



*St. Ambrose Catholic School*

*2025-2026 Parent - Student Handbook*

**SCHOOL INFORMATION**

School Phone: 618-466-4216

School Fax: 618-466-4575

School website: [www.stambrosegodfrey.org](http://www.stambrosegodfrey.org)

*St. Ambrose Catholic School*

*822 Homer Adams Parkway*

*Godfrey, IL 62035*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to St. Ambrose Catholic School. In choosing our school, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of Catholic education. We at St. Ambrose take that trust you have placed in us very seriously. We will educate your children and care for them in a Christ filled environment that is welcoming to all.

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of St. Ambrose Catholic School for the 2025-2026 school year. Please read this document carefully. You will be asked to acknowledge that you agree to “read and be governed by the 2025-2026 Parent/Student Handbook. The agreement may be completely digitally or you are also welcome to print off the forms, complete them, and send them in to the school office.

Here at St. Ambrose Catholic School, the faculty and staff look forward to working with you to promote spiritual, academic, and extra-curricular growth and development for your child(ren).

Sincerely,

Robert Baird

Principal

St. Ambrose Catholic School

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\*The Diocese of Springfield, St. Ambrose Administration, and Pastor (with consultation from the School Advisory Council) reserve the right to amend the policies within this handbook anytime as necessary. Notice of Amendments will be provided to parents.

## **MISSION & EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

### **Mission Statement**

St. Ambrose Catholic School provides students with excellence in education both academically and spiritually, in order to prepare them to excel in service to family, community, and Christ our Lord.

### **Philosophy, Objectives, and Purpose of Program**

We believe each child is a unique person created by God to fulfill a special purpose in the world. Thus, it is the responsibility of St. Ambrose Catholic School to help ensure that the Christian potential of each child is reached by developing and strengthening the whole person spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically, and socially.

We believe that the parents are the first and foremost educators of the child in the ways of faith. It is through them that the child first receives an insight into God's love and acquires Christian attitudes and values. The interests of the child can be best served through mutual cooperation and support by parents at home and the teachers and staff at school. By our actions together, we serve as living witnesses of the Good News and sharers of the faith, thus empowering the child to be developed for the service of others and to take a rightful place in answering God's call.

The mission of our Catholic schools in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois is the formation of Catholic, Christian disciples. This mission demands that our schools provide intellectual, spiritual, and human formation for young people who are equipped for human flourishing and for eternal life with Jesus Christ; and that they support the Christian family, providing formation and community for families to grow in virtue, in love of God and in service of neighbor. Our schools exist to help our young people understand who God created them to be and how to understand and engage with the world that God has created for them to steward. Our schools recognize the responsibility of parents to serve as the first teachers of their faith to their children, a divine calling that flows from the sacramental character of their baptism and holy matrimony, and we seek to support and encourage parents in fulfillment of this duty. Likewise, our teachers have a prophetic calling flowing from their baptism and confirmation, to teach and promote the faith. Our teachers are not merely employees. Our teachers are ministers of the Church, aiding pastors and the bishop in fulfilling the Church's mission to promote and defend the faith.

## **ADMISSION & ATTENDANCE POLICIES**

### **Non-discrimination Policy**

St. Ambrose Catholic School admits students of any race, color, sex, or national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, sex, or national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships, loan programs, athletics, or school administered programs. Our school does reserve all its rights as religious entities in accord with the teachings of the Catholic Church, the protections of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, and the Illinois Religious Freedom Restoration Act 775 ILCS 35/.

The pastor and school administration will ensure that these policies are followed. Concerns will be addressed through the Grievance Procedure listed in the Discipline and Conduct section of this handbook.

## **Transfer Students**

Students who wish to transfer to St. Ambrose may be evaluated prior to their admittance to ascertain proper placement and to predict academic success. The Principal will meet with families regarding prospective students to determine placement. Screening for Kindergarten students will be required. Screenings for students in grades 1-8 will be scheduled as needed. After acceptance, the progress of the new student will be reviewed by the teachers, principal and/or pastor as needed during a trial period in the first quarter the student attends St. Ambrose. This trial period provides time for the student to adjust to a new school setting and to demonstrate academic commitment and responsible behavior consistent with the standards of St. Ambrose Catholic School. In the event that a student does not demonstrate satisfactory academic commitment and responsible behavior during this trial period, the student may be required to withdraw from the school.

## **Admissions**

At the time of registration, all new students seeking admission to St. Ambrose Catholic School are evaluated on the basis of current academic records including; standardized test scores, report cards, behavior reports, and on observations made by the staff at previously attended school. Applications for new registration to be considered for acceptance, class sizes, and placement must be submitted by April 15 for an upcoming school year.

Documents required for admission include:

- Verification of active parish affiliation/stewardship
- Health records
- Immunization records
- Birth certificate (original)
- Baptismal certificate
- Report cards
- Standardized test results
- If applicable, record of IEP, ISP, 504 plan, needed accommodations, etc.

Students applying for admissions in Grades 1-8 must present a copy of the above listed documents. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at St. Ambrose Catholic School will be able to meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the student, parents, and Principal is part of the admission process. The Principal then recommends admission to the Pastor.

All new students will be given a trial/probationary period to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any issues, a student may be asked to withdraw from St. Ambrose Catholic School. Conditional admission may be recommended, if appropriate, and conditions may be suggested/required. For example, students who are not performing at grade level but whose parents request placement with chronological age classmates must provide a full-time aide at the parents' expense.

Moreover, all financial responsibilities to previous parish schools must be satisfied before admission is considered at St. Ambrose Catholic School. Ordinarily, St. Ambrose Catholic School does not accept transfers into or returning to St. Ambrose during the school year unless the transfer is due to a move into the area by a parish family. All transfer students will be vetted through their previous school before being accepted.

## **Guidelines for Priority of Admissions**

- A. Preschool
  1. Active Parishioners with siblings in the school
  2. Inactive Parishioners with siblings in the school
  3. Active Parishioners
  4. Inactive Parishioners
  5. Non-parishioners with siblings in the school
  6. Catholic non-parishioners
  7. Families of other faiths
- B. Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade
  1. Students enrolled the previous year
  2. Active Parishioners with siblings in the school

3. Inactive Parishioners with siblings in the school
4. Active Parishioners
5. Inactive Parishioners
6. Non-parishioners with siblings in the school
7. Transfer students from other Catholic schools who are parishioners of other parishes
8. Transfer students from other Catholic schools who are not Catholic
9. Transfer students from public or private schools who are not Catholic

### **Age Requirements**

TO ENTER KINDERGARTEN AT ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC SCHOOL, A CHILD'S AGE MUST COMPLY WITH ILLINOIS STATE REGULATIONS. At this time, the regulation states that the child must be five years old by September 1 of the entry year to begin Kindergarten. Children entering preschool must be three years old by September 1 of the entry year to enter the three-year old program and four years old by September 1 of the entry year to enter the four-year old program.

### **Birth Certificates**

In accordance with Illinois State Law, birth certificates for all students must be on file with the office.

### **Class Size**

The class size of each preschool class is 20 students, per state guidelines. The recommended capacity of each Kindergarten-8th grade classroom/homeroom/section is 25 students. At the discretion of the principal, the class size is dependent upon room availability, educational characteristics of the students, staff compositions, and more. Should enough students register to support additional sections, the principal will consult with the pastor, Finance Council, and School Board to determine if additional sections are warranted. If warranted, additional assistance in a classroom will be considered.

The deadline for administrative decisions regarding admissions and the "Class Size Policy" will be April 15. After April 15, additional registrations (returning or new) will be accepted for classrooms until reaching the cap of 25 students. After April 15, additional registrations (returning or new) for classrooms that have reached capacity will be placed on a wait list. The wait list does not guarantee acceptance.

### **Beginning of the School Year Checklist**

By the first day of school, the following checklist should be completed;

1. All registration materials should be submitted to the school office.
2. Changes to Emergency Contact Forms should be corrected in the school office.
3. Preschool, Kindergarten, Second, and Sixth grade physical and dental forms should be up-to-date and submitted. Kindergarten students and any new students who have transferred from out-of-state are required to submit an eye exam.
4. Uniforms should be ready for wear with appropriate adjustments for growth.
5. Supplies should be purchased and brought to school.
6. Financial obligations must be up-to-date, including tuition and lunch accounts.
7. Necessary medications should be delivered with proper medical documentation.
8. Submit Parent-Student Handbook Waivers and other necessary documentation (by the published deadline).

### **Gender Identity**

Students and their parents are expected to live virtuous lives guided by Gospel values and the teaching of the Church as described in the Family School Agreement (BK3:404.1). Students shall conduct themselves in accord with their biological sex at all times.

### **Attendance**

Illinois law requires that whoever has custody or control of any child between six (by September 1<sup>st</sup>) and seventeen years of age shall assure that the child attends school during the entire time school is in session (unless the child has already graduated from high school). Illinois law also requires that whoever has custody or control of a child who is enrolled in the school, regardless of the child's age, shall assure that the child attends school during the entire time school is in session. Daily attendance is required.



### **School Day**

- 7:30 Drop Off Begins in the Gym
- 7:55 Announcements/Prayer in the Gym
- 9:15-9:30 K-3 Morning Recess
- 11:10-11:30 K-3 Lunch
- 11:35-12:00 K-3 Recess
- 11:35-11:55 4-8 Lunch
- 11:55-12:20 4-8 Recess
- 2:35 PK/K Dismissal
- 2:45 1-8 Dismissal

### **Student Absences**

There are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. Excused absences include: illness (including up to 5 days per school year for mental or behavioral health of the student), observance of a religious holiday or event, death in the immediate family, family emergency, situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the school administration, circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent or guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, attending a military honors funeral to sound TAPS (gr 6-12 only), or other reason as approved by the building principal.

Additionally, a student will be excused for up to 5 days in cases where the student's parent or guardian is an active-duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings. The school administration, in its discretion, may excuse a student for additional days relative to such leave or deployment. A student and the student's parent or guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teachers prior to any excused absences and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school.

All other absences are considered unexcused. Pre-arranged excused absences must be approved by the building principal. The school may require documentation explaining the reason for the student's absence and will presume that an absence is unexcused unless families present the school office with documentation indicating otherwise.

In the event of any absence, the student's parent or guardian is required to call the school at **(618) 466-4216** before **9:00 am** to explain the reason for the absence. If a call has not been made to the school by **9:30 am** on the day of a student's absence, a school official will call the home to inquire why the student is not at school. If the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, the student will be required to submit a signed note from the parent or guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Failure to do so shall result in an unexcused absence. Upon request of the parent or guardian, the reason for an absence will be kept confidential.

St. Ambrose Catholic School submits lunch orders by **9:00 am**. Students who will be late but still attending for lunch must be reported by **9:00 am** or else must provide their own lunch.

### **School Day and Tardies**

The school day begins with announcements and prayer in the gymnasium at 7:55 AM. Students arriving after 7:55 are tardy and must check in at the office.

### **Make-Up Work**

Teachers may, but are not required, to provide assignments ahead of time for extended absences or in the case of illness. Students who are absent due to illness should rest at home and complete work as they are able. Assignments may be gathered upon returning to school and they will be due based on the number of days absent. The student is allowed one day of make-up time for each day missed, with a maximum of seven days (including the weekend) for all make-up work to be completed. Students that are unexcused will not be permitted to complete makeup work for credit, but are expected to complete all assignments.

### **Diagnostic Procedures for Identifying Student Absences and Support Services to Truant or Chronically Truant Students**

State law requires every school to collect and review its chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families to encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success. This review must include an analysis of chronic absence data from each attendance center.

Furthermore, State law provides that schools are encouraged to provide a system of support to students who are at risk of reaching or exceeding chronic absence levels with strategies. Schools should also make resources available to families such as those provided through the State Board of Education's Family Engagement Framework to support and engage students and their families. These resources are meant to foster heightened school engagement and improved daily school attendance.

"Chronic absence" means absences that total 10% or more of school days of the most recent academic school year, including absences with and without valid cause, and out-of-school suspensions. The school uses the following diagnostic procedures for identifying the causes of unexcused student absences: interviews with the student, his or her parent or guardian, and any school officials who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problems.

Supportive services to truant or chronically truant students include parent conferences, student counseling, family counseling, and information about existing community services.

### **Truancy**

Student attendance is critical to the learning process. Truancy is therefore a crucial issue and will be dealt with in a serious manner by the school. Students who miss more than 1% but less than 5% of the prior 180 regular school days without valid cause (a recognized excuse) are truant. Students who miss 5% or more of the prior 180 regular school days without valid cause are chronic truants (This equates to 9 or more days of unexcused absences). Students who are chronic truants will be offered support services and resources aimed at correcting the truancy issue.

If chronic truancy persists after support services and other resources are made available, the school will take further action, including;

- Referral to the local Truancy Officer
- Reporting to officials under the Juvenile Court Act
- Referral to the State's Attorney
- Appropriate school discipline

A student who misses 15 consecutive days of school without valid cause and who cannot be located or, after exhausting all available support services, cannot be compelled to return to school is subject to expulsion from school. A parent or guardian who knowingly and willfully permits a child to be truant is in violation of State law.

## **ACADEMICS & RECORDS**

### **Books & School Owned Items**

Care must be taken to keep school textbooks and school materials in good condition so that they may be used for a number of years. Lost or damaged school materials must be paid for by the student based on the age, condition, and value of the book. Damage or vandalism to any school property is prohibited and the student and parents will be required to cover the expenses to repair or replace any damaged or vandalized items.

### **Catholic Instruction**

St. Ambrose Catholic School is deeply committed to helping students see and understand the ways in which faith and reason complement and reinforce one another in the life of the virtuous man or woman. This motivation animates our rigorous academic curriculum and is at the heart of our earnest efforts to shape the character and cultivate the spiritual life of our students. For this reason, St. Ambrose Catholic School provides regular activities and lessons focused on worship and praise of God, spiritual reflection, catechesis, and service to the wider parish and regional community. The aim of these endeavors is to encourage every student to become his or her noblest and best self.

Each Catholic school in the Diocese must provide daily instruction in the Catholic faith for every student. Liturgical celebrations (especially Mass), in accord with approved liturgical norms, and service opportunities shall be an integral part of the catechetical program, and all students shall participate as appropriate.

### **Sacramental Preparation**

St. Ambrose Catholic Church and School provides informational sessions with parents to assist them in preparing their child for the sacraments of Baptism, Penance, Confirmation and Eucharist. We comply with all Diocesan and Universal laws regarding age requirements for children preparing for the sacraments. While much of the preparation for the sacraments takes place during Religion Class, parent involvement and attendance at Sunday Mass are essential to the process. For children attending St. Ambrose Catholic School who have never been baptized, the process of preparation will be determined on an individual basis and by age.

