform in the exercise of their duties shall bring any weapon as defined in Section 912 of the PA Crimes Code, 18 Pa C.S. § 912, onto school grounds or in any school building or vehicle even if they have a legal permit to carry such weapon.

Non-school personnel or students who violate this policy shall be prosecuted as trespassers (Policy 614).

Possession of weapons in the school environment or verbal threats concerning the use of a weapon are a threat to the safety of students and staff and prohibited by law (Policy 614.1). The Diocese prohibits possession of weapons and replicas of weapons in any school building, on school property, at any school sponsored activity and in any conveyance providing transportation to school or a school sponsored activity (Policy 614.3). Any student on school grounds, during a school session, or anywhere at a school-sponsored activity (including athletics) shall be subject to disciplinary actions, up to and including expulsion, and reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency for criminal prosecution (PA Crime Code, 18 Pa. C.S. § 912). Police and parents will be contacted, upon discovery. In the case of an exceptional student, the Superintendent shall take all necessary steps to comply with the *Individuals with Disabilities Act* (Policy 614.3; Public Law 91-230, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq).

- **Weapon**: the term shall include, but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku stick, brass or metal knuckles, firearm, shotgun, rifle, bb or pellet gun, look-alike gun, chemical agent, explosive device, and/or any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.
- **Possession**: a student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student's locker; under the student's control while she/he is on school property, on property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school; or while the student is on her/his way to or from school (Policy 614.2).

CATEGORIES OF MISCONDUCT

<u>LEVEL I MISCONDUCTS</u>	<u>DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS/RESPONSES</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom disturbances (ex. calling out, throwing objects, minor safety violations) • Classroom tardiness • Cheating, lying and plagiarism • Improper language • Repeated failure to complete an assignment • Repeated failure to carry out directions • Violations of the dress code • Violations of bus riding regulations • Any other behavior which disrupts the orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the school (minor fighting, horseplay, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal reprimands • Student/teacher conferences • Special seating • Written assignments pertaining to acceptable behavior • Reasonable withdrawal of classroom privileges • Restriction from school activities (e.g. cannot attend field trips, assemblies, athletic events, etc.) • Parent conference (personal or telephone) • Behavior contract • Detention—lunch, before/after school • Parent called to bring in appropriate clothing
<p><u>LEVEL II MISCONDUCTS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated or more severe Level I misbehaviors • Bullying behaviors/Harassment • Class cuts • Truancy • Continued classroom or school tardiness • Being disrespectful • Falsifying papers and excuses • Failure to comply with the instruction of a teacher or other staff member • Disruptive classroom behavior • Failure to attend detention • Install unapproved software or app on any school technology • Disclosing a password or using an unauthorized password • Sending inappropriate, vulgar, bullying, or derogatory social media messages • Downloading and/or viewing unauthorized websites • Violation of computer usage regulations • Unauthorized use of technological/electronic devices such as cellular phones, games, media players, etc. 	<p><u>DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS/RESPONSES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal of school privileges • Restriction from school activities • Confiscation of an object—must be recovered by the parent (unless a weapon—turned over to law enforcement) • Student/teacher conference • Behavior contract • Parent/teacher conference • Referral to counselor/Principal • Detention • In-school suspension (ISS) • Out-of-school suspension (OSS) • Withdrawal of bus riding privileges • Withdrawal of technology privileges • Referral to outside agency or social agency

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsportsmanlike behavior at athletic events, assemblies, school activities. • Persistent violation of school rules and regulations (gum chewing, running in the halls, etc.) • Persistent violation of bus riding regulations. • Any other behavior that's frequency or seriousness tends to disrupt the educational process 	
<p><u>LEVEL III MISCONDUCTS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated or more severe Level II misconducts • Physical abuse: physical aggression or violence toward any other person • Vandalism such as writing on walls, seats, chairs; defacing or destroying school property including school buses; technology; equipment; etc. • Stealing including software theft • Installing a computer virus/hacking • Threats to others or the School (physical, written or verbal) • Disorderly conduct • Possession or use of tobacco and/or e-cigs • Harassment • Gambling • Any other acts of misconduct which involve a violation of the personal or property rights of others, including the school (e.g. being on school property at unauthorized times) 	<p><u>DISCIPLINARY OPTIONS/RESPONSES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The administrator will take into account the increased severity of Level III misconduct, and may apply options listed at Levels I and II, as well as: • Referral to law enforcement agencies • Restitution for any damages
<p><u>LEVEL IV MISCONDUCTS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated or more severe Level III misconducts • Extortion • Bomb threats, terroristic threats/acts • Possession/use/transfer of weapons including any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku, firearm, shotgun, rifle and anything capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. This definition 	<p><u>Disciplinary Options/Responses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The administrator or designee will take into account the increased severity of Level IV misconduct and may apply Levels I, II, and III discipline, accordingly. • Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) • Expulsion from school • Referral to law enforcement agencies

<p>includes box cutters, kitchen knives, pen knives on key chains and other common household items, as well as look-alikes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possessing/using/furnishing/selling of unauthorized substances (such as drugs, look-alike drugs, non-controlled substances, alcohol, etc) or its paraphernalia • Possession /use/transfer of detonating or explosive devices • Repeated possession and/or use of tobacco products or e-cigs • Setting fires (arson) • Setting off false fire alarms • Tampering with fire extinguishers • Intimidation, extortion, or blackmail of another student or school personnel under threat of physical harm • Inciting to riot • Violations of the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania • Any other acts of misconduct which result in violation to another's person or property or which pose a direct threat to the safety and welfare of others including the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to the Board of Trust Administrators for appropriate action • Restitution of any damages
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Detention

Students may be detained after school or class hours for repeated tardiness, unexcused absences and disciplinary infractions. Parental notification will be given and acknowledged prior to the time of detention for afterschool detention, as transportation is the parent's responsibility.

Assignments for detention will be related to furthering student academic and behavioral achievement (Policy 412.2).

Suspension (both ISS—in-school suspension and OSS—out-of-school suspension)

A student may be temporarily suspended by the principal for a serious infraction of school regulations or for repeated detentions from one to ten days. No prior notice to parents is needed for a suspension.

- The suspension will begin after the student has been informed by the Principal of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened (§12.6(a)(ii)).
- The parents/guardians and the Superintendent shall be notified immediately in writing (email or US Postal) when the student is suspended (§12.6(a)(iii)).

- When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing with the Principal consistent with the requirements in §12.8(c) (relating to hearings) (§12.6(a)(iv)).
- An agreement between the student/parents and the principal describing the student’s future cooperation in a program designed to resolve the student’s problems (Policy 412.3).

Expulsion

Expulsion is a permanent separation of students at SSRCS for persistent and willful disregard of school rules. Reasons for expulsion may be for a single serious incident or event or situation involving disregard for or a clear violation of a school rule or regulation or a series of same. Examples include, but are not limited to (Policy 412.4):

- Infractions of school regulations, or the disciplinary codes applicable to each school
- Continued misconduct or conduct detrimental to the physical, educational, or moral well-being of other students
- Continued malicious disobedience or disrespect for authority
- Violation of the drug & alcohol policy
- Violation of the weapon policy
- Assault or battery of a fellow student, teacher or employee
- Bomb threats
- False alarms
- Use of vulgar or obscene language
- Excessive absence or tardiness
- Fighting
- Disrespect toward the school in work or action.

IV. STUDENT SERVICES

Auxiliary Educational Services--TITLE I, ACT 89, AND SPEECH SERVICES

Students who require speech (1 day/week), Title I (remedial reading; 2 days/week), and/or Act 89 (remedial math; 1 day/week) services will receive the services during the school day. These services are provided at no additional cost.

Child Abuse /Mandated Reporters (620)—SSRCS abides by the Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services by the employee or volunteer with first-hand knowledge. All volunteers or employees in the school must be in compliance with the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL).

It is important to remember that “child abuse” is not limited to sexual abuse alone. It includes inflicting or creating an imminent risk of physical injury, mental injury, sexual abuse, or harmful physical neglect. A “child” is any individual who is under the age of 18.

- Child abuse can be one of several different things:

- Non-accidental physical injury that causes severe pain, or that significantly impairs the child’s physical functioning, even temporarily;
 - Non-accidental clinically-diagnosable mental injury that renders the child chronically and severely anxious, agitated, depressed, socially withdrawn, psychotic, unable to perform age-appropriate developmental and social tasks, or in reasonable fear that his or her life or safety is threatened;
 - Any type of sexual abuse or sexual exploitation (such as inducing a child to engage in sexual acts or to be photographed in simulating sexual acts, even if the child “consents” to the acts); or
 - Serious physical neglect which endangers a child’s life or development or impairs the child’s functioning, but which does not arise solely from the financial inability of the parents to provide adequate housing, clothing and medical care. Child abuse also occurs when an individual places a child in imminent risk of serious physical injury or sexual abuse or exploitation.
- Perpetrators—a perpetrator of child abuse can be a:
 - child’s parent;
 - spouse or former spouse of the parent;
 - paramour or former paramour of the parent;
 - person 14 years of age or older responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct contact with children as an employee of child care services, a school, or through a program, activity or service, such as a baby sitter or day care staff person;
 - individual residing in the same home as the child who is at least 14 years of age;
 - relative who is 18 years of age or older who does not reside in the same home as the child, but is related within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity by birth or adoption to the child; or
 - an individual 18 years of age or older who engages a child in severe forms of trafficking in persons or sex trafficking, as those terms are defined under section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (114 Stat. 1466, 22 U.S.C. § 7102).
 - A perpetrator of child abuse for failure to act can be a:
 - child’s parent;
 - spouse or former spouse of the parent;
 - paramour or former paramour of the parent;
 - person 18 years of age or older who is responsible for the child’s welfare or who resides in the same home as the child.
 - Mandated reporters do not have to determine whether or not the person meets the definition of perpetrator in order to make a report.
 - Mandated Reporters—those people who are required by law to report suspected child abuse. Mandated reporters are held to a higher standard of responsibility and may receive serious consequences for not reporting suspected abuse.
 - All employees and volunteers who have identified, suspected, or self-reported child abuse by any person should immediately report the incident to **ChildLine** electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or by calling 1-800-932-0313. If an oral report is made to ChildLine, a report of suspected child abuse Commonwealth of Pennsylvania **CY 47 form** must also be completed and forwarded to the county Children and Youth agency within 48 hours after making the report.
 - After the report is made to ChildLine, the staff person or volunteer may discuss the ChildLine call with his or her supervisor, but the reporting individual must then notify the Bishop Delegate's Office of the mandated report in writing, via a copy of the CY 47 form. The Managing Director of Catholic Charities serves as the Bishop’s delegate for matters of clergy and church personnel sexual misconduct. The Director of Human Resources serves as the safe environment coordinator.

- A mandated reporter need not make a first-hand observation of the suspected child abuse victim. Second-hand reports of abuse must be reported to the proper authorities if the mandated reporter has “reasonable cause to suspect” that child abuse has occurred.
- Permissive Reporter—Permissive Reporters are individuals who are encouraged to report suspected child abuse, although **not required** by law.
- Reporting—Mandated reporters are **required to make a report** of suspected child abuse if:
 - They have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse under any of the following circumstances:
 - They come into contact with the child in the course of employment, occupation, and practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program activity or service.
 - They are directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or training of the child, or are affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, school, regularly established church, or religious organization or other entity that is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child.
 - A person makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of abuse.
 - An individual 14 years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that the individual has committed child abuse.

It is not required that the child come before the mandated reporter in order to make a report of suspected child abuse nor are they required to identify the person responsible for the child abuse to make a report of suspected child abuse.

Health Services

The local public school district (Belle Vernon Area) provides limited health services to SSRCS through their school nurse. The School Laws of Pennsylvania provide for the medical, vision, and dental examination of students at intervals required by the State. The school nurse is responsible for coordinating these procedures (Policy 602).

Children must be immunized before entering school, as **required by state law**. No child shall be permitted in school without the following immunizations:

- **4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)**
 - Usually given as DTP or DTaP or DT or Td
- **4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose given)**
 - A 4th dose not necessary if the 3rd dose was administered at age 4 years or older and at least 6 months after the previous dose
- **Two doses of measles, mumps, rubella—usually given as MMR**
- **Three doses of Hepatitis B**
- **Two doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity**

7th Grade or after:

- **One dose** of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) on the first day of 7th grade
- **One dose** of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) on the first day of 7th grade

Two exemptions are allowed:

- **Medical:** Submit a SIGNED statement from your child’s physician indicating that a certain immunization would be harmful to your child’s health.
- **Religious, Moral/Ethical:** Children do not need to be immunized if a parent/guardian OBJECTS IN WRITING to immunization on religious grounds or strong moral or ethical conviction.

However, children exempted from immunization may be required to be excluded from school during the outbreak of above (listed) diseases as directed from the PA Department of Health (Policy 603).

Accidents, Injuries, and Illnesses

In case of an emergency concerning the health of a student, the school nurse and/or school Principal shall be immediately notified. The school nurse, if available, shall be primarily responsible for rendering medical assistance. If the parent, guardian, or person designated on the student’s emergency card cannot be reached, the school shall decide whether an ambulance call to 911 or further treatment at a medical facility is necessary (601.2).

In the case of illness during school hours, the School will contact the child’s parent/guardian to determine if the child should be picked-up. Children are not permitted to call their parent/guardian or dismiss themselves. All children must be picked-up in the School Office and signed out.

Parents/Guardians should contact the School Office if keeping their child home with a contagious illness or condition that they may have had while in school (e.g., head lice, pink eye, stomach flu, etc.)

The school office will maintain an emergency card for each enrolled student, which shall contain, at a minimum, the following information:

- Student name
- Name and address of parent/guardian and where they can be reached during normal school hours
- Name, address, and telephone number of a third party who may be contacted in the event the parent or guardian cannot be reached
- Any allergies or medical conditions we should be aware of (e.g., needs epi-pen or bee stings, carries inhaler for asthma, etc.)

Allergies—SSRCS recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and welcomes all students with food allergies. In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, SSRCS maintains a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/guardian, and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potentially life threatening allergy. The School protects the rights of its students by providing them, through accommodations when required, the opportunity to participate fully in all school programs and activities (Policy 608.10).

Medication—Only essential medications will be given at school, with parent/guardian taking full responsibility for any medication sent into the school (604). Some students have permission to carry inhalers and/or epi pens. This information is available to Staff on the “Confidential Health Concerns” list.

Any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day **must comply** with school regulations. These are necessary for the protection of both the student and the school personnel.

- Private physician's written request for administration of specific dosage of medication should include (604.1):
 - Date;
 - Student's name;
 - Diagnosis;
 - Medication, dosage, how administered, time schedule and length of time to be administered in school;
 - Possible side effects or contraindications;
 - Any curtailment of specific school activity (lab, physical education, sports, recess, etc.);
 - Listing any other medications which have been prescribed by the physician;
 - Physician's signature and telephone number;
 - Parent's signature.

- The nurse is responsible for orientation of the person(s) authorized to administer medication (604.1a) including:
 - Principles of medication administration;
 - Review of specific medications which are to be administered, including side effects;
 - For students on long-term medication, the nurse should have conferences with the parents regarding responses to medication and a written report should be given as needed for the family to give the physician.

- Parental or guardian written request and authorization to give each specific medication accompanies the physician's written approval/request, with:
 - Date;
 - Student's name;
 - Prescribing doctor's name;
 - Statement requesting and authorizing the administration of the medication, name of medication, dosage and time interval;
 - List of all current medication taken by the student (home or school).

- The school nurse or a person designated by the principal will administer the medication.

- Medication is to be **delivered to the school by the parent, guardian or responsible adult** to the School Office (604.1b).
 - If the school nurse is not available, the principal will need to designate someone.
 - The medication will be recorded in the log with the date, name and amount of medication delivered and signed by the parent.
 - The physician's written request and parental authorization is brought with the medication and delivered to the school nurse or designated person.
 - When possible, the parent should notify the school office in advance that the child will need medication.

- When someone **other than the parent brings the medication to the school**, the medication should be placed in a **sealed envelope by the parent**. It should be marked with the name of the child, the name and the amount of medication sent, or be in a pharmacy labeled bottle.
- Supply of medication to be kept at school (604.1c):
 - Single day supply for short-term illness.
 - One or two weeks for long-term chronic illness. This would afford the nurse the opportunity to meet the parents and discuss the child's response to medication, etc. The amount of medication stored by the school should be based on the length of time medications are to be administered and other individual factors.
 - Medication brought to school must be in a **properly labeled** container (604.1d) by the pharmacist or doctor and include:
 - Student's name;
 - Name of physician;
 - Date of prescription;
 - Name and telephone number of pharmacy;
 - Name of medication, dosage and frequency of administration.
- Medications are stored in a locked container in a secured area, which is convenient to the person responsible for administering medication. Medications requiring refrigeration are stored in the refrigerator.
- Unused medication will be given to parents for disposition. Record date, time, amount, and signature of parent/guardian or adult receiving medication.
- The school nurse, when available, is the primary person to administer medication (604.1e), s/he:
 - Confers with parents at the time the medication is delivered.
 - Is responsible for the administration and recording of medication.
 - Medications to be given by injection will be given **only by the school nurse**.
 - Injectable medications must comply with the same regulations required for oral medications.
 - Supervises appropriate self-administration of medication.
 - Medications should be taken in the presence of the person administering the medication.
 - Alerts appropriate school staff to possible side effects of medication which need to be reported.
 - Alerts appropriate teacher(s) if pupil should refrain from any school activity (e.g., lab, shop, sports, etc.)
 - Confers with physicians and pharmacists as needed.
 - Consults by phone or in person with physician or parent at any time.
- The Principal:
 - Designates in writing the person(s) authorized to administer medications (if other than the school nurse).
 - Contacts the school nurse on receipt of medication request.
 - Reviews specific medications with the school nurse. Review to include pupil response and emergency procedures.

- The school will administer only essential medicines prescribed by a physician and accompanied by written instructions signed by a physician. Essential medication includes **only medicine prescribed by a physician, and without which the student could not attend school. No over-the-counter medicine such as: Aspirin, Tylenol, Midol, cough syrup will be dispensed. No cough drops.**
- Fully inform parents that if the school nurse is not available and the parents cannot administer the medication, someone designated by the administrator will give the medication.
- It is required that:
 - School personnel supervise the student's self-administration of medication when a student is old enough or capable to do so.
 - An area be designated for administration of medication which will afford the **student privacy**.
 - **In-service for emergency procedures** (e.g., what to do if a pill becomes lodged in the throat) be made available by the school nurse.
 - School personnel responsible for observing and reporting to nurse or school administration report any side effects or other problems concerning administration of medication.
- Documentation of Medication Administration (604.1f)
 - Physician and parental medication request becomes part of student's health record.
 - Log or written record indicating the administration of medication should be established.
 - Teachers are responsible for observing and reporting to nurse or school administration any side effects.
 - School nurses are responsible for reporting side effects to the prescribing physician.
- **Students with an Infectious Disease**—Schools cannot prohibit admission to or discriminate against students who attend SSRCS solely because of an infectious disease. The school does reserve the right to dismiss a student or curtail a student's activities (curricular, co-curricular, and/or extra-curricular), on a case-by-case basis, if the principal and attending physician determine that a student presents a substantial risk to himself/herself or to others.

Parents/Guardians are expected to inform the principal if or when their child has an infectious disease in order that the school principal can provide for the protection of the child and other individuals in the school. The number of personnel who are made aware of the student's condition will be kept at the minimum necessary to assure confidentiality and to provide proper care and supervision of the infected student, while at the same time providing for the safety and welfare of other students, employees, and volunteers in the school. The principal, in consultation with the parents/guardians of the student, will determine those persons who will be informed of the student's condition. No other school personnel will be informed without prior consultation with the parents/guardians. Subsequent meetings will be scheduled to re-evaluate the condition of the student.

Since immunosuppressed students are at a greater risk of suffering complications from other infections, the student's parents/guardians should consider removing the student from the school during outbreaks of communicable diseases. In all cases, the students and their parents/guardians are to be treated with Christian compassion and care by all school personnel (Policy 625).

Guidance/Counseling Services

Guidance services are provided through Pennsylvania Act 89 (Policy 520.7) and allocated by the Westmoreland County Intermediate Unit (WIU). WIU contracts with Catapult to provide a certified guidance counselor to the School, two days/week for most of the school year. Guidance services may include but are not limited to individual, small group, and whole class participation for help in study skills, career interests, social concerns, school problems, etc. The counselor serves on the Student Assistance Program Team (SAP) and assists with standardized testing.

Counseling services for individual students or small groups are provided for specific needs based upon teacher and/or parent referrals. Parents will be notified, and written consent will be obtained before ongoing sessions and/or assessments are scheduled.

The School Counselor is available to the students, parents, and school faculty.

Progress for Academic Success (PAS)

In lieu of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that is used in the public school, SSRCS uses a Process for Academic Success (PAS). PAS is a communication and planning guide only, not a contract for services. A Process for Academic Success is no guarantee that the needs of the student will be met; rather it is a communication and planning guide meant to help coordinate the educational approach for students. PAS is not a guarantee for ongoing enrollment at the school. Administration reserves the right to terminate enrollment for any reason and at any time.

Student Assistance Program (SAP)

SSRCS offers every student the services of a Student Assistance Program (SAP). Anyone—student, teacher, parent, staff member, self—may **refer** a student to the SAP Team. The Team meets weekly to review and investigate referrals. Students can be referred for a decline in academic work, behavioral issues, attendance issues, suspicion of substance abuse, suspicion of emotional issues, any barriers affecting the child’s learning. After an initial investigation, parents are invited to meet with the Team to discuss the concerns and authorize the gathering of data related to the concern. The team will gather the information and meet again with the parent(s)/guardian(s) for **planning** and the identification of resources and agencies that can assist with support. The plan is put into **action** and the Team continues to **support** the student and his/her family with monitoring, mentoring, and motivating academic success (Policy 605).

RIGHT TO AMEND

SSRCS reserves the right to amend this Handbook.



St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School
Student/Parent Handbook
Parental Sign-Off

Dear Parent/Guardian:

At the start of the 2019-20 school year, we ask that you read (via the website) a copy of our St. Sebastian Regional Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook.

Please print, sign, date, and return this sheet to the homeroom teacher, as soon as possible. Your signature does not necessarily mean that you agree with the contents of the "Handbook," but that you have read, understood, and will abide by its content.

Student(s) name(s) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ **Date** _____