

## CODE OF CONDUCT

In all areas of learning, discipline must be considered in the development of the whole person. The Code of Conduct is based on the Gospel message of Jesus. Growth in self-discipline, a responsibility for Catholic morals values, and a loving respect for the rights of all persons is encouraged and nourished by the Code of Conduct. To achieve these ends, parents, faculty and students work together to create a catholic school environment. These basic components include:

- Teachers have the right to teach. No student will stop the teacher from teaching.
- Students have the right to learn. No student will stop another student from learning.

To discipline means literally to educate and to train for a specific goal. In order to do this effectively, the goals of disciplinary measures must be visible and meaningful for all. The school observes this Code of Conduct because it is built on fundamental Catholic school teachings. The role of the principal/administration, staff and faculty is to work with the students and parents to assist the students in developing a strong Christian attitude toward life.

Our code of conduct is based on our philosophy. We believe that all children are expected to behave in accordance with the Gospel message. As Catholics and Christians, we are mandated by our faith to treat each other with love and respect.

***In registering at Saint Nicholas School, both students and parents agree to comply with and support the discipline policies and regulations.***

### Code of Conduct Policy

Each student and staff member has the right to attend Saint Nicholas School in a safe and peaceful environment. Recognizing that each of us is continually striving for perfection in our daily lives, it is expected that we will help one another to achieve this goal of Christ-centered behavior in all of our daily living experiences.

Each student will begin each quarter of the school year with a conduct grade of 100 points. Failure to act according to the belief statements below will result in points being deducted from the student's conduct grade. These grades will be recorded on the student's report card each quarter.

In addition, when a student's conduct grade falls **below 86 points**, he/she will become *ineligible for a period of two weeks to participate in any extracurricular activities, including athletic, where he/she represents the school. This two-week period will begin on the Monday following the day the conduct grade falls below 86.*

A student who fails conduct during two grading periods will be placed under a written disciplinary contract. This contract will spell out the terms under which the student may remain at Saint Nicholas School.

## POINTS CONSEQUENCES

100 points	Expected behavior at all times
100 - 95 points	Points deducted from conduct grade
94 - 86 points	Above plus school detention for each infraction below 94
85 - 80 points	Above plus detention served, conference with parent(s)
79 - 76 points	All above plus specific behavior contract and probation period
75 - points	Above plus Saturday detention served from 9:00-12:00 and conference with parent(s)

*We assert the following belief statements about our Christian behavior while attending Saint Nicholas School. We will work together to help ourselves and each other achieve these goals:*

**I.** Saint Nicholas School students grow in their understanding of the Christian faith through their active participation in the celebration of liturgies, prayer services, as well as daily prayer. Failure to live according to this standard includes the following actions and their corresponding penalty:

Irreverence during daily prayer	5 points
Irreverence during liturgies/prayer services	10 points
Failure to fully participate in liturgies (singing etc.)	5 points

**II.** Saint Nicholas School students base their actions on the example of Jesus who accepted each person as a gift. Failure to live according to this standard includes the following actions and their corresponding penalty:

Verbal teasing/ridiculing another student	5 points
Daring a student to hurt another student by word or action	5 points
Name-calling	5 points
Vulgar, inappropriate language	5 points
Bullying another student by word or action	5 points

**III.** Saint Nicholas School students act respectfully toward others. Failure to live according to this standard includes the following actions and their corresponding penalty:

Hallway disruption (running, excessive talking)	5 points
Horseplay (poking, touching, etc.)	5 points
Fighting	10 points
Hurting another student by actions (kicking, tripping, etc.)	5 points
Unacceptable gestures to another student	5 points
Unacceptable gesture/talk to a teacher/adult	10 points
Violation of fire or tornado drill rules	10 points

**IV. Saint Nicholas School students respect the property of others. Failure to live according to this standard includes the following actions and their corresponding penalty:**

Chewing gum, eating candy	3 points
Disturbing another's property	5 points
Destroying another's property	10 points + restitution
Stealing from another	10 points + restitution
Defacing school/church property	10 points + restitution
Vandalism/destruction of school/church property (lavatories)	10 points + notification of law enforcement + restitution
Littering in the halls, playground, lunch room, parking lot	3 points

**V. Saint Nicholas School students accept responsibility for their actions. Failure to live according to this standard includes the following actions and their corresponding penalty:**

Lying	10 points
Cheating	10 points + zero grade given on assignment/test
Threatening a student or teacher	10 points + suspension
Possession or use of drugs, alcohol	25 points + notification of law enforcement
Illegal activity (possession of weapons, explosive incendiary devices, etc.)	25 points + notification of law enforcement

**Saint Nicholas School students gather daily at mealtime to eat and share pleasant conversation with classmates. Failure to live according to this standard includes the following actions and their corresponding penalty:**

Inappropriate table manners	3 points
Throwing food	5 points + clean-up
Taking food from another	5 points
Disturbing another's food	5 points
Loud, boisterous voices	5 points
Carrying, eating food outside the lunchroom without Permission	5 points

**VII.** Saint Nicholas students will be in compliance with the Saint Nicholas School dress code policy. Failure to live according to this standard includes the following actions and their corresponding penalty:

Dress code violations

3 points

**VIII.** Saint Nicholas School students recognize the importance of being prompt for school. They recognize that tardiness not only impedes their learning but also is a disruption for the teacher and the entire class. Failure to live according to this standard includes the following actions and their corresponding penalty:

If a child has three unexcused tardies during a semester one conduct point will be deducted for each unexcused tardy thereafter. (Refer to page 12 of Parent/Student Handbook)

Unexcused tardiness

1 point (per tardy)

## **Disciplinary Procedures**

All disciplinary procedures will be consistent with the policies of the Diocese of Youngstown as defined in the Administrators Handbook.

**SINCE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO LIST ALL AREAS OF CONDUCT, THE ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE WHETHER A STUDENT'S BEHAVIOR IS EXCESSIVE OR INAPPROPRIATE. ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS ARE FINAL. THE CODE OF CONDUCT IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL**

Situations with specific consequences:

- Saint Nicholas School supports and cooperates with the procedures of the local school districts regarding behavior on school buses. These procedures include parent notification, suspension for a time from transportation, and loss of transportation privileges.
- Students responsible for stealing, destroying, or vandalizing Saint Nicholas School or Parish property or the property of others are financially responsible, with their parents/guardians, whether the damage is accidental or intentional. The police will be notified if the situation warrants it.
- Truancy will be referred to the Pupil Personnel Office of the public school district of residence. If necessary, the case will be referred to Juvenile Court and/or Children's Services. Truancy is understood to include leaving school without permission, being absent from school without parents'/guardians' knowledge, and being absent from class without permission.
- Students are prohibited from the use, possession, or sale of drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, tobacco, explosive materials or weapons on Saint

Nicholas property, at Saint Nicholas sponsored events whether held during or outside of school hours, and on public school buses. Violations warrant notifications of the police, immediate suspension, and mandatory conference with parents before the student returns to school. Intervention by trained professionals may be required as a condition for the student to remain at Saint Nicholas School. Lack of cooperation on the part of either the student or parents/guardians in this matter will result in the student's expulsion.

- Search: School officials will at any time search student book bags and desks if there are reasonable grounds to believe that a student is using the book bag or desk to store and/or conceal illegal substances, stolen property, or other items related to a violation of school rules.

According to the Saint Nicholas School philosophy, it is felt that by learning the values of responsible behavior towards oneself and others, (both at home and in school), children learn to recognize their unique and individual place in society. The realization that no matter what their gifts may be, each has something valuable to contribute to society. This positive approach is the basic philosophy of Saint Nicholas School.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems that arise, this handbook empowers the faculty and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior (within or outside of the school community) that violates the spirit, philosophy and code of conduct of the school, even though not specified.

In justice to the other students, circumstances may dictate that a student be removed temporarily or permanently from the particular school setting.

### **Use of Disciplinary Action**

In cases where a student is continually disruptive of others or in the case of a single serious disciplinary infraction, the teacher will appraise the principal/administration of the situation. They will assist in the development of a course of action to be taken to correct the situation. Corporal punishment is prohibited.

Students who lack self-discipline or who violate the rights of others can expect disciplinary action. Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the student, the nature of the infraction, and the severity of the case. Repeated infractions can result in more serious consequences, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, but there is no requirement for progressive discipline.

## **Disciplinary Measures**

- Conference with student and/or parent
- Appropriate verbal reprimand
- Temporary removal from the classroom (e.g., time-out room) or isolation from the group with supervision
- Loss of privileges
- Supervised after-school detention
- Referral to office
- Disciplinary contract
- Saturday detention

## **Suspension**

Serious or repeated misconduct may lead to suspension from class or school. It is the authority of the local building administrator to suspend a student from class or school. The diocesan schools shall not suspend a student for more than five (5) consecutive days. If the suspension is for an offense which can only be addressed through counseling in substance abuse or anger control or requires the assistance of an outside agency, the suspension may be of a duration to allow such counseling to occur.

### **Suspendable Offenses are:**

- Any offense involving the use of violence, force, threat, coercion or other conduct which violates the safety of others. Police should be informed of these incidents.
- Use/possession of a weapon. Possession of any dangerous articles or weapons (e.g. knives, pointed sticks, guns, sling shots, firecrackers, matches, etc.). Police must be informed.
- Vandalism, destruction, or theft of school property.
- First offense involving possession, use or being under the influence of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or other chemical substances (counseling may be required where necessary).
- Repeated disregard for school rules and regulations.
- Other offenses serious enough to warrant a student's removal from school.

### **In-school suspension**

An in-school suspension requires that the student work in a private area of the building under the supervision of the principal or designee. The student is to report to the office each morning by 8:00 A.M. and remain in the area of supervision the entire school day. All work must be 44 completed satisfactorily before leaving at the end of the day. During the time of suspension, all extracurricular privileges are forfeited. The student does have the obligation to continue daily studies.

**Out-of-school suspension**

An out-of-school suspension requires that the student work in his/her home under the supervision of the parents/guardians. The student is to report to the School Office each morning by 8:00 A.M. to receive assignments. All work must be satisfactorily completed at home and presented to the principal by 3:00 P.M. each day. During the time of suspension, all extracurricular privileges are forfeited and the student is responsible for making up all class work.

**Expulsion**

Expulsion is the most serious disciplinary action taken by diocesan schools and may be used for serious disciplinary infractions, when public behavior affects school morale, safety and/or when the student remains incorrigible. Only the Superintendent of Schools may expel a student. In diocesan schools, expulsion is the permanent removal of a student from the school community.

When a student has been expelled, official school records and withdrawal papers will so indicate the expulsion.

Unless directed otherwise by the Superintendent of Diocesan Schools, no principal shall admit to his or her school a student who has been expelled from another Diocesan or Public school.

**Classroom Discipline/Conduct**

Each teacher sets his/her own behavior expectations while in the classroom. Infractions of these specific expectations will be handled individually between teacher, student, and parent. (e.g. disruptive classroom behavior, homework, not having materials, books, etc.) Each teacher will set day and time for these individual detentions.

**Detentions/Saturday Detention**

Detentions may be given to students violating the Saint Nicholas School Code of Conduct. Detentions may be given to students violating the Saint Nicholas School Code of Conduct. Students are responsible for notifying their parents/guardians of the day on which they will be expected to remain after school. Grades 1-8 will require a parental verification slip to be signed. Failure to return this slip may result in further disciplinary action such as additional detentions.

Detentions will last until 3:15 P.M. Saturday detentions will be given to students whose Code of Conduct falls below 76%. Saturday detention is held from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from school when a detention is issued.

## **Student Regulations and Procedures**

Privacy of individual students must be balanced against the need to protect the health, welfare and safety of other members of the school community.

### **Students and Student Property**

#### ***Searches***

The principal/administration or his/her designee has the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of school patrons against drugs, weapons, unauthorized publications, and other contraband materials. Search of a student's person and/or personal property on school property (e.g. automobiles, etc.) or at school activities may be conducted by the school principal/administration or other designated officials. It is only necessary that a search be reasonable and related to the school rights in these regards. The failure of a student to voluntarily submit to a search shall be presumptive evidence of the existence of contraband and grounds for appropriate disciplinary action.

#### ***Student Property***

Students are solely responsible for their own personal property. The school accepts no responsibility for items left unattended in the common areas of the school. It is the responsibility of the student to turn in wallets, watches and other valuables to the physical education teacher/coach when participating in athletic events away from school.

#### ***School Lockers and Desks***

Lockers and desks are school property and are subject to searches by school authorities to protect the safety of all.

## **Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence Policy**

#### ***Purpose***

Saint Nicholas School is firmly committed to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for everyone in the school. For this reason, and in keeping with the goals and objectives of Catholic education, Saint Nicholas School expressly prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence in the school environment. This policy reemphasizes the personal dignity of the individual and fosters positive sexual attitudes and respect for others.

***Sexual Harassment defined:***

For the purpose of this policy, sexual harassment includes the following specific instances:

- Verbal sexual abuse
- Disseminating obscene or sexually explicit material, whether in the form of music, written lyrics, pornographic pictures or other literature, or having such material in one's possession in the school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities
- Obscene or sexually explicit graffiti anywhere in the school or on the school/parish grounds
- Continuing an unwanted written or oral communication directed to another of a sexual nature
- Spreading sexual rumors/innuendos
- Obscene T-shirt, hats or buttons
- Touching oneself sexually in front of others
- Obscene and/or sexually explicit gestures
- Any other inappropriate behavior of a sexually explicit or obscene nature that demeans or offends the recipient

The above list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but is intended to provide guidance as to what may constitute sexual harassment. Isolated, trivial incidents are not sufficient to constitute harassment and will be handled according to the student behavior code. Allegations of sexual harassment (as defined above) are to be reported to the teacher and the principal. Parents of both the offender and the victim will be informed of the allegations. The matter is to be kept confidential by all parties involved, and every effort will be made to protect the offender and the victim from retaliation. The parents of both the offender and the victim are obligated to cooperate in remedying the situation. If the allegations are substantiated, disciplinary actions will be taken. These will depend on the nature, frequency and severity of the action, the ages of the offender and victim, the history of similar actions by this individual, and the circumstances in which the harassment occurred.

***Possible disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to any or all of the following:***

- Verbal warning, reprimand and apology to the victim
- A parent/student/principal conference
- Written warning/reprimand and parent notification entered in the student's file
- Detention or removal from selected school activities and/or extracurricular activities
- Behavior/probation contracts, possibly requiring professional intervention
- Suspension,
- Expulsion

## **Sexual Violence**

Sexual violence is handled separately because of its potentially criminal nature. If an incident of sexual violence occurs, the principal, pastor, or other school authority is required under law to report the incident (O.R.C.2151.421). The Department of Human Services and the police will be contacted immediately if there is any “reason to believe” (O.R.C. 2151.421) that sexual abuse or violence has occurred involving a child less than eighteen years of age. The Diocesan Legal Office will be contacted immediately in these situations.

Generally sexual harassment should be construed as sexual violence when: the recipient is physically touched without his/her consent in a sexual manner; is expressly threatened or perceives a threat of physical harm for purposes of the offender’s sexual gratification, or is the victim of sex offenses under Ohio Law. In these cases, the Department of Human Services and the police will be contacted immediately.

## **Weapons**

Unless otherwise authorized by law, pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, no person shall knowingly possess, have under the person’s control, convey or attempt to convey a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance onto these premises. ORC SEC. 2923.1212. A valid concealed carry permit does not authorize the licensee to carry a weapon onto these premises.

- A. A “weapon” is any instrument or device designed primarily for use in: Inflicting death or injury upon a human being or animal, and which is capable of inflicting death upon a human being when used in the manner for which it was designed. Additionally, any instrument or device of any sort whatsoever which is actually used in such a manner as to indicate that an individual intends to inflict death or serious injury upon the other, and which, when so used, is capable of inflicting death upon a human being, is a weapon. Weapons include, but are not limited to, any pistol, revolver, or other firearm, dagger, razor, stiletto, switchblade knife, or knife having a blade exceeding five inches in length. Facsimiles of weapons used in a threatening fashion are subject to this policy. Dangerous objects include, but are not limited to, clubs, nunchucks, brass knuckles, knives, butterfly knives, stun guns, and billy clubs.
- B. Possession includes bringing a weapon onto school property, to school sponsored events either on or off school property, storing a weapon in one's locker or other area of the school property, or having a weapon on one's person. In furtherance of the overall philosophy, goals and objectives of the Catholic education educational experience, Saint Nicholas School expressly prohibits the use, possession, sale, or discharge of any weapons or explosive devices in the school, on the school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities. This policy shall apply to all students, participants in parish programs, teachers, administrators, and other personnel in the school or parish. This policy includes, but is not limited to, any firearm, knife, deadly weapon, or explosive or incendiary device. As defined by state law, a deadly weapon is “any instrument, device, or thing capable of inflicting death, and designed or specifically adapted for use as a

weapon” (O.R.C. 2923.11A). Firearms shall include any loaded or unloaded gun of any caliber or type. This prohibition also includes any pistol, rifle or other device that uses air or gas propelled projectiles. Violations of this policy may warrant notification of the police, immediate suspension, and possible expulsion. If possession of a weapon is suspected, the principal or other administrator will immediately contact the police department and the Diocesan Legal Office before confronting the individual. If it is determined that this policy has been violated, the parents/guardians of the offender shall be immediately contacted and must cooperate with the disciplinary process.

Disciplinary action may include immediate in- or out-of-school suspension, pending investigation and resolution. If the student’s infraction does not warrant immediate dismissal, then the parents may be required to sign a probation contract that includes all conditions of the student’s retention at the school. Possible terms of this probation agreement may include professional counseling, participation in a community program addressing youth violence, suspension from extracurricular activities, and any other conditions deemed appropriate by the administration of the school or parish program after consultation with the Diocesan Legal Office.

### **Gangs**

Youth gangs and gang-related activity are prohibited. A gang is defined as any non-school sponsored groups, usually secret and/or exclusive in membership, whose purpose or practices include unlawful or anti-social behavior or any action that threatens the welfare of others. If gang related activities are a concern, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and appropriate intervention initiated to include behavior contracts, referrals to counseling or other programs specific to the nature of the offense. Parents/Guardians will be held liable and financially responsible for all forms of vandalism.

Realizing that gang activity is a community concern, communication will be maintained with the local police department and public school officials on all matters related to gang activity within our community. Involvement and jurisdiction of school authorities in gang related incidents occurring outside the school or off school/parish property will be determined in cooperation with diocesan legal authorities and the police, and will take into consideration the nature of the incident, the safety of the student, the effect of the incident on other students, and the good order and functioning of the school.

## **Substance Abuse**

The school makes every effort to make students aware of the dangers and consequences of the unlawful use of substances.

1. For purposes of definition, the Office of Catholic Schools defines drugs as the improper use of legal drugs/substances (to include tobacco and steroids) and/or the use of illegal drugs/substances. Students who unlawfully use, consume, possess, or distribute drugs, or who use, consume, possess or distribute alcohol, and/or possess or threaten to use any weapon (e.g., knife) or firearm (to include firecrackers and/or any explosive device that would bring potential harm to people and/or property) on school property or at school activities or near school property with access to students attending the school or against any member of the school community are subject to appropriate disciplinary action (including but not limited to expulsion). The school may require a professional assessment to determine the appropriate program of rehabilitation, if one is needed.
2. The use or sale of drugs on or within one thousand feet of school property is unlawful under Ohio State law and is in violation of school policies. If a student is suspected to have violated this policy or is discovered with the unlawful use, sale or possession of drugs or alcohol on or near school property or at school-sponsored events, the student will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. In the event school officials believe that a student is under the influence of an illegal substance, the parents will be notified. School officials reserve the right to require that the student take a drug test within 24 hours and that the results of the testing are shared with the appropriate school officials. If, however, a violation of the law has occurred, the proper law enforcement agencies will be contacted.

## **Internet**

While monitoring of a student's home use of the Internet is the responsibility of the parents, there are times when the result of home usage materially disrupts class work or involves substantial disorder. The school will use normal disciplinary procedures to deal with such situations. If the school becomes aware of criminal activity, the administration will report such activity to the appropriate authorities.

## **Electronic Devices/Cell Phones**

While it is considered popular for students to have "beepers", electronic games, iPods, cameras or other electronic devices, they may not have them in school. They are distracting to students and are not necessary **during** school hours. These items will be confiscated. This includes all electronic games or devices. All such items are not considered educational or appropriate.

Cell phones are **ONLY** permitted in school if they are turned off and kept in the child's book bag. Cell phones may not be used anywhere or at anytime during school hours. Cell phones are not to be placed in pockets, purses or desks. Violation of this policy will result in the confiscation of the cell phone and loss of cell phone privileges. The cell phone will be held in the school office for at **least 24 hours** and will only be returned to a parent after a conference has been scheduled with the principal. Violation of this policy will result in the deduction of five conduct points. Repeated violations will result in the loss of cell phone privileges for the remainder of the school year..

***Miscellaneous Items***

Saint Nicholas School does not assume responsibility for money, toys, tape recorders, cameras, radios and similar items brought to school by a student. Parents/Guardians are asked to see that these items are kept at home.