### **Field Trips**

The school administration shall authorize only those field trips that are appropriate educational or catechetical experiences. Field trips are a privilege for students, not a right. Students must abide by all school policies during transportation and participation in all field trip activities and shall treat all field trip locations as though they are school grounds. Failure to abide by school rules and/or location rules during a field trip may subject the student to discipline. Furthermore, children, adolescents, and accompanying adults attending field trips or other parish sponsored trips shall be informed that participation in such events requires that they adhere to the St. Ambrose discipline policy and code of behavior. These requirements apply to both minors and accompanying adults attending said functions.

All students who wish to attend a field trip must receive written permission from a parent or guardian with authority to give permission. Students may be prohibited from attending field trips for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to receive appropriate permission from parent or guardian or teacher;
- Failure to complete appropriate coursework;
- Behavioral or safety concerns;
- Denial of permission from administration;
- Other reasons as determined by the school.

On field trips there shall be an adequate number of adult chaperones (age 21 or older) for students, and all chaperones must abide by the Policy on Working with Minors for the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. An acceptable ratio of chaperones is 1 adult (age 21 or older) for every 8 students, but the number of chaperones depends on the age of the children and the nature of the event.

### **Chaperones**

Anyone wishing to chaperone or participate in an activity involving children must have completed Safe Environment Training and have a current background check, both of which are provided through the Diocese of Springfield.

Chaperones of school-sponsored activities and field trips are greatly appreciated by teachers and students. It is the responsibility of a chaperone to assist the school staff in maintaining good order, encouraging polite responses, and monitoring for safety. Therefore, chaperones ordinarily may not bring preschoolers with them for field trips (see below for guidelines for chaperones).

Appropriate dress and behavior is a good example for the students. Refraining from the consumption of alcoholic beverages (including samples) and all tobacco products while supervising or attending a school-sponsored activity is required of chaperones.

### **Guidelines for Chaperones**

The following guidelines have been established to make field trips both enjoyable and safe for chaperones and the students. We appreciate chaperones taking their time to volunteer and for following the guidelines.

1. Chaperones are needed to monitor and accompany school children. For that reason, younger brothers and sisters may not come on a field trip unless directed by the teacher or Principal.
2. If chaperones are driving students, each student must have a seatbelt that is fastened around him/her during the entire car trip or in a car seat as per Illinois Child Passenger Protection Act which states: "A child under the age of 8 years old must be secured in a child safety seat. However, if the vehicle is equipped with lap belts only in the back seat, a child weighing more than 40 lbs. may be transported in the back seat wearing a lap belt only. Drivers and all passengers must be secured in

either a seat belt or child safety seat.” There must always be two adults (who have participated in the Protecting God’s Children program or Safe Haven program and successfully completed a background check) to chaperone children other than one’s own. No exceptions to this policy will be granted.

3. Chaperones may not bring snacks for the students in their car or stop for food on the way to or at the conclusion of the field trip if they are driving students by car. If teachers feel snacks are needed, they will provide enough for the entire class.
4. Chaperones must stay with the group for the entire visit. A chaperone must always accompany children to the restroom.
5. The focus of the trip should be the care of the students. Chaperones must not allow distractions (talking to other parents, use of devices, etc.) to interfere with supervision of students.
6. Chaperones must be able to account for each child in their group at all times.

### **Grading, Promotion, and Retention**

School report cards are issued to students on a quarterly basis. For questions regarding grades, please contact the classroom teacher. Grade changes will only be considered for up to two weeks after being issued.

Students receive grades on their report cards based upon the following percentages:

100 - 90	A
89 - 80	B
79 - 70	C
69 - 60	D
59 & below	F

The decision to promote a student to the next grade level is based on successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, completion of the annual service hour requirement, and other assessments. A student will not be promoted based upon age or any other social reason not related to academic performance.

### **Progression from Grade to Grade / Retention**

It is the hope of the staff that all students will experience success. It is the aim of the staff to meet the individual needs of the students. Although St. Ambrose Catholic School does not provide a special education program, the school will assist in finding appropriate resources and providing appropriate accommodations to those in need.

Kindergarten may be a one or a two-year program depending on the academic and social needs of each child. Discussion of the possibility of a two-year program usually begins early in the school year, but a decision is not made until spring. Parents, teachers, and administration participate in this decision. The principal makes the final decision after consultation with parents.

Ordinarily the remaining grades are one-year programs. Should there be a question regarding the wisdom of promotion, a dialogue between teachers and parents will occur. The school makes the final decision regarding retention. Should the school recommend a second year in a grade for a child, but the parents insist that the child should proceed to the next grade; the teacher will indicate a “transfer” rather than a “promotion” to the next grade on the permanent record. If this should occur following the eighth grade year, a certificate of attendance will be issued in place of a diploma.

Many factors must be considered when retention is discussed. When a student in a primary or intermediate grade is involved, the teacher, parents, and administrator will review the child’s progress during the year. When a student in grades 5-8 is involved, retention may be recommended if the child has an unsatisfactory average (below 70%) in three or more academic subjects, shows a lack of effort and responsibility, and/or has a significant amount of incomplete or missing assignments.

If the parents/guardians refuse retention, they must sign a form letter indicating that they refused the retention against the recommendations of the school. This letter will be placed in the student’s permanent file. Students may be transferred to the next grade. A student who is transferred will not be allowed to stay at St. Ambrose Catholic School unless there is a specific Accommodation Plan on file that can be reasonably implemented by the school.

### **Homework**

Homework is used as a way for students to practice what they have learned in the classroom. The time requirements and the frequency of homework will vary depending on a student's teacher, ability, and grade level. Students who are absent from school for a valid cause (an excused absence) may make up missed homework in a reasonable timeframe (please see Absences policy).

### **High Honor Roll / Honor Roll Criteria**

Honor Roll and High Honor Roll are determined at the end of each Quarter. There are 4 grading quarters in the academic year. Students will be on the High Honor Roll list for those that receive all A's in their coursework. It must be all A's, not an A average.

- Students will be on the High Honor Roll list for those that receive all A's in their coursework during a Quarter. It must be all A's, not an A average.
- Students will be on the Honor Roll if they receive all A's and B's (no C's), during a Quarter.

### **Graduation Requirements**

Students will graduate from St. Ambrose Catholic School and receive a diploma after completing the requirements of St. Ambrose Catholic School, the Diocese of Springfield, and the State of Illinois. These requirements include the successful completion of academic instruction in grades K-8, completion of service hour requirements, and completion of the Constitution Test in grade 7.

### **Incomplete Work**

Students are expected to complete all assignments. Missing or incomplete assignments will result in lower grades. In grades K – 5, the amount of reduction is decided by each teacher. In the middle school grades (6-8), the policy is: 25% off the first day late, 50% off the second day, and then a grade of zero after two days late.

### **Student Records**

A school student record is any writing or other recorded information concerning a student and by which a student may be identified individually that is maintained by a school or at its direction or by a school employee, regardless of how or where the information is stored, except for certain records kept in a staff member's sole possession; records maintained by law enforcement officers working in the school; video and other electronic recordings (including electronic recordings made on school busses) that are created in part for law enforcement, security, or safety reasons or purposes, though such electronic recordings may become a student record if the content is used for disciplinary purposes regarding a particular student.

Per 105 ILCS 5/28-19.2(a), "No discrimination, or punishment of any kind, including the lowering of grades, exclusion from classes, or withholding of student records, transcripts, or diplomas may be exercised against a student because the student's parents or guardians are unable to purchase required textbooks or instructional materials or to pay required fees."

"No discrimination or punishment of any kind" includes not only these actions listed above in statute, but also exclusion from school-sponsored social events such as graduation and prom.

The School Code requires that the OFFICIAL RECORD be sent within ten (10) days of receiving a request for records. The OFFICIAL RECORD consists of the following;

The formal record showing dates of enrollment, courses studied, grades, credits and awards received, bearing the signature and title of the certifying official, the seal of the school, if any, and the date of issue. (See permanent record definition below.)

The following definitions apply;

"Student Permanent Record" means the minimum personal information necessary to a school in the education of the student and contained in a school student record. Such information may include the student's name, birth date, address, grades and grade level, parents' names and addresses, attendance records, and such other entries as the State Board may require or authorize.

"Student Temporary Record" means all information contained in a school student record, but not contained in the student permanent record. Such information may include family background information, intelligence test scores, aptitude test scores, psychological and personality test results, teacher evaluations, and other information of clear relevance to the education of the student, all subject to regulations of the School Board. The information shall include information provided under Section 8.6 of the

Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act and information contained in service logs maintained by a local education agency under subsection (d) of Section 14-8.02f of the School Code. In addition, the student temporary record shall include information regarding serious disciplinary infractions that resulted in expulsion, suspension, or the imposition of punishment or sanction. For purposes of this provision, serious disciplinary infractions means infractions involving drugs, weapons, or bodily harm to another.

Parents/legal guardians, or someone specifically designated in place of the parent, do have a right to inspect and copy all school student permanent and temporary records of that child.

The request to inspect and/or copy such records must be granted within a reasonable time, and not more than ten (10) days after the request is received by the official records custodian. The principal is the usual custodian of records.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Illinois Student Records Act afford parents or guardians and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's school records. They are:

**1. The right to inspect and copy the student's education records within 10 business days of the day the school receives a request for access.**

The degree of access a student has to his or her records depends on the student's age. Students less than 18 years of age have the right to inspect and copy only their permanent record. Students 18 years of age or older have access and copy rights to both permanent and temporary records. A parent or guardian or student should submit to the building principal a written request that identifies the record(s) he or she wishes to inspect. Within 10 business days, the building principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or guardian or student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. In certain circumstances, the school may request an additional 5 business days in which to grant access.

These rights are denied to any person against whom an order of protection has been entered concerning the student.

**2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper.**

A parent or guardian or eligible student may ask the school to amend a record that is believed to be inaccurate, irrelevant, or improper. Requests should be sent to the building principal and should clearly identify the record the parent or guardian or eligible student wants changed and the specific reason a change is being sought.

If the school decides not to amend the record, the school will notify the parent or guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise him or her of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

**3. The right to permit disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the FERPA or Illinois School Student Records Act authorizes disclosure without consent.**

Disclosure without consent is permitted to school officials with legitimate educational or administrative interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); or a person serving on the School Board. A school official may also include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of personally identifiable information from education records (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, therapist, or educational technology vendor); or any parent or guardian or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility or contractual obligation with the district.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any person as specifically required by State or Federal law. Before information is released to these individuals, the parents or guardians or eligible student will receive prior written notice of the nature and substance of the information, and have an opportunity to inspect, copy, and challenge such records.

Academic grades and references to expulsions or out-of-school suspensions cannot be challenged at the time a student's records are being forwarded to another school to which the student is transferring.

Disclosure is also permitted without consent to: any person for research, statistical reporting or planning, provided that no student or parent or guardian can be identified; any person named in a court order; appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons; and juvenile authorities when necessary for the discharge of their official duties who request information before adjudication of the student.

**4. The right to a copy of any school student record proposed to be destroyed or deleted.**

The permanent record is maintained for at least 60 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. The temporary record is maintained for at least 5 years after the student transfers, graduates, or permanently withdraws. Temporary records that may be of assistance to a student with a disability who graduates or permanently withdraws, may, after 5 years, be transferred to the parent or guardian or to the student if the student has succeeded to the rights of the parent or guardian. Student temporary records are reviewed every 4 years or upon a student's change in attendance centers, whichever occurs first.

**5. The right to prohibit the release of directory information.**

Throughout the school year, the school may release directory information regarding students, limited to:

- Name
- Address
- Grade level
- Birth date and place
- Parent or guardian names, addresses, electronic mail addresses, and telephone numbers
- Photographs, videos, or digital images used for informational or news-related purposes (whether by a media outlet or by the school) of a student participating in school or school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics that have appeared in school publications, such as yearbooks, newspapers, or sports or fine arts programs
- Academic awards, degrees, and honors
- Information in relation to school-sponsored activities, organizations, and athletics
- Major field of study
- Period of attendance in school

*Any parent or guardian or eligible student may prohibit the release of any or all of the above information by delivering a written objection to the building principal within 30 days of the date of this notice.*

**6. The right contained in this statement: No person may condition the granting or withholding of any right, privilege or benefits or make as a condition of employment, credit, or insurance the securing by any individual of any information from a student's temporary record which such individual may obtain through the exercise of any right secured under State law.**

**7. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA.**

The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

U.S. Department of Education  
Student Privacy Policy Office  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington DC 20202-8520

**Flagging Records of Missing Children**

The school checks the missing person report in the Nonpublic Registration and Recognition Renewal report prior to releasing student records. Upon notification from a law enforcement agency that a present or past student is missing, his or her records will be flagged with a written notice of the information. That flag will remain until the law enforcement agency has contacted the school that the missing child has been recovered. If a request for the student's records is made before the flag has been removed, the school will immediately notify the law enforcement agency and will hold the records until their release has been approved by the law enforcement authority. For written requests, the school will provide the law enforcement agency with a copy of the request. If the request is made in person, the school will ask for identification from the person making the request, including contact information and a copy of a driver's license, as well as the birth date of the child and their relationship. He or she will then be informed that a

copy of the records will be mailed. The school will provide the law enforcement agency with the obtained information as well as a description of any individual making the request in person.

### **Non-Custodial Parents**

The school respects the right of non-custodial parents to be involved in the education of their children. In the absence of a court order and with due provision to State law, what is said in these policies applies to any parent or legal guardian, whether or not the student lives with the parent. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

### **Transfer of Records**

Certified copies of transfer students' records are requested within 14 days of enrollment. When a student transfers to another school or graduates, a duplicate copy of the student's cumulative permanent file will be sent within ten days to the receiving school upon request.

### **Standardized Testing**

Students and parents or guardians should be aware that the school requires students to complete the following standardized tests:

- 1) The Diocese of Springfield in Illinois requires that Catholic elementary schools administer the MAP (Measure of Academic Progress) standardized test. The Diocese requires Spring testing, but St. Ambrose students participate in Fall testing as well. Once available, individual test results are provided to parents. Class summaries are compiled and made available as well. Students in grades 3-8 participate in MAP testing in Reading, Math, Language Usage, and Science.
- 2) The Diocese of Springfield in Illinois also requires that students participate in ACRE (Assessment of Catholic Youth Religious Education) testing. This test assesses the strengths and areas in need of improvement within the Religious Education program of a parish and school. Students in 5th and 8th grade complete the ACRE test once each year.
- 3) Students in middle school, (7th grade) must complete the U.S. and Illinois Constitution Tests. Students must pass these tests in order to be eligible to graduate from St. Ambrose Catholic School.

### **Students with Disabilities**

St. Ambrose will make every reasonable effort to provide a Catholic education to students with disabilities. Despite our best efforts, at times St. Ambrose may not have the resources, staff, or facilities to accommodate certain needs. Before admission, the administration will meet with the parents to discuss what accommodations can be provided and what is in the best interest of the child.

### **Student Service Requirements**

**Philosophy:** The best way for students to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to the world is to live the Good News of Christ in their daily lives.

**Goal:** The goal of the Service Hours Program is two-fold: one, to enable each student to serve others and fulfill the commandment of Jesus Christ to love one another as He has loved us; and two, to allow students an opportunity to reflect in a serious way about their service experience.

**Service Hours Requirement:** All grade school students (1st grade through 8th grade) are required to perform a minimum number of hours of service per school year. Service hours must be completed by the first Monday of the month of May.

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| - First Grade:   | 1 service hour  |
| - Second Grade:  | 2 service hours |
| - Third Grade:   | 3 service hours |
| - Fourth Grade:  | 4 service hours |
| - Fifth Grade:   | 5 service hours |
| - Sixth Grade:   | 6 service hours |
| - Seventh Grade: | 7 service hours |
| - Eighth Grade:  | 8 service hours |



**What must be turned in:** All completed service hours will be logged electronically through the school's digital submission system, which may be found on the school and parish websites. The school office will then be responsible for verifying and certifying the service hours.

**Pre-approval of Service Hours:** The overall objective of the service hour program is to affirm service. To help students select service hours projects, there will be a list of pre-approved service hour projects/services (listed below). The list of pre-approved projects is not exhaustive, meaning that other service hour projects may be done; however, any service hour project that is not on the Pre-Approved List **may be rejected** if the service project does not fit within the approval guidelines established by the service hours program.

**Approval Guidelines for Service Hours Projects:** The primary, but not only, criteria for service hours' approval is that service hours are completed with opportunities/projects that are geared towards helping others or volunteering with non-profit organizations whose mission is consistent with, or at least not in opposition to, the mission, beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church.

Some of the reasons for service hours not being approved would include the following (though not an exhaustive list):

- The organization's mission, and/or business, is inconsistent with and/or contrary to the mission, beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church, such as Planned Parenthood, or any pro-abortion organization, etc.
- The organization is in business for profit, such as a mall, retail outlet, law office, doctor's office, dance school, etc.
- The service includes any activity that would monetarily profit or benefit the person doing the service, a family member, relative or longtime friend.
- The service is seen as exploiting the person doing the service.
- The service involves raising funds for an organization whereby the funds only benefit the student and not the organization, such as raising money to attend a convention.
- The service involves selling candy, raffle tickets, discount cards, etc.

**Failure to Complete Service Hours:** In the event that any student does not complete the required number of hours during the academic year, parish administration will be notified and will take appropriate action.

**Apple Fest:** Because Apple Fest is such an important component of the fundraising mission of St. Ambrose, all middle school students (sixth grade, seventh grade, and eighth grade) will be required to work a MINIMUM of 1 hour at Apple Fest. Details and sign-ups for volunteer positions at Apple Fest will be provided a few weeks prior to the event.

**Service Awards:** A tiered reward system will be available for students who go above and beyond their own personal service requirement. Distinctions available include:

- Gold Service Award – volunteering more than 15 hours above the requirement
- Silver Service Award – volunteering more than 10 hours above the requirement
- Bronze Service Award – volunteering more than 5 hours above the requirement

#### **OPPORTUNITIES AT ST. AMBROSE CHURCH/OFFICE**

1. Altar server (except for funerals, since they are paid)
2. Usher
3. Choir (Sundays, not school days) – begins this fall with the new Music Director
4. Cantor
5. Lector
6. Musician
7. Worship Aid
8. Vacation Bible School Helper
9. "Father Steve's Helper" – can be applied towards service hours or for a "treat"
  - a. Before Sunday 10:30 AM Mass
  - b. After Mass

- i. Clean up
- ii. Wash and dry vessels
- iii. Collection in bags
- iv. Check outreach containers
- v. Fold/staple
- vi. Bind seasonal hymn books
- vii. Put ribbons in new missalettes
- viii. Wrapping around Christmas/Easter gift books
- ix. Sorting items

**PLEASE NOTE:** This list is not exhaustive. As stated in the policy, other volunteer opportunities will also suffice.

### **BUILDING OPERATIONS**

#### **Arrival Procedures, Dismissal, and Parking Instructions**

In the morning, students (K-8) may be dropped off beginning at 7:30 at the gym entrance. All K-8 students will gather in the gym in the morning. PreK students may be dropped off in the rear parking lot at the door to the PreK/K wing. Older siblings may enter with their PreK sibling and then head to the gym.

The dismissal process will be completed entirely in the lower large parking lot. PreK and Kindergarten will be dismissed at 2:35. During PreK and K dismissal cars are free to come and go. **Please monitor your children during this time.** At 2:45 all vehicle movement will be stopped and grades 1-8 will dismiss. Students are to proceed immediately to vehicles. **VEHICLES WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED TO MOVE AGAIN, ONCE ALL STUDENTS ARE DONE MOVING. SCHOOL STAFF WILL DIRECT THE PROCESS.** Parents are to park in single rows (so backing up is not necessary to keep children safe). For the safety of all, students are to go to their vehicles immediately. Any student who does not have a ride will remain on the sidewalk with teachers/staff. If they do not have a ride after pick up is completed, they will be taken to After Care.

If a student is to be allowed to walk home, the principal and homeroom teacher must be notified so that appropriate procedures can be implemented.

***IMPORTANT:*** *If there is a change in pick up, parents must notify the school office so the staff can ensure that each child is going home with the appropriate and approved individuals listed in FACTS SIS in the emergency contacts.*

*To provide for the safety of the child, parents/guardians are asked to indicate transportation arrangements on the emergency form. On that form, parents/guardians should identify those individuals who are permitted to pick up their student(s) from school.*

#### **Asbestos Abatement & Management Plan**

St. Ambrose Catholic School has an Asbestos Management Plan, which is on file in the school office and is available during normal business hours in accordance with federal regulations. Asbestos is present in the school but safely contained, according to regulations.

#### **Building and Grounds Access Policy**

The church, school building, and community center along with associated grounds are an integral portion of the many facets of the parish and school community. The purpose of this Building and Grounds Access Policy is to establish appropriate measures and guidelines to maintain the security and safety of the children attending St. Ambrose Catholic School while respecting the use of the church by parishioners and visitors. The multi-use nature of parish facilities and grounds necessitates a continuing effort by the parish, school administration, faculty members, parents, and parishioners to provide appropriate access for the various facilities while protecting the school children during the school year.

#### **Access to and Security of the School Grounds**

On all school days provided by the academic calendar, St. Ambrose Catholic School grounds, including the school gymnasium, shall be available for authorized access by students, parents, faculty members, and authorized visitors from 7:30 until thirty (30) minutes past the scheduled dismissal time. Except for children enrolled in a before-school or after-school supplemental program, participants in

school-sponsored extracurricular activities, or students engaged in other authorized school activities, no child shall be left unsupervised by a parent. Assigned faculty members shall be available from 7:30 AM until the commencement of class and from the scheduled dismissal time until the completion of the dismissal process.

#### **Access to School Classrooms during Instructional Periods**

No parents or visitors shall be permitted in classrooms during instructional periods except as provided in this paragraph. Parents wishing to observe classroom instruction shall arrange a mutually convenient time and date with the classroom teacher. After such arrangements, the parents shall advise the school office of the arrangements for observation. The principal may make such additional rules and policies regarding parental observation as he or she deems necessary to maintain the normal educational process.

Parents and authorized caregivers may be allowed access to classrooms for the purpose of picking up an ill child or one leaving school at other than the normal dismissal time. In all such cases, the adults picking up the child will report first to the school office upon arriving on campus.

#### **Parishioners on School Grounds during School Hours**

Parishioners who are not parents of currently enrolled school children are requested to avoid the school building and playground area during, before, and after school, during lunch hours, and during recess periods. The entrances to the Community Center and Church are available during these periods for access to those facilities.

#### **Removal of Unauthorized Persons from School Grounds and Building**

Faculty and staff members of the school are authorized to request any person who is not a parent or authorized visitor to the school facilities to leave the premises. In the event that any person fails to comply with such a request, the faculty or staff member shall inform the principal who shall determine what additional action is necessary or appropriate to obtain compliance with the request. Any person who fails to comply with a request of the principal or the pastor to leave the school premises shall be considered a trespasser and may be subject to arrest.

#### **Emergency School Closings**

St. Ambrose Catholic School prepares and updates emergency closing procedures as warranted. When weather conditions or other factors necessitate the closing of school, the decision is made as early in the morning as possible (usually by 6 AM). Parents will be notified via text message using "Parent Alert" on FACTS SIS. Parents may also obtain school closing information on WBGZ, (1570 AM), or on News Channels 2, 4 and 5. School personnel make every effort not to close school early for the sake of parents who work.

In the event school is in session when weather conditions become treacherous, parents may come for their children at any time. Staff will remain with the children until everyone has gone home.

#### **Invitations and Gifts**

Party or other social invitations may not be distributed in school unless the entire class is invited. Gift giving should not be done within the school/parish parking lot unless it is a class activity involving all children. Please do not have flowers, balloons, etc. delivered to school as the gift cannot be delivered to the classroom during school hours.

#### **Treats and Snacks**

Due to health concerns and scheduling, treats and snacks for any occasion must be arranged in advance with the classroom teacher. All treats and snacks must be store bought and prepackaged in individual servings. No homemade treats or snacks are allowed at school. Acceptable treats and snacks do not require refrigeration and have a clearly printed list of ingredients on the packaging. We strongly encourage you to select a treat or snack with good nutritional value.

### **DISCIPLINE & CONDUCT**

#### **Statement of Respect for Dignity of All**

Parents, students, faculty, and staff make up the school community and are always representatives of St. Ambrose Catholic School. The school takes very seriously its responsibility to ensure a safe, Christian environment for all parents, students, staff, faculty, and

campus guests. As such, parents, students, faculty, and staff are called to always exemplify The Golden Rule and to actively advance the mission and philosophy of the school by displaying behaviors that foster pride, courtesy, and respect for the dignity of all as we strive to educate students in a Catholic environment. This Christian behavior and respect shall characterize all verbal and non-verbal communications at all levels within the school community.

Enrollment at St. Ambrose Catholic School is a ministry that is extended to children and families who have pledged to be cooperative partners with the Church, especially in the key areas of academics, faith formation, and discipline.

### **Building Conduct**

*The following actions and attitudes should characterize everyone studying at St. Ambrose Catholic School, and failure to abide by the expectations may result in discipline:*

- *Students arrive at school in the appropriate full and clean uniform. A student's personal presentation should reflect respect for others as well as respect for himself/herself.*
- *Students should be at their desks with all books and materials ready before the bell rings. Students are not permitted to leave the room during class without permission.*
- *When the student has a question to bring to the class, he or she should raise his or her hand and wait until the teacher gives permission to speak.*
- *Students should keep classrooms and personal belongings orderly and clean. At the end of each class, the student is responsible for keeping the area around his or her desk tidy.*
- *Students are expected to act appropriately during class changes, both in the school buildings and across campus. Student conduct in the corridors will be appropriate and quiet. Students must walk—not run—to and from class.*
- *All students are expected to greet priests, school staff, parents, visitors, and fellow students politely and courteously.*
- *At lunch or at recreational periods, each student is expected to act in a controlled and respectful manner while using the areas designated by school staff. Students are expected to keep the grounds neat and litter free.*
- *Each student should respect others and their property as the student would want to be respected.*
- *Personal belongings should be kept in good form. Uniform items, books, binders, folders, jackets, and backpacks must be free of any inappropriate writing or decoration.*
- *Standard cafeteria norms are to be practiced at all times according to the directives given by school staff. Good table manners, proper dining etiquette, orderly and quiet cafeteria lines, cleaning up after oneself, and leaving the dining room clean make for a pleasant dining experience for all.*
- *When participating in school activities like playing on a team, participating in an academic competition, or performing in a choral activity, students should be considerate of others and always participate to the best of their ability. Every student is to practice good sportsmanship, encourage others, and refrain from complaining, criticizing, or being disrespectful in any way.*
- *Food and beverages are to be consumed only in the cafeteria unless directed otherwise by the teacher (younger students typically have snack time in class). The only exception permitted to this policy is that students may, to ensure adequate hydration during the day, bring a water bottle to school, if it is shatter-proof (i.e., not glass) and has a threaded, non-spill cap. Nothing other than water is to be brought in the container. Chewing gum is not permitted during the academic day.*
- *Students should always show respect to adults. A title of Mr, Mrs, Ms, Coach, etc. should be used when addressing an adult.*
- *Students should treat each other with respect, kindness, purity, and compassion.*
- *Chewing gum is not permitted.*
- *Students should throw trash away and should not throw trash on the ground or leave trash in lockers, the classroom or lunch area.*
- *Students should not write on tables, chairs, walls, or other property.*
- *Students should not sit on desks or tables. Students should not stand on chairs, desks, or tables.*

### **Prohibited Student Conduct**

Enrollment at St. Ambrose Catholic School is a pledge that all students and parents will partner with the faculty and administration to forge a culture that results in all members being consistently treated with dignity and respect as made in the image and likeness of

God. For that reason, obscenities, harassment, bullying, intimidation, and other behaviors that are not consistent with living as a disciple of Jesus Christ, will be identified for correction. Parents are expected to support school personnel in addressing these issues and any behavior not consistent with extending the love of Christ to all members of our community.

Students may be disciplined for gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to the following:

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling, or offering tobacco or nicotine materials, including electronic cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, vape pens or other vaping related products.
2. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages. Students who are under the influence of an alcoholic beverage are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
3. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling, or offering for sale:
  - a. Any illegal drug, controlled substance, or cannabis (including marijuana, hashish, and medical cannabis unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law*).
  - b. Any anabolic steroid unless it is being administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
  - c. Any performance-enhancing substance on the Illinois High School Association's most current banned substance list unless administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.
  - d. Any prescription drug when not prescribed for the student by a physician or licensed practitioner, or when used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription or prescribing physician's or licensed practitioner's instructions. The use or possession of medical cannabis, even by a student for whom medical cannabis has been prescribed, is prohibited unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law*.
  - e. Any inhalant, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance: (a) that a student believes is, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system; or (b) about which the student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student intended the inhalant to cause intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system. The prohibition in this section does not apply to a student's use of asthma or other legally prescribed inhalant medications.
  - f. "Look-alike" or counterfeit drugs, including a substance that is not prohibited by this policy, but one: (a) that a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by this policy; or (b) about which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or impliedly represented to be an illegal drug, controlled substance or other substance that is prohibited by this policy.
  - g. Drug paraphernalia, including devices that are or can be used to: (a) ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and (b) grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances.
  - h. Any substance inhaled, injected, smoked, consumed, or otherwise ingested or absorbed with the intention of causing a physiological or psychological change in the body, including without limitation, pure caffeine in a tablet or powdered form.

Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they have the prohibited substance, as applicable, in their possession.

4. Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a "weapon" or lookalike weapon, or violating the procedures listed below under the Firearms and Other Weapons Prohibition section of this Handbook.
5. Using or possessing an electronic paging device.
6. Using a cellular telephone, smartphone, video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA), or similar electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, or otherwise violate student conduct rules. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, creating and sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing an indecent visual depiction of oneself or another person through the use of a computer, electronic communication device or cellular telephone, commonly known as "sexting." Unless otherwise banned under this policy or by the building principal, all cellular phones, smartphones, and other electronic devices must be kept powered-off and out-of-sight during the regular school day unless: (a) the supervising teacher grants permission or (b) it is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals.
7. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member's direct supervision and in the context of instruction.

8. Disobeying rules of student conduct or directives from staff members or school officials. Examples of disobeying staff directives include refusing a staff member's request to stop, present school identification or submit to a search.
9. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarizing, giving or receiving unauthorized help during an academic examination, altering report cards and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
10. Engaging in bullying, hazing or any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to a staff person or another student or encouraging other students to engage in such behavior. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, any use of violence, intimidation, force, noise, yelling, screaming, profanity, coercion, threats, intimidation, stalking, harassment, sexual harassment, public humiliation, defamation, slander, theft or destruction of property, retaliation, hazing, bullying, bullying using a school computer or a school computer network or other comparable conduct.
11. Engaging in any sexual activity, including without limitation, offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure (including mooning) and sexual assault.
12. Engaging in teen dating violence.
13. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, stealing, or attempting to steal, school property or another person's personal property (including any act of vandalism).
14. Entering school property or a school facility without proper authorization.
15. In the absence of a reasonable belief that an emergency exists, calling emergency responders (calling 9-1-1); signaling or setting off alarms or signals indicating the presence of an emergency; or indicating the presence of a bomb or explosive device on school grounds, school bus or at any school activity.
16. Being absent without a recognized excuse.
17. Being involved in a gang or engaging in gang-like activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.
18. Violating any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism, and hazing.
19. Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.
20. Making an explicit threat on a website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel if the website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and the information could be reasonably interpreted as threatening the safety and security of the individual named because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.
21. Operating an unarmed aircraft system (AUS) or drone for any purpose on school grounds or at any school event unless granted permission by the building principal.

For purposes of these rules, the term "possession" includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations in which the item is: (a) on the student's person; (b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of, the student, such as in the student's clothing, backpack, or automobile; (c) in a school's student locker, desk, or other school property; (d) at any location on school property or at a school-sponsored event; or (e) in the case of drugs and alcohol, substances ingested by the person.

Efforts, including the use of positive interventions and support shall be made to deter students, while at school or at a school-related event, from engaging in aggressive behavior that may reasonably produce physical or psychological harm to someone else. No disciplinary action shall be taken against any student that is based totally or in part on the refusal of the student's parent or guardian to administer or consent to the administration of psychotropic or psychostimulant medication to the student.

#### **When and Where Conduct Rules Apply**

The grounds for disciplinary action also apply whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event;

4. Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.

### **Disciplinary Measures**

St. Ambrose Catholic School seeks the integral formation of the whole student. This formation program involves motivating the will to pursue the good and requires, at times, the proper correction of that will when it goes astray. St. Ambrose Catholic School has established disciplinary norms and a code of conduct that aim to help students form themselves as well as assist the school in creating a safe, orderly, and positive atmosphere. As part of this process of formation, students are taught that poor choices result in consequences and that they must accept responsibility for their own behavior. Depending on the seriousness of the infraction, a range of disciplinary measures may be applied. Potential disciplinary measures include, without limitation, any of the following measures;

1. Notifying parents or guardians.
2. Disciplinary conference.
3. Withholding of privileges.
4. Temporary removal of the student from the classroom.
5. Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen or damaged property. Parents/guardians and students may be monetarily liable for lost or damaged school property.
6. In-school suspension.
7. Before, during, or after-school study or detention, provided the student's parent or guardian has been notified.
8. Community service.
9. Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of the personal property that was used to violate school rules.
10. Suspension of bus riding privileges (if applicable).
11. Suspension from school and all school activities. A suspended student is prohibited from being on school grounds.
12. Expulsion from school and all school activities. An expelled student is prohibited from being on school grounds.
13. Written Apologies
14. Notifying juvenile authorities or other law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity, such as, illegal drugs (controlled substances), "look-alikes," alcohol or weapons or in other circumstances as authorized by the reciprocal reporting agreement between the school and local law enforcement agencies

The above list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case. In some circumstances, it may not be possible to avoid suspending or expelling a student because behavioral interventions, other than a suspension or expulsion, will not be appropriate and available, and the only reasonable and practical way to resolve the threat and properly address the disruption is a suspension or expulsion.

### **Suspension**

Suspension will be issued for violation of the Prohibited Student Conduct policy. Suspension may also be issued in response to a student(s) failing to respond and correct behaviors after lower level consequences have been administered. Suspensions may be in school (ISS) or out of school (OSS). Suspensions will range from 1-5 days. During a period of suspension, students are prohibited from participating in or attending any extracurricular activities, school related, or school sponsored activities. Students who are given an ISS will be required to report to school each day and work with a substitute teacher that is paid for by the suspended student's parents or legal guardians. Students must complete all missing work from the days of suspension. A student in St. Ambrose Catholic school shall not be suspended by the principal until there has been a phone or in person conference with the parent(s) or legal guardian. The period of suspension may not exceed five (5) school days.

### **Expulsion**

The expulsion of a student from a catechetical program is so serious that it should be invoked rarely and then only as a last resort. The catechetical administrator shall use reasonable means to discover the cause of the problem and should exhaust all appropriate remedies such as conference with parents or referral to a guidance clinic, physician, or the pastor, parochial administrator, or priest moderator. Situations meriting expulsion are published in the Handbook above (please see Conduct section). Serious violations which may result in expulsion include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. *Extreme instances of Prohibited Student Conduct (see Section on Prohibited Student Conduct).*

2. *A student engages in delinquency or immorality, which would merit criminal punishment or constitute a menace or danger to other persons.*
3. *A student engages in such chronic or incorrigible behavior, as defined in the Conduct and Discipline policy, which undermines classroom discipline and impedes the progress of the entire class.*
4. *Repeated school suspensions.*

*When all other means have failed and expulsion is being considered, the following procedures are to be observed:*

1. *The student may be suspended out of school for a period not to exceed one week.*
2. *The parents of the student are to be granted a conference with the pastor and principal in the hope that a solution to the problem will be found which will forestall the necessity of expulsion.*
3. *The pastor, in consultation with the principal, is to make the final decision and to communicate this decision to the parents. If expulsion is necessary, he will also help them make arrangements for the further education of their child.*
4. *If the pastor decides to expel the student from school, charity would suggest that some help be given to the family in finding another Catholic school, if possible, that would accept the student on a probationary basis.*
5. *If expulsion is necessary, the date of withdrawal and the word "misconduct" are sufficient for the permanent records. (At the discretion of the school, if the reason for expulsion is for possession of a weapon as defined in the Gun Free Schools Act, related to the possession or distribution of a controlled substance, or battery of a staff member or a fellow student, said reason(s) can be specifically indicated on a transfer record).*
6. *If the parent(s) choose not to attend a scheduled conference, the principal and pastor will move forward with the decision making process regarding an expulsion.*

### **Re-Engagement of Returning Students**

The building principal or designee shall meet with a student returning to school from an out-of-school suspension or alternative school setting. The goal of this meeting shall be to support the student's ability to be successful in school following a period of exclusion and shall include an opportunity for students who have been suspended to turn in or make-up missed work.

### **Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment**

Because St. Ambrose Catholic School is committed to maintaining a culture characterized by charity, civility, and respect for the human person, all forms of bullying—including cyberbullying—will be addressed swiftly. Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important school goals. Bullying by verbal, non-verbal, or gesture on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, order of protection status, status of being homeless, actual or potential marital or parental status, pregnancy, parenting status, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic **is prohibited** in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While traveling to and from school sponsored activities.
3. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities. While traveling to and from school property, sponsored or school sanctioned events or activities.
4. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
5. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
6. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

**Bullying** includes cyberbullying and means any severe or pervasive physical, verbal, or non-verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:



1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

**Cyberbullying** means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, text communications, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage, blog, or vlog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates or is intended to create any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates or is intended to create any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally, via email, via the anonymous reporting tool on the school website, or in writing to the building principal, Dean of Students, or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. All school staff members are available to receive information and make a report about bullying. Anyone, including staff members and parents or guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the school office or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call or in writing, or using the anonymous reporting tool on the school website.

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the school shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent or guardian, utilizing all contact information the school has available or that can be reasonably obtained by the school, within 24-hours after the school's administration is made aware of a student's involvement in an alleged bullying incident. The term "bullying incident" includes individual instances of bullying, as well as all threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be a result of bullying. Notification to a parent or guardian shall include, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

#### St. Ambrose Bullying Prevention & Response Plan

The principal & School Board shall develop and maintain a bullying prevention and response plan that advances the goals of St. Ambrose Catholic School and provides all students with a safe learning environment. This plan must be consistent with and include the requirements listed below (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b) 1-12.

- 1) St. Ambrose Catholic School defines bullying as previously described within this policy.
- 2) Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of St. Ambrose Catholic School. However, nothing in this plan is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment of the U.S Constitution or under Section 3 of the Article I of the Illinois Constitution.
- 3) Anyone with knowledge of incidents or suspected incidents of bullying are encouraged to report them immediately. If you suspect your child or someone is being bullied, please immediately report this to a school official, using the provided

contact information below or by using the reporting link on the school website (anonymous reporting is available). Reports can also be shared with classroom teachers or our office staff.

Mr. Robert Baird – Principal      Mrs. Karie Preston – Dean of Students

[rbaird@stambrosegodfrey.org](mailto:rbaird@stambrosegodfrey.org)   [kpreston@stambrosegodfrey.org](mailto:kpreston@stambrosegodfrey.org)

618-466-4216

618-446-4216

- 4) The policies of St. Ambrose Catholic School are consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the Principal or designee shall promptly inform the parent(s) guardian(s) of every student involved in an alleged incident of bullying according to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and discuss the availability of support services, counseling, interventions, and restorative measures.
- 5) The principal or designee shall promptly investigate and address reports of bullying, by among other things:
  - a) Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date of a report of a bullying incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported bullying incident.
  - b) Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
  - c) Being consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation, the opportunity to meet with the Principal or designee to discuss the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.
- 6) The principal or designee shall use interventions to address bullying, that may include, but are not limited to, the St. Ambrose Character Counts programs, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, and through other support services.
- 7) Retaliation or reprisal against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. Acts of retaliation or reprisal will be treated as *bullying* for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate actions.
- 8) A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school's investigation concludes no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as *bullying* for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate actions.
- 9) The bullying policy of St. Ambrose was created and is updated in conjunction with the Administration of St. Ambrose Catholic School and the St. Ambrose Catholic School Board.
- 10) This policy is posted on the St. Ambrose Catholic School website and is also included in the Student-Parent handbook.
- 11) The principal or designee shall work with the St. Ambrose School Board to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of this policy. This assessment/evaluation process shall include;
  - the frequency of victimization;
  - student, staff, and family observations of safety at school;
  - identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs;
  - the types of bullying manifesting themselves; and
  - bystander/witness intervention, observation, and/or participation.
- 12) The principal or designee shall fully implement the School policies to address bullying, including but not limited to the following;
  - Character Counts program
  - Curriculum content that delivers anti-bullying and character building information
  - Student social and emotional development is incorporated into the school's educational programs.
  - The St. Ambrose Technology Acceptable Use policy states that our network and devices are limited to support of education and research and other legitimate school use and that any misuse of technology, the network, or devices is strictly prohibited.
  - The St. Ambrose Student Discipline policies addresses and provides a range of consequences for incidents of bullying or related behaviors.

13) Bullying is considered a violation of the school's code of conduct and will be disciplined according to the disciplinary measures outlined in this handbook.

Staff and students have responsibilities to make every attempt to create and maintain a bully-free atmosphere at St. Ambrose Catholic School.

#### Staff Responsibilities

- Conscientiously provide curriculum, instruction, and discussion related to bullying prevention
- Closely supervise students in areas of the school and playground
- Quickly and sensitively respond to bullying reports
- Take seriously parents' concerns about bullying
- Investigate reported bullying incidents
- Assign consequences for bullying based on the school behavior procedures
- Provide immediate consequences for retaliation against students who report bullying

#### Student Responsibilities

- Treat each other respectfully
- Refuse to bully others
- Refuse to let others be bullied
- Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied
- Try to include everyone in play, especially those who are left out
- Report bullying to an adult at school and at home

#### **Conflict Resolution**

The faculty, staff, and administration of St. Ambrose Catholic School teach and support peaceful and non-violent conflict resolution. Students are not to utilize violent, threatening, or bullying behaviors to resolve conflicts. If a conflict arises, the faculty and administration will handle the situation as appropriate, utilizing the necessary conflict resolution skills.

#### **Corporal Punishment**

Corporal punishment is illegal and will not be used. Corporal punishment means a discipline method in which a person deliberately inflicts pain upon a student in response to the student's unacceptable behavior or inappropriate language, with an aim to halt the offense, prevent its recurrence, or set an example for others.

#### **Firearms and Other Weapons Prohibition**

A student who is determined to have brought one of the following objects to school, to any school-sponsored activity or event, or to any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school, shall be expelled for a period of not less than one year:

(1) A firearm, meaning any gun, rifle, shotgun, weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act, or firearm as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code of 2012. The expulsion period may be modified by the school administration or pastor on a case-by-case basis.

(2) A knife, brass knuckles, or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a "billy" club, or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm.

(3) Objects used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm or to represent a weapon, including "look-alikes" of any firearm/weapons or other item as defined above are prohibited.

The expulsion requirement may be modified by the school administration or pastor on a case-by-case basis.

### **Firearms, Drugs, Battery, and Student Information Reporting System**

St. Ambrose Catholic School will report any qualifying incident to the appropriate authorities within a timely manner. The chief school administrator shall immediately notify local law enforcement officials of written complaints from school personnel concerning instances of battery committed against school personnel, and schools shall also report all of these incidents to the State Board of Education through existing school incident reporting systems in IWAS as they occur during the year by no later than August 1 for the preceding school year.

The chief school administrator shall immediately notify a local law enforcement agency of firearm incidents on school grounds. If a student is in possession of a firearm, then the school administrator shall also immediately notify the student's parent or guardian. The chief school administrator shall immediately notify a local law enforcement agency of verified incidents involving drugs occurring on school grounds. Both types of incidents will also be reported to the Illinois State Police through the School Incident Reporting System (SIRS).

### **Gang Activity Prohibited**

A "gang" is defined as any group, club, or organization of two or more persons whose purposes include the commission of illegal acts. No student on or about school property or at any school activity or whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to a school activity, shall: (1) wear, possess, use, distribute, display, or sell any clothing, jewelry, paraphernalia or other items which reasonably could be regarded as gang symbols; commit any act or omission, or use either verbal or non-verbal gestures, or handshakes showing membership or affiliation in a gang; or (2) use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interest of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to, soliciting others for membership in any gangs; (3) request any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidate, harass or threaten any person; (4) commit any other illegal act or other violation of district policies, (5) or incite other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Complaints from students, parents, and other legitimate sources about the operation of the school will be treated courteously and promptly (anonymous complaints may or may not be addressed). In order to help a parent or student resolve a grievance with a teacher, administrator, or the school in general, and to do so in an effective, efficient manner with mutual consultation, it has been established that the following order of people are those to whom the grievance should be brought: 1. The teacher or staff member involved; 2. The school principal; 3. The pastor. In fairness to both parties, the principal and/or pastor will meet with all parties involved, document the grievance or complaint, document the answer to the grievance or complaint, document the agreement reached or not reached, and read the report to both parties. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved at one level, either party may appeal to the next level, as listed above. The pastor's decision will be binding and final on all matters.

### **Harassment and Teen Dating Violence Prohibited**

#### **Harassment Prohibited**

No person, including a school employee or agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate, or bully a student on the basis of actual or perceived: race; color; national origin; military status; unfavorable discharge status from military service; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity; gender-related identity or expression; ancestry; age; religion; physical or mental disability; order of protection status; status of being homeless; actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy; physical appearance; socioeconomic status; academic status; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic. The school will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, sexual, or visual, that affects the tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

#### **Sexual Harassment Prohibited**

The school shall provide an educational environment free of verbal, physical, or other conduct or communications constituting harassment on the basis of sex as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and federal law.

**Teen Dating Violence Prohibited**

Engaging in teen dating violence that takes place at school, on school property, at school-sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation is prohibited. For purposes of this policy, the term *teen dating violence* occurs whenever a student who is 13 to 19 years of age uses or threatens to use physical, mental, or emotional abuse to control an individual in the dating relationship; or uses or threatens to use sexual violence in the dating relationship.

**Making a Report or Complaint**

Students are encouraged to promptly report claims or incidents of bullying, intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking. A student may choose to report to an employee of the student's same gender.

Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to discipline.

**Investigation Process**

Reports and complaints of discrimination or harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the school's duty to investigate and maintain an educational environment that is productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

**Enforcement**

Any school employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Any school student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to remedial action and/or disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion, consistent with the student discipline information in this handbook.

Any third party who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the school in the context of the relationship of the third party to the school, e.g., vendor, parent/guardian, invitee, etc. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to remedial and/or disciplinary action.

**Retaliation Prohibited**

Retaliation against any person for bringing complaints, participating in the complaint process, or otherwise providing information about discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin is prohibited.

Individuals should report allegations of retaliation to the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

**Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraint**

Isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint shall only be used if the student's behavior presents an imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others and other less restrictive and intrusive measures were tried and proven ineffective in stopping it. The school may not use isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint as discipline or punishment, convenience for staff, retaliation, a substitute for appropriate educational or behavioral support, a routine safety matter, or to prevent property damage in the absence of imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others. The use of prone restraint is prohibited.

**Lunch and Cafeteria Rules**

While at lunch in the gymnasium, students are to conduct themselves in a manner as if they are still in the classroom and following school rules. Students may bring their lunch or purchase lunch through the St. Ambrose School lunch program. A calendar of

lunches available for the school year is posted to the FACTS SIS parent information system. Parents/guardians may order on a daily basis or as needed. Parents/guardians must maintain a positive fund balance in their lunch accounts.

### **Search and Seizure**

To maintain order, safety, and security in the schools, school authorities are authorized to conduct reasonable searches of school property and equipment, as well as of students and their personal effects. "School authorities" includes school liaison police officers.

### **School Property and Equipment as well as Personal Effects Left There by Students**

School authorities may inspect and search school property and equipment owned or controlled by the school (such as lockers, desks, and parking lots), as well as personal effects left there by a student, without notice to or the consent of the student. Students have no reasonable expectation of privacy in these places or areas or in their personal effects left there. The building principal may request the assistance of law enforcement officials to conduct inspections and searches of lockers, desks, parking lots, and other school property and equipment for illegal drugs, weapons, or other illegal or dangerous substances or materials, including searches conducted through the use of specially trained dogs.

### **Student Searches**

School authorities may search a student and/or the student's personal effects in the student's possession (such as purses, wallets, knapsacks, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) when there is a reasonable ground for suspecting that the search will produce evidence the particular student has violated or is violating either the law or the school's student rules and policies. The search will be conducted in a manner that is reasonably related to its objective of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the student's age and sex, and the nature of the infraction.

School officials may require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates the school's disciplinary rules or school district policy. In the course of the investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported in order for the school to make a factual determination. School officials may not request or require a student or his or her parent or guardian to provide a password or other related account information to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website.

### **Seizure of Property**

If a search produces evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the school's policies or rules, evidence may be seized and impounded by school authorities, and disciplinary action may be taken. When appropriate, evidence may be transferred to law enforcement authorities.

### **Questioning of Students Suspected of Committing Criminal Activity**

Anytime there is suspicion/evidence suggesting that criminal activity has taken place, state statute and Diocesan policy require school administration to contact law enforcement. When students become involved with law enforcement officers, the officer shall be requested to confer with the student when he or she is not under the jurisdiction of the parish or school if this can be arranged. Before a law enforcement officer, school resource officer, or other school security person detains and questions on school grounds a student under 18 years of age who is suspected of committing a criminal act, the building principal or designee will: (a) notify or attempt to notify the student's parent or guardian and document the time and manner in writing; (b) make reasonable efforts to ensure the student's parent or guardian is present during questioning or, if they are not present, ensure that a school employee (designated administrator on site) is present during the questioning; and (c) if practicable, make reasonable efforts to ensure that a law enforcement officer trained in promoting safe interactions and communications with youth is present during the questioning.

### **Student Appearance**

The dress code for St. Ambrose Catholic School contributes in a very important way to the overall sense of unity as a school community. The dress code enhances the learning atmosphere, adds a sense of pride, and reduces negative competition among students. Our students are expected to wear their uniform in a way that portrays a positive and modest self-image, conveys personal neatness and cleanliness, and demonstrates an attitude of excellence in performance and achievement. A student's appearance, including dress and hygiene, must not disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety. The school does not prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists. The school will not prohibit students from wearing or accessorizing the student's graduation attire with items associated with the student's cultural, ethnic, or religious identity or any other protected characteristic or category identified in the Illinois Human Rights Act. Modesty in attire is expected for students, and all staff, faculty, and volunteers,

supporting any event on St. Ambrose Catholic School property or a school-sponsored activity off campus. Students who disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety must modify their appearance.

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Modesty in attire is expected for students, and all staff, faculty, and volunteers, supporting any event on St. Ambrose Catholic School property or a school-sponsored activity off campus. Students who disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety must modify their appearance.

### Uniform Dress Code

All students are expected to wear the full, appropriate uniform each day and maintain it throughout the entire school day. Students are expected to wear clothing in a neat, clean, and well-fitting manner while on school property and/or in attendance at school-sponsored activities. Students are to use discretion in their dress and are not permitted to wear apparel that causes a substantial disruption in the school environment. Students must wear uniforms at St. Ambrose Catholic School. In addition to providing a sense of group identity and self-discipline, uniforms reduce distractions, eliminate competition for attention, and minimize social differences. It is expected that students maintain a neat, age-appropriate appearance at school or at any function that is an educational extension of the school day.

- Student dress (including accessories) may not advertise, promote, or picture alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, violent behavior, or other inappropriate image.
- Student dress (including accessories) may not display lewd, vulgar, obscene, or offensive language or symbols, including gang symbols.
- Hats, coats, bandannas, sweat bands, and sunglasses may not be worn in the building during the school day.
- Hair styles, dress, and accessories that pose a safety hazard are not permitted in the shop, laboratories, or during physical education.
- Clothing with holes, rips, tears, and clothing that is otherwise poorly fitting, showing skin and/or undergarments may not be worn at school.
- The length of shorts, skirts, and dresses must be appropriate for the school environment.

- Athletic footwear or sneakers, must be worn during the school day.
- If there is any doubt about dress and appearance, the building principal or dean of students, or other designee will make the final decision.
- Students whose dress causes a substantial disruption of the orderly process of school functions or endangers the health or safety of the student, other students, staff, or others may be subject to corrective action or discipline.

#### FACE COVERINGS

Face coverings are optional and may be worn by any student or staff.

#### SHIRTS (all shirts must be tucked-in)

- Polo-style knit shirt: Plain red, navy blue, gray, or white traditional with long or short sleeves, pointed collars and buttons.
- Turtleneck: Plain red, navy blue, gray, or white.
- T-shirt: plain white (only if worn under uniform shirt).
- Marquette and St. Ambrose logos are permitted on shirts.
- No other emblem/logo is permitted.

#### PANTS/CAPRIS

- Plain navy blue or khaki poly-cotton pants or capris that fit to the waist.
- Plain navy blue or khaki poly-cotton elastic-waist pants.
- Blue jean-style and cargo-style pants are not permitted. This is to include any riveted details on pockets.

#### SHORTS

- Plain navy blue or khaki poly-cotton dress shorts hemmed to the tops of the fingertips (when an individual's arms are extended straight down at their sides) and fit to the waist.
- Baggy shorts, athletic shorts and cargo style shorts are not permitted.

#### JUMPER/CULOTTES/SKIRTS

- Solid navy, solid khaki, or navy and red plaid jumper, culottes, and skirts are permitted.
- Girls in grades K-5 may wear jumpers, skirts or culottes. Girls in grades 6-8 may wear culottes, or skirts.
- Skirt lengths should be hemmed to no shorter than the tops of the fingertips (when an individual's arms are extended straight down at their sides).

- Gym shorts, undershorts, or leggings should be worn under jumpers, culottes, and skirts.

#### SWEATERS

- Solid red, navy blue, gray, or white crew neck pullovers or cardigans are permitted.
- No logos except St. Ambrose and Marquette are allowed.

#### SWEATSHIRTS

- Crew neck pullovers or hoodie-style sweatshirts are permitted



Must be plain red, navy blue, gray, or white and may have a St. Ambrose or Marquette logo. Other color sweatshirts with Marquette logo are also permitted. No other logos are permitted.

- Uniform polo-style shirt or turtleneck must be worn under a sweatshirt.
- Non St. Ambrose Fleece items, jackets, vests, or over shirts of any other variety may only be worn to recess and to and from school and church. This is considered nonuniform outerwear.

#### SHOES

- **Only** athletic shoes are permitted in school. Athletic shoes with white soles are preferred.
- Boots may be worn outside in the winter. Only school shoes are allowed inside.
- Brown or black leather dress shoes may be worn for school picture days.
- Sandals and clogs are not permitted, including on dress down days.

#### SOCKS/TIGHTS

- Socks or tights must be worn at all times.
- Socks must be SOLID white, red, navy, gray or black.
- Tights may only be worn in solid red, white, navy, gray, or black

#### HAIR

- Hair is to be neat and groomed.
- Extreme or unusual colors are not permitted.
- Head bands should be flat fitting. No large cat ears, unicorn horns, puppy dog ears allowed.
- Bows should be appropriately sized and not excessively large.
- In compliance with Illinois SB 0817, St. Ambrose Catholic School will not prohibit any hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture.
- The Administration reserves the right to attend to anything determined to be a classroom distraction.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

- Belts may be worn as long as the end of the belt is tucked into the belt loops.
- Hats are not to be worn in the school building.
- Tattoos or writing on the body or school clothing are not allowed.
- The Administration reserves the right to attend to anything determined to be a classroom distraction.
- Make-up is optional and should be neutral in tone, while complimenting the student's natural features, including, but not limited to lip stick/gloss, eye shadow, concealer, eye liner, mascara, blush.
- Only girls may wear earrings and only in the ear lobe, with up to two post earrings per ear are allowed.

#### Non-Uniform Days / Dress Down Days

- Non-uniform days occur occasionally. Clothing should always be neat and clean.

- **DRESS DOWN DAYS ARE TYPICALLY RESERVED FOR FRIDAYS.**
- One Friday a month, we have “dress down for charity day.” One Friday a month we have a Student Council “themed” dress down day. The other Fridays in a month are reserved for the use of dress down days and uniforms may always be worn.
- **THERE WILL BE NO DRESS DOWN DAYS DURING LENT, ON DAYS OF MASS, OR HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION.**
- Undershorts / Leggings are required under all skirts and dresses.
- Short shorts, cut-offs, sun dresses, tank tops, halter tops, sleeveless tops and revealing clothing are not permitted.
- All shirts must have sleeves on them.
- T-shirts with reference to alcohol, drugs, sexual content, or violence, or any other inappropriate slogans will not be permitted.
- At no time may sandals, clogs, or boots be worn for a dress down day.
- Jeans may be worn but cannot have rips or tears..
- LEGGINGS - On dress down days, students may wear tights, leggings, or yoga pants as long as a skirt, shorts, or a shirt is worn over them and is no shorter than the tops of the fingertips (when an individual’s arms are extended straight down at their sides).

#### **Eighth Grade Uniform Privilege**

The eighth grade class may design a class sweatshirt and/or t-shirt in school colors that may be worn during school on designated days. The Principal must approve the design in advance. Beginning in January of the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, eighth graders may also wear an appropriate sweatshirt/outerwear of their high school they plan to attend.

#### **Uniform Infractions**

Students arriving at school with a uniform or dress code violation will be given the opportunity to correct the infraction. If an infraction cannot be immediately corrected or persists, appropriate attire will be provided and changed into.

Disciplinary consequences will be assessed on a second offense and for subsequent offenses. It is hoped that following an initial intervention, the problem will be solved. If the issue persists, additional disciplinary consequences may be administered. It is expected that the parents will help ensure their student is dressed appropriately according to the dress code. Failure to return borrowed school attire may result in restitution.

#### **Video and Audio Monitoring Systems**

A video and/or audio monitoring system is in use on school buses and a video monitoring system is in use in public areas of the school building, including classrooms and middle school coat closets. These systems have been put in place to protect students, staff, visitors, and school property. If a discipline problem is captured on audiotape or videotape, these recordings may be used as the basis for imposing student discipline. If criminal actions are recorded, a copy of the recording may be provided to law enforcement personnel.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR & ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES**

### **Activities Code of Conduct**

This Extracurricular and Athletic Activities Code of Conduct applies, where applicable, to all school-sponsored athletic and extracurricular activities that are not part of an academic class nor otherwise carry credit for a grade.

### **Athletic Programs**

Any school-sponsored athletic programs shall be part of the school curriculum and shall be subject to policies of the pastor and School Advisory Council as well as to the general administrative responsibilities of the principal of the school. Further, school-sponsored athletic programs shall be guided by the general curriculum goals of the school and should in no way detract from the academic and religious goals of the school.

### **Requirements for Participation in Athletic Activities**

A student must meet all academic eligibility requirements, have appropriate equipment including properly fitting protective gear, and have the following fully executed documents on file in the school office before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity:

1. A current certificate of physical fitness issued by a licensed physician, an advanced practice nurse or physician assistant dated within one year of participation. The preferred certificate of physical fitness is the IHSA's or IESA's "Pre-Participation Physical Examination Form."
2. A digital consent/permission slip to participate in the specific athletic activity signed by the student's parent or guardian.
3. Proof the student is covered by medical insurance.
4. Signed documentation agreeing to comply with the school's policies and procedures on student athletic concussions and head injuries.

### **Academic Eligibility**

Eligibility for most athletics is also governed by the rules of the Illinois High School Association or Illinois Elementary School Association and, if applicable, these rules will apply in addition to this Extracurricular and Athletic Activities Code of Conduct. In the case of a conflict between IHSA or IESA and this Code, the most stringent rule will be enforced.

Selection of individuals/participants in extracurricular and athletic activities is at the discretion of the designated teachers, sponsors, and coaches. Grades will be averaged and submitted each Monday by 2:00 pm. Any student participating in extracurricular activities having a grade percentage of 59% (F) or lower in any subject will not be allowed to participate in the activity for that week (Tuesday through the next Monday). When an ineligibility occurs, the principal notifies the Athletic Director who will, in turn, notify the coach or sponsor. The entire week of ineligibility will be served. This applies to practices as well as games or competitions. The following week, every effort will be made to provide sufficient opportunity to improve the grade. Any students participating in a sport or activity while knowingly ineligible will serve an immediate in-school suspension.

### **Absence from School on Day of Extracurricular or Athletic Activity**

A student who is absent from school after noon is ineligible for any extracurricular or athletic activity on that day unless the absence has been approved in writing by the principal. Exceptions may be made by the designated teacher, sponsor, or coach for justifiable reasons, including: 1) a pre-arranged medical absence; 2) a death in the student's family; or 3) a religious ceremony or event.

A student who has been suspended from school is also suspended from participation in all extracurricular and athletic activities for the duration of the suspension. A student who is absent from school on a Friday before a Saturday event may be withheld from Saturday extracurricular or athletic activities at the sole discretion of the designated teacher, sponsor, or coach.

### **Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct applies to all extracurricular and athletic activities and is enforced 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. This Code does not contain a complete list of inappropriate behaviors. Violations will be treated cumulatively, with disciplinary penalties increasing with subsequent violations. A student may be excluded from extracurricular or athletic activities while the school is investigating the student's conduct.

**The student shall not:**

1. Violate the school rules and policies on student discipline including policies and procedures on student behavior;
2. Ingest or otherwise use, possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute a beverage containing alcohol (except for religious purposes);
3. Ingest or otherwise use possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute tobacco or nicotine in any form;
4. Ingest or otherwise use, possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute any product composed purely of caffeine in a loose powdered form or any illegal substance (including mood-altering and performance enhancing drugs or chemicals) or paraphernalia;
5. Use, possess, buy, sell, offer to sell, barter, or distribute any object that is or could be considered a weapon or any item that is a look-alike weapon. This prohibition does not prohibit legal use of weapons in cooking and in athletics, such as archery, martial arts practice, target shooting, hunting, and skeet;
6. Attend a party or other gathering and/or ride in a vehicle where alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances are being consumed by minors;
7. Act in an unsportsmanlike manner;
8. Violate any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism and reckless driving;
9. Haze or bully other students;
10. Violate the written rules for the extracurricular or athletic activity;
11. Behave in a manner that disrupts or adversely affects the group or school;
12. Be insubordinate or disrespectful toward the activity's sponsors or team's coaching staff; or
13. Falsify any information contained on any permit or permission form required by the extracurricular or athletic activity.

*Hazing* is any humiliating or dangerous activity expected of a student to belong to a team or group, regardless of his or her willingness to participate. *Bullying* includes cyber-bullying (bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication) and means any physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
1. Causing a detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
1. Interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
2. Interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

**Modification of Athletic or Team Uniform**

Students may modify their athletic or team uniform for the purpose of modesty in clothing or attire that is in accordance with the requirements of the student's religion or the student's cultural values or modesty preferences.

**Clubs**

All school clubs must be officially recognized and approved by the principal and pastor in order to meet in the school building and to enjoy the privilege of using school facilities. Recognition requires a faculty advisor or school-appointed leader and a list of membership with the administration.

**School Dances**

Attendance at school-sponsored dances is a privilege. Only students who attend the school may attend school-sponsored dances unless the principal or designee approves a student's guest in advance of the event. A guest must be "age appropriate," defined as the same age as St. Ambrose students.

All school rules, including the school's discipline code and dress code are in effect during school-sponsored dances. Students who violate the school's discipline code will be required to leave the dance immediately and the student's parent or guardian will be contacted. The school may also impose other discipline as outlined in the school's discipline code.

### **Student Athlete Concussions and Head Injuries**

Student athletes must comply with Illinois' Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act and all protocols, policies, and bylaws of the Illinois High School Association or Illinois Elementary School Association before being allowed to participate in any athletic activity, including practice or competition.

Students are removed immediately from practice or competition if any statute-specified person believes the student has sustained a concussion. A student who was removed from practice or competition because of a suspected concussion shall be allowed to return only after all statutory prerequisites are completed, including without limitation, signing the post-concussion consent form and the school's return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols. If the school has high school athletes, it reports instances of concussions to the appropriate organization that governs the school's interscholastic athletic participation.

The school has a principal-appointed or approved concussion oversight team composed of at least one person who is not a coach, and administration or their designee must supervise the individual appointed to implement the return-to-play return-to-learn protocol.

## ***FINANCIAL MATTERS***

### **Parents' Financial & Volunteer Responsibilities**

All parish schools shall be supported by a financial program consisting of a reasonable balance of tuition, fees, general parish funds, development income, and fundraisers. Registered, active members of St. Ambrose Parish who follow the guidelines of the Family School Agreement pay the scholarship tuition rate for tuition, understanding that the parish subsidizes the school through the general revenues of the parish. Families who do not follow the guidelines of the Family School Agreement will be considered inactive and pay the non scholarship tuition rate. Family statuses will be reviewed at least annually.

All parish families support Catholic education through a parish subsidy each year. The financial support of everyone is an important part of that mission. Non-parishioners pay a higher tuition rate approaching the actual cost of educating a child at St. Ambrose School. In addition to tuition and the parish subsidy, fundraising is essential to supporting the mission of the school. It is vital that all school families participate in these fundraising events at some capacity whether it be participation or volunteering. All families with children in St. Ambrose School are expected to volunteer a minimum of 16 hours during the school year. Parishioners who transfer from another local Catholic parish must have been active members of that parish for the prior year in order to benefit from the St. Ambrose scholarship tuition rate. Families moving to the parish from outside the greater Alton area would be expected to show evidence of being active members of the parish from the beginning of their move to the Alton area.

### **Participation in CASH BASH Fundraiser**

The Cash Bash Raffle is one of our primary fundraisers at St. Ambrose. All families are required to sell 2 Cash Bash tickets. Tickets are \$100 each. If a family chooses not to or does not sell the 2 tickets, they will be required to "buyout" the fundraiser. A buyout means the family will cover the \$200 cost of the two tickets or the family will cover \$100 if they sell only one ticket. Invoices for outstanding balances and tickets will be sent out shortly after the fundraiser concludes.

### **Fees**

Registration/Supply/Technology Fees are charged for each child's educational materials and for the materials and equipment used during the school day. Fees are charged for each child's educational materials and for the materials and equipment used during the school day. A portion of these fees must be paid upon registration in the Spring.

- For New Students: \$50 per child is due at time of application is non-refundable.
- All tuition, registration fees, and extended care fees are paid through the FACTS program.

Fee Schedule	
K-8 Supply Fee – Per Family	
1 child	\$325
2 children	\$590
3 or more children	\$830
Technology Fees – Per Child	
Grades 4-8	\$150.00
Preschool Supply Fee – Per child	
3 Days	\$100
5 Days	\$100

### Tuition

In addition to paying fees, each family is responsible for paying tuition for their children who attend St. Ambrose Catholic School.

K-8 Scholarship Tuition	
1 Child	4,930
2 Children	6,660
3 or more Children	7,470
K-8 Non-Scholarship Tuition	
1 Child	6,595
2 Children	9,865
3 or more Children	11,145
Preschool – Per Child	
*3 Half Days	1,940
3 Full Days	2,960
*5 Half Days	3,240
5 Full Days	4,930

\*Only available for three-year-old program

- \$500 discount applies to 5 full day preschool for any family with another child in elementary or preschool

~~~~~Tuition Paid in Full by July 1 will receive a 3% Discount~~~~~

### Tuition Payment Options

- Annual payment due August 1
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 1 payment due August 1
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 2 payments due in August and December
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 4 payments due in August, November, February, and May
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 10 payments due August – May
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 12 payments due July - June
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 20 payments due August – May (15<sup>th</sup> & Last Day)

- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 24 payments due July – June (15<sup>th</sup> & Last Day)

#### **FACTS® Tuition Management Service Overview**

- All tuition, registration fees, and extended care fees are paid through the FACTS® program.
- For **new students**, there will be a one-time \$72 application fee. \$22 of this fee is charged by FACTS for each new child and the remaining \$50 is the non-refundable registration fee which will be applied to your supply fee when you tuition is billed.
- For **returning students**, there will be a \$61 re-enrollment fee. \$11 of this fee is charged by FACTS for each returning child and the remaining \$50 is the non-refundable registration fee which will be applied to your supply fee when your tuition is billed.
- **Returning Students** who register **AFTER March 31<sup>st</sup>** will be charged a **\$111 re-enrollment fee** for each child. \$11 of this fee is charged by FACTS for each returning child and the remaining \$100 is the non-refundable registration fee which will be applied to your supply fee when your tuition is billed.
- The administrative fee for the tuition management agreement is a **one-time non-refundable** fee administered by FACTS® 14 days after the payment plan is finalized.
  - \$25 **per family** with 1 or 2 payments
  - \$55 **per family** with 3 or more payments
- Application and Enrollment must be completed online through FACTS®.
- All families are expected to utilize the FACTS® Tuition Management System (see 4.4 Tuition Payment Options).

#### **Tuition Assistance Program**

Diocesan and School financial aid programs may be available for parishioner families who qualify. While the primary responsibility for financing a student's Catholic education rests with the student's family, St. Ambrose Catholic School will make every effort to see that no child is denied access to a Catholic education based solely on lack of funds to pay tuition.

Tuition Assistance available to active Parish families attending this school:

1. The Parish Finance Council awards tuition assistance to several families based on need. The families requesting assistance must set up a meeting with the Finance Council representatives (through the Director of Operations) where options will be discussed, and the amount of assistance will be determined.
  - a. All information regarding applications for Tuition Assistance will be held in strictest confidence by the Principal, Director of Operations, and Pastor. Parents are also expected to keep confidential the amount of any Tuition Assistance award that is given.

#### **Miscellaneous**

Please address all school account questions to the St. Ambrose Director of Operations. Parents who feel that they will have difficulty meeting the tuition are asked to contact the Director of Operations to arrange for a meeting with the Finance Council regarding tuition assistance.

Parents who do not meet their financial obligations to St. Ambrose Parish will not be able to enroll for the next semester until the obligations have been met. If correct registration materials are not completed and returned, it is assumed that families have withdrawn from the school. No further information will be sent to these families by the school. Official records will not be transferred until financial obligations are met.

If a student withdraws, St. Ambrose Catholic School must be notified in writing and all financial obligations met prior to records being transferred. Generally, tuition is refunded when a student transfers to another school if tuition has been paid for days following the transfer. A registration fee of \$250 per child is not refunded unless an incoming kindergarten student has not passed the screening in the spring.

## **Financial Delinquency Policy for St. Ambrose School**

All families whose children are attending St. Ambrose Catholic School must be current with respect to tuition, fees, or any other financial obligation to the school. These obligations are outlined in the School's *Tuition Policy*, *Family School Agreement Plan*, and *Payment Agreement* that must be signed by the parent or legal guardian prior to the first student attendance day. If the family is delinquent in meeting any of these financial obligations, the following procedures will be followed:

- If a financial obligation is past due after ten (10) business days, a letter will be sent by the school to the address designated by the family.
- If a financial obligation is past due after twenty (20) business days, a phone call to the number provided by the family will be made by the school in order to determine whether a payment will be made or a payment settlement plan will be arranged with the Business Office.
- If the financial obligation has not been settled after the aforementioned phone conversation; or if the family is unresponsive, the school will contact the family by phone or – failing a phone connection – by registered letter to inform the family that any child affected by this policy will be suspended immediately from St. Ambrose School. If any child who has been suspended under this policy is dropped off at school during the suspension period, they will be kept in the school office until a parent/legal guardian picks up the child. If the parent/legal guardian is unresponsive to this request, the school will have no option but to contact the appropriate local law enforcement agency and/or DCFS.
- Only when all financial obligations have been met or when a financial obligation settlement plan has been successfully negotiated with the church Business Office will the student(s) affected by this suspension be allowed to re-register for attendance.
- Failure on the part of the family to adhere to any and all components of the settlement plan will result in expulsion of the affected student(s) from St. Ambrose School.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

### **Anaphylaxis Prevention**

While it is not possible for the school to completely eliminate the risks of an anaphylactic emergency, the school maintains comprehensive policies and procedures on anaphylaxis prevention, response, and management in order to reduce these risks and to provide accommodations and proper treatment for anaphylactic reactions. Parent(s) and guardian(s) and students who desire more information or who want a copy of the school's policy may contact the Building principal.

*Parents of students with known life-threatening allergies and/or anaphylaxis should provide the school with written instructions from the student's health care provider for handling anaphylaxis and all necessary medications for implementing the student-specific order on an annual basis. This may be provided as an Individual Health Care Plan, an Emergency Action Plan, or as part of a student's Accommodation Plan. Students who have a known allergy may carry an auto-injector prescribed for them with appropriate notification to the school. In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/2-3.182, St. Ambrose Catholic School will follow individual emergency plans, ensure staff members receive appropriate training, and provide annual notice to parents or guardians of all students to make them aware of this policy.*

### **Communicable Diseases**

The school will observe recommendations of the Illinois Department of Public Health regarding communicable diseases.

1. Parents are required to notify the school if they suspect or have knowledge that their child has a communicable disease.
2. In certain cases, students with a communicable disease may be excluded from school or sent home from school following notification of the parent or guardian. The principal shall follow local procedures for notifying the Department of Public Health when this occurs.
3. The school will provide written instructions to the parents and guardian regarding appropriate treatment for the communicable disease.



4. A student excluded because of a communicable disease will be permitted to return to school only when the parent or guardian brings to the school a letter from the student's doctor stating that the student is no longer contagious or at risk of spreading the communicable disease.

#### **Counseling and Guidance**

The school provides information on some local counseling options available to students and families. The Dean of Students for St. Ambrose Catholic School is certified in counseling and provides support as needed. When additional support is required St. Ambrose Catholic School will seek out those needed professionals.

#### **Diabetes Care for Students**

If your child has diabetes and requires assistance with managing this condition while at school and school functions, a Diabetes Care Plan must be submitted to the building principal. Parents or guardians are responsible for and must:

- a. Inform the school in a timely manner of any change which needs to be made to the Diabetes Care Plan on file with the school for their child.
- b. Inform the school in a timely manner of any changes to their emergency contact numbers or contact numbers of health care providers.
- c. Sign the Diabetes Care Plan.
- d. Grant consent for and authorize designated School representatives to communicate directly with the health care provider whose instructions are included in the Diabetes Care Plan.

For further information, please contact the building principal.

#### **Head Lice and Nits**

In an instance when head lice is discovered impacting a student, the school will ensure that steps are taken at school to clean impacted areas using recommended best practices, and that parents/guardians of the impacted student take the appropriate steps to resolve the instance. The school will provide notification and information to the parents/guardians of classmates of the impacted student(s).

The school will observe the following procedures regarding head lice:

1. Parents are required to notify the school office or nurse if they suspect their child has head lice.
2. Infested students will be sent home following notification of the parent or guardian or discovery of an instance of head lice. Students will be expected to follow the care guidelines set forth by a medical professional and recommended best practices.
3. The school will ensure that steps are taken to clean impacted areas using recommended best practices.

#### **Illness or Injury**

All student, staff, parent, and volunteer accidents, injuries, or illnesses occurring on parish/school property during educational activities shall be reported to the principal or other designated authority as soon as possible. Efforts will be made to contact the parents/guardians for information and instructions (except for minor scrapes, bruises, or other minor incidents). If parent(s) or guardians cannot be contacted and the illness or injury is believed to be serious enough to require medical attention, the student will be taken to a doctor or hospital for treatment. If an injury is serious enough and is an emergency, 911 will be called. This action by the educational personnel does not obligate the person, parish, or school to assume financial responsibility for the treatment of the student. No student will be allowed to go home alone due to illness or accident without parental consent. A school staff member will remain at school or at a hospital, clinic, or medical center with a student until a parent or guardian or designated emergency contact is able to reunite with the student.

**When students are absent from school due to illness/sickness, they must be fever free for 24 hours and be free from significant loss of bodily fluids (i.e. diarrhea & vomiting) for 24 hours, before returning to school. The 24 hour period begins once the student records a normal temperature and/or from the last instance of significant loss of bodily fluids.**

## **Immunization and Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations**

### **Required Health Examinations and Immunizations**

All students are required to present appropriate proof of a health examination and the immunizations against, and screenings for, preventable communicable diseases within one year prior to:

1. Entering kindergarten or the first grade;
2. Entering the sixth and ninth grades; and
3. Enrolling in an Illinois school for the first time, regardless of the student's grade.

Proof of immunization against meningococcal disease is required for students in grades 6 and 12. A diabetes screening must be included as part of the health exam (though diabetes testing is not required). Students between the age of one and seven must provide a statement from a physician assuring that the student was "risk-assessed" or screened for lead poisoning. An age-appropriate developmental screening and an age-appropriate social and emotional screening are required parts of each health examination.

Failure to comply with the above requirements by October 15 of the current school year will result in the student's exclusion from school until the required health forms are presented to the school, subject to certain exceptions. A student will not be excluded from school due to his or her parent or guardian's failure to obtain a developmental screening or a social and emotional screening.

New students who register mid-term have 30 days following registration to comply with the health examination and immunization requirements. If a medical reason prevents a student from receiving a required immunization by October 15, the student must present, by October 15, an immunization schedule and a statement of the medical reasons causing the delay. The schedule and statement of medical reasons must be signed by an appropriate medical professional.

### **Eye Examination**

All students entering kindergarten or the school for the first time must present proof by October 15 of the current school year of an eye examination performed within one year. Failure to present proof by October 15, empowers the school to hold the student's report card until the student presents: (1) proof of a completed eye examination, or (2) that an eye examination will take place within 60 days after October 15.

### **Dental Examination**

All students entering kindergarten, second, sixth and ninth grades must present proof by May 15 of the current school year of having been examined by a licensed dentist within the last 18 months. Failure to present proof empowers the school to hold the child's report card until the student presents: (1) proof of a completed dental examination, or (2) that a dental examination will take place within 60 days after May 15.

### **Exemptions**

A student will be exempted from the above requirements for:

- Medical grounds if the student's parent or guardian presents to the building principal a signed statement explaining the objection;
- Religious grounds if the student's parent or guardian presents to the building principal a completed Certificate of Religious Exemption;
- Health examination or immunization requirements on medical grounds if a physician provides written verification;
- Eye examination requirement if the student's parent or guardian shows an undue burden or lack of access to a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches who provides eye examinations or a licensed optometrist; or
- Dental examination requirement if the student's parent or guardian shows an undue burden or a lack of access to a dentist.

### **Insurance**

It is required that schools offer a student accident insurance plan. The school shall make certain that parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of every student in the school declare(s) in writing that they either do or do not want their child or children to be covered by the student accident insurance. If a student does not take the student accident insurance, the school must require a signed waiver releasing the school and staff of any liability. These signed waivers must be kept on file for all who do not participate in the student accident insurance plan. If a parent does not take the student accident insurance, the parent must show proof of other health insurance coverage. Students without proof of insurance coverage shall not be allowed to attend school.

### **Medication for Students**

Taking medication during school hours or during school-related activities is prohibited unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent or guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent or guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child by completing a "School Medication Authorization Form."

No school employee is allowed to administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed School Medication Authorization Form is submitted by the student's parent or guardian. No student is allowed to possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this procedure.

### **Self-Administration of Medication**

A student may possess and self-administer an epinephrine injector (e.g., EpiPen®) and/or an asthma inhaler or medication prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent or guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form. **Students with asthma should provide the school with a copy of an Asthma Action Plan that has been completed by their physician.**

Students who are diabetic may possess and self-administer diabetic testing supplies and insulin if authorized by the student's diabetes care plan, which must be on file with the school.

Students with epilepsy may possess and self-administer supplies, equipment, and medication, if authorized by the student's seizure action plan, which must be on file with the school.

Students may self-administer (but not possess on their person) other medications required under a qualified plan, provided the student's parent or guardian has completed and signed a School Medication Authorization Form.

The school district shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from administration of medication or a student's self-administration of medication, including asthma medication or epinephrine injectors, or medication required under a qualifying plan. A student's parent or guardian must indemnify and hold harmless the school district and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine injector, asthma medication, and/or a medication required under a qualifying plan.

### **Health & Safety: Medication for Students: Administration of Medical Cannabis**

In accordance with the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program, qualifying students are allowed to utilize medical cannabis infused products while at school and school events. A parent or guardian or other designated caregiver is allowed to administer the product subject to the restrictions outlined in 105 ILCS 5/22-33. A school administrator may administer the product, and a student who is a registered qualifying patient may self-administer the product under the supervision of a school administrator, subject to the restrictions outlined in 105 ILCS 5/22-33. Discipline of a student for being administered a product by a designated caregiver pursuant to this procedure is prohibited. The school may not deny a student attendance at a school solely because he or she requires administration of the product during school hours.

### **Undesignated Medications**

The school maintains the following undesignated prescription medications for emergency use; opioid antagonists. No one, including without limitation, parents or guardians of students, should rely on the school or district for the availability of undesignated medication. This procedure does not guarantee the availability of undesignated medications. Students and their parents or guardians should consult their own physician regarding these medication(s). The school follows all requirements for reporting the supply of undesignated prescription medications and any administration of undesignated prescription medications.

### **Non-Prescription Medication**

If a student requires a non-prescription medication a parent or guardian must come to school and provide it to the student.

### **Emergency Aid to Students**

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students, including administering medication. School staff are certified in CPR.

### **Pregnancy**

St. Ambrose Catholic School affirms the moral teaching of the Catholic Church, including the teaching of the holiness and sacredness of life. To be true to its Gospel task, St. Ambrose equally asserts the values of forgiveness and compassion. Believing that the truly Christian response to a boy or girl facing adult situations and decisions is focused on the person, the administration will work with each student and family involved in pregnancy in a sensitive and Christian manner (on an individual basis). A conference will be held with the student, his/her parents/guardian, the pastor, and the principal to determine those arrangements for the student's completion of his/her education, health, and well-being.

### **Safety Drill Procedures and Conduct**

Safety drills will occur at times established by the school administration. Students are required to be silent and shall comply with the directives of school officials during emergency drills. There will be a minimum of three (3) evacuation/fire drills, a minimum of one (1) severe weather (shelter-in-place) drill, a minimum of one (1) law enforcement lockdown drill to address an active threat or an active school shooting incident, and a minimum of one (1) bus evacuation drill (if applicable) each school year. There may be other drills at the direction of the administration. The law enforcement lockdown drill will be announced in advance and a student's parent or guardian may elect to exclude their child from participating in this drill. All other drills may not be preceded by a warning to students.

### **Toxic Art Supplies and Required Eye Protection**

Toxic art supplies are not used in grades K-6. Art supplies containing toxic substances are not used in grades 7 through 12 unless the materials are properly labeled according to statute. Students, teachers, and visitors are required to wear industrial quality eye care protective devices when participating in or observing chemical or combined chemical-physical laboratories involving caustic or explosive chemicals or hot liquids or solids, or vocational or industrial arts shops or laboratories involving hot molten metals; milling, sawing, turning, shaping, cutting, grinding, or stamping of any solid metals; heat treatment, tempering, or kiln firing of any metal or other materials; gas or electric arc welding; repair or service of any vehicle; caustic or explosive materials.

### **Wellness Policy**

Adopted for the 2024-2025 school year is a Wellness Plan to guide St. Ambrose Catholic School. The Wellness Plan will be amended and adapted as needed. The Wellness Plan may be viewed on the school website.

### **MEDIA, INTERNET, TECHNOLOGY, & PUBLIC RELATIONS**

*\*All students, teachers, and staff are bound to the Diocesan Information Technology, Electronic Communications, and Social Media Policies in addition to school policies.*

## **Acceptable Use of the School's Electronic Networks**

All use of the school's *electronic networks* shall be consistent with the school's mission and the school's goal of promoting educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. These procedures do not attempt to state all required or prohibited behavior by users. However, some specific examples are provided. **The failure of any user to follow these procedures will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or legal action.**

### **Terms and Conditions**

The term *electronic networks* includes all the school's technology resources, including, but not limited to:

1. The school's local-area and wide-area networks, including wireless networks (Wi-Fi), school-provided Wi-Fi hotspots, and any school servers or other networking infrastructure;
2. Access to the internet or other online resources via the school's networking infrastructure or to any school-issued online account from any computer or device, regardless of location;
3. School-owned and school-issued computers, laptops, tablets, phones, or similar devices.

**Acceptable Use** - Access to the school's electronic networks must be: (a) for the purpose of education or research, and be consistent with the school's educational objectives, or (b) for legitimate business use.

**Privileges** - Use of the school's electronic networks is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in a cancellation of those privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action. The system administrator or principal will make all decisions regarding whether or not a user has violated these procedures and may deny, revoke, or suspend access at any time.

**Unacceptable Use** - The user is responsible for his or her actions and activities involving the electronic networks. Some examples of unacceptable uses are:

- a. Using the electronic networks for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other intellectual property rights or contracts, or transmitting any material in violation of any State or federal law;
- b. Using the electronic networks to engage in conduct prohibited by school or diocesan policy;
- c. Unauthorized downloading of software or other files, regardless of whether it is copyrighted or scanned for malware;
- d. Unauthorized use of personal removable media devices (such as flash or thumb drives);
- e. Downloading of copyrighted material for other than personal use;
- f. Using the electronic networks for private financial or commercial gain;
- g. Wastefully using resources, such as file space;
- h. Hacking or attempting to hack or gain unauthorized access to files, accounts, resources, or entities by any means;
- i. Invading the privacy of individuals, including the unauthorized disclosure, dissemination, and use of information about anyone that is of a personal nature, such as a photograph or video;
- j. Using another user's account or password;
- k. Disclosing any network or account password (including your own) to any other person, unless requested by the system administrator;
- l. Posting or sending material authored or created by another without his or her consent;
- m. Posting or sending anonymous messages;
- n. Creating or forwarding chain letters, spam, or other unsolicited messages;
- o. Using the electronic networks for commercial or private advertising;
- p. Accessing, sending, posting, publishing, or displaying any abusive, obscene, profane, sexual, threatening, harassing, illegal, or knowingly false material;
- q. Misrepresenting the user's identity or the identity of others; and
- r. Using the electronic networks while access privileges are suspended or revoked.

**Network Etiquette** - The user is expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Be polite. Do not become abusive in messages to others.
- b. Use appropriate language. Do not swear or use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.

- c. Do not reveal personal information, including the addresses or telephone numbers, of students or colleagues.
- d. Recognize that the school's electronic networks are not private. People who operate school technology have access to all email and other data. Messages or other evidence relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- e. Do not use the networks in any way that would disrupt its use by other users.
- f. Consider all communications and information accessible via electronic networks to be private property.

**No Warranties** - The school makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The school will not be responsible for any damages the user suffers. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, missed deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its negligence or the user's errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the internet is at the user's own risk. The school specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

**Indemnification** - By using the school's electronic networks, the user agrees to indemnify the school for any losses, costs, or damages, including reasonable attorney fees, incurred by the school relating to, or arising out of, any violation of these procedures.

**Security** - Network security is a high priority. If the user can identify or suspects a security problem on the network, the user must promptly notify the system administrator or Building Principal. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Keep user account(s) and password(s) confidential. Do not use another individual's account without written permission from that individual. Attempts to log-on to the network as a system administrator will result in cancellation of user privileges. Any user identified as a security risk may be denied access to the networks.

**Vandalism** - Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges and other disciplinary action. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the internet, or any other network. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of malware, such as viruses and spyware.

**Telephone Charges** - The school assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or fees, including telephone charges, texting or data use charges, long-distance charges, per-minute surcharges, and/or equipment or line costs.

**Copyright Web Publishing Rules** - Copyright law and school policy prohibit the re-publishing of text or graphics found on the internet or on school websites or file servers or cloud storage without explicit written permission.

- a. For each re-publication (on a website or file server) of a graphic or a text file that was produced externally, there must be a notice at the bottom of the page crediting the original producer and noting how and when permission was granted. If possible, the notice should also include the web address of the original source.
- b. Students engaged in producing web pages must provide library media specialists with email or hard copy permissions before the web pages are published. Printed evidence of the status of *public domain* documents must be provided.
- c. The absence of a copyright notice may not be interpreted as permission to copy the materials. Only the copyright owner may provide permission. The manager of the website displaying the material may not be considered a source of permission.
- d. The *fair use* rules governing student reports in classrooms are less stringent and permit limited use of graphics and text.
- e. Student work may only be published if there is written permission from both the parent or guardian and student.

**Use of Email** - The school's email system, and its constituent software, hardware, and data files, are owned and controlled by the school. The school provides a Google Educational Account to staff and students with email to aid students in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities, and as an educational tool.

- a. The school reserves the right to access and disclose the contents of any account on its system, without prior notice or permission from the account's user. Unauthorized access by any student to an email account is strictly prohibited.
- b. Each person should use the same degree of care in drafting an email message as would be put into a written memorandum or document. Nothing should be transmitted in an email message that would be inappropriate in a letter or memorandum.
- c. Electronic messages transmitted via the school's internet gateway carry with them an identification of the user's internet *domain*. This domain is a registered name and identifies the author as being with the school. Great care should be taken, therefore, in the composition of such messages and how such messages might reflect on the name and reputation of the

school. Users will be held personally responsible for the content of any and all email messages transmitted to external recipients.

- d. Any message received from an unknown sender via the internet, such as spam or potential phishing emails, should either be immediately deleted or forwarded to the system administrator. Downloading any file attached to any internet-based message is prohibited unless the user is certain of that message's authenticity and the nature of the file so transmitted.
- e. Use of the school's email system constitutes consent to these regulations.

### **Internet Safety**

Internet access is limited to only those *acceptable uses* as detailed in these procedures. Internet safety is supported if users will not engage in *unacceptable uses*, as detailed in these procedures, and otherwise follow these procedures. Staff members will supervise students while students are using school internet access to ensure that the students abide by the *Terms and Conditions* for internet access contained in these procedures.

Each school computer with internet access has a filtering device that blocks entry to visual depictions that are: (1) obscene, (2) pornographic, or (3) harmful or inappropriate for students, as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act and as determined by the principal or designee.

The system administrator and Principal shall monitor student internet access. *Please keep in mind that it is impossible for school staff to maintain ubiquity in monitoring a student's use of electronics, including the content a student may access.* As digital citizens, students are responsible for their own actions at all times. The school responds to incidents as we become aware of them; however, we cannot offer perfect and complete supervision in this area, despite our consistent and conscientious vigilance.

Parents should speak with their son or daughter about appropriate conduct regarding the use of electronics and instruct him or her to inform a staff member if another student is using electronics inappropriately or sharing material that is impure, inappropriate, or makes the student or others uncomfortable. Parents are solely responsible for monitoring their student's activity on social media platforms and should therefore maintain constant vigilance in reviewing what their child is posting online to avoid violation of school policies and/or state and federal laws, along with the possible disciplinary and legal consequences.

### **Access to Student Social Networking Passwords and Websites**

School officials may conduct an investigation or require a student to cooperate in an investigation if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. The school may not request or require a student to provide a password or other related account information in order to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website. However, in the course of an investigation, the student may be required to share the content that is reported to allow school officials to make a factual determination in the investigation.

### **Student Photographs and Names**

Student photographs and names may be used by the school in the bulletin or newsletter, on the school maintained website or social media, or where appropriate unless noted in the registration documents or if a specific request is received from the parent or legal guardian.

### **Student Use of Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices**

The use of school issued electronic devices and other technology at school is a privilege, not a right. Students are prohibited from using electronic devices, except as provided herein. An electronic device includes, but is not limited to, the following: cell phone, smart phone, audio or video recording device, smartwatch, GPS or tracking device, personal digital assistant (PDA), iPod®, iPad®, laptop computer, tablet computer or other similar electronic device. Pocket pagers and other paging devices are not allowed on school property at any time, except with the express permission of the principal.

1. All electronic devices and cell phones (other than school issued Chromebooks) that parents want students to have in their possession must be registered at the beginning of the year. The devices must be kept in the off position and put in backpacks, coat closets, or cubbies/wall pockets (at the teacher's direction) during the school hours (7:30-2:45) and also at Before Care (6:30-7:30) and at After Care (2:45-6:00). Middle school students will be required to store cell phones in teacher approved places in the classroom.
2. No cell phones or other devices may be used for picture or video taking.
3. No harassment or threatening of persons via the cell phone is permitted.

4. Cell phones may not be used for game playing, texting, Internet or e-mail access, social media access, gambling, or making purchases of any kind.
5. Those who violate any of the rules regarding cell phones or devices may forfeit their privileges of bringing them to school.
6. Cell phones/electronic devices that are misused on school premises will be confiscated and kept in the school office to be picked up by only a parent/ guardian before 3:30 pm on a school day.
7. If there are special circumstances, the principal will give permission for phone or device usage.

If these or any other items are lost or stolen, St. Ambrose Catholic School assumes no responsibility for replacement.

- The use of school issued electronic devices and other school issued technology at school is a privilege, not a right.
- Students will not have access to their personal cell phones, iPods, iPads, smartwatches, eReaders, GPS devices, computers, and other electronic devices, within the building. This includes before and after school.
- All devices must be powered off by the student prior to entering the building.
- Students can collect electronic devices when leaving the building at regular dismissal or following after-school activities.
- An Electronic Policy Form is required to be filled out by the parent and the student who owns a cell phone that will be accompanying the student to school.

### **Technology Vendors: Annual Notice to Parents about Educational Technology Vendors Under the Student Online Personal Protection Act**

Schools throughout the State of Illinois contract with different educational technology vendors for beneficial K-12 purposes such as providing personalized learning and innovative educational technologies and increasing efficiency in school operations. Under Illinois' Student Online Personal Protection Act, or SOPPA (105 ILCS 85/), educational technology vendors and other entities that operate internet websites, online services, online applications, or mobile applications that are designed, marketed, and primarily used for K-12 school purposes are referred to in SOPPA as *operators*. SOPPA is intended to ensure that student data collected by operators is protected, and it requires those vendors, as well as schools and the Illinois State Board of Education, to take a number of actions to protect online student data.

Depending upon the particular educational technology being used, our school may need to collect different types of student data, which is then shared with educational technology vendors through their online sites, services, and/or applications. Under SOPPA, educational technology vendors are prohibited from selling or renting a student's information or from engaging in targeted advertising using a student's information. Such vendors may only disclose student data for K-12 school purposes and other limited purposes permitted under the law.

In general terms, the types of student data that may be collected and shared include personally identifiable information (PII) about students or information that can be linked to PII about students, such as:

- Basic identifying information, including student or parent or guardian name and student or parent or guardian contact information, username/password, student ID number
- Demographic information
- Enrollment information
- Assessment data, grades, and transcripts
- Attendance and class schedule
- Academic or extracurricular activities
- Special indicators (e.g., disability information, English language learner, free or reduced meals, or homeless or foster care status)
- Conduct and behavioral data
- Health information
- Food purchases
- Transportation information
- In-application performance data
- Student-generated work
- Online communications
- Application metadata and application use statistics



- Permanent and temporary school student record information

Operators may collect and use student data only for K-12 purposes, which are purposes that aid in the administration of school activities, such as:

- Instruction in the classroom or at home (including remote learning)
- Administrative activities
- Collaboration between students, school personnel, and/or parents or guardians
- Other activities that are for the use and benefit of the school

### **Unauthorized Use of Artificial Intelligence**

"Artificial intelligence" or "AI" is intelligence demonstrated by computers, as opposed to human intelligence. "Intelligence" encompasses the ability to learn, reason, generalize, and infer meaning. Examples of AI technology include ChatGPT and other chatbots and large language models.

AI is not a substitute for schoolwork that requires original thought. Students may not claim AI generated content as their own work. The use of AI to take tests, complete assignments, create multimedia projects, write papers, or complete schoolwork without permission of a teacher or administrator is strictly prohibited. The use of AI for these purposes constitutes cheating or plagiarism. In certain situations, AI may be used as a learning tool or a study aid. Students who wish to use AI for legitimate educational purposes must have permission from a teacher or an administrator to do so. Students may not use AI, including AI image or voice generator technology, to violate school rules or policies. To ensure academic integrity, tests, assignments, projects, papers, and other schoolwork may be checked by AI content detectors and/or plagiarism recognition software.

## **PARENT COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION**

### **Change of Address and Communication Records for the School**

It is imperative that school records have the correct name, mailing and street address, and telephone numbers of parents. Please notify the school immediately of any such changes. The school must also be provided court papers of divorce decrees, custody decrees, and restraining orders to use as guidelines for communications between the school and the home. The principal should be notified when parents are divorcing or separating. Office forms can then be changed with new addresses and phone numbers for both parents. This may also enable the faculty and staff to better meet the student's needs at this transitional time.

### **Communications**

#### **Teacher Availability**

Teachers should not be interrupted during class time (7:50am – 2:50pm). Teachers will be available for conferences before, during, or after school by appointment only.

#### **Principal Availability**

If parents have contacted the appropriate person, but still need further discussion, they may schedule an appointment with the Principal. The Principal will meet with parents before, during, and after school by appointment only.

#### **Communication with Faculty & Administration**

When communicating with the faculty and administration of St. Ambrose, parents and guardians may expect a response within 48 hours.

### **Parent Organizations**

#### **Parents' Association (SAPA)**

The Parents' Association of St. Ambrose Catholic School was established to develop and deepen a greater partnership among the parents, the Principal, office staff and Pastor, faculty of the school, and all interested adults of the parish. The Association is intended

to enhance the school program through financial and moral support and to build community within the school through activities and programs that welcome the involvement and support of all those involved in the school.

The leadership of the Parents' Association is composed of parents and other interested adults who have made commitments to coordinate one or more of the programs or activities sponsored by the Association. From this group a chairperson is selected.

Perceived needs of the school addressed by the Parents' Association are:

1. To assist in organizing educational programs for the benefit of parents and/or children
2. To assist in the organization of school social events
3. To help plan, organize, and assist in the parish and school's fundraising events
4. To assist with recruitment and retention

### **Parent Service Requirement**

**ALL** Parents are expected to participate in the programs of both church and school, as time and circumstances permit, and to participate in the major school and parish fundraisers such as Apple Fest, Golf Tournament, Cash Bash, Trivia Night, etc. Each family is required to serve a minimum of 8 volunteer hours per semester – 16 hours per year with 2 hours being at Applefest. Family members other than parents may contribute volunteer hours to a specific family (volunteers working in any capacity at the church or school must have completed Protecting God's Children or Safe Haven training). A buyout is available if parents do not wish to volunteer (\$100 per hour).

### **Parent - Teacher Conferences**

A parent-teacher conference (K-8) is scheduled after the first quarter, usually in late October. Pre-school parent-teacher conferences are usually conducted in the Spring. Additional conferences may be scheduled throughout the year by contacting the teacher involved for an appointment or by contacting the school office.

### **Policy Making**

St. Ambrose Catholic School is fully accredited by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. The Bishop of the Diocese of Springfield is the final authority in all matters related to the Church and School. The Pastor of St. Ambrose is delegated by the Bishop as the final decision maker for the Church and School. Policies are developed in conjunction with the Principal and School Advisory Council and the Pastor has the final authority in all matters, including development of policies.

### **Responsibilities of School, Parents, and Students**

St. Ambrose Catholic School commits itself to a number of responsibilities in the service of our families and students. We require that families and students likewise meet their responsibilities so that the vital process of teaching and learning can be conducted in a safe, healthy, and salutary environment for all.

#### **School Responsibilities**

When enrolling your child in a Catholic school, the school accepts certain important responsibilities, including the following:

- To have children receive an academically sound education in a Catholic environment
- To communicate with parents and to have requests for meetings answered in a timely manner
- To have students supervised in a safe and appropriate manner
- To nurture the spiritual growth of students through Catholic traditions and rituals
- To develop the social and emotional growth of students through various activities and opportunities

#### **Staff Responsibilities**

- Conscientiously provide curriculum, instruction, and discussion related to bullying prevention
- Closely supervise students in areas of the school and playground
- Quickly and sensitively respond to bullying reports
- Take seriously parents' concerns about bullying
- Investigate reported bullying incidents
- Assign consequences for bullying based on the school behavior procedures

- Provide immediate consequences for retaliation against students who report bullying

### **Parent Responsibilities**

St. Ambrose parents have the following responsibilities;

- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences, events, fundraisers, etc.;
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- To notify the school with an emailed or written note when the student has been absent or tardy;
- To see that the student pays for any damage to Chromebooks, school books or property due to carelessness, vandalism, or neglect on the part of the student;
- To notify the school office and classroom teacher of any changes to who is picking students up after school;
- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
- To meet all financial obligations to the school;
- To inform the school of any special situations regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;
- To treat all staff members with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

At home parents have a responsibility to ensure their student(s);

- Get to bed early on school nights;
- Arrive at school on time and are picked up on time;
- Is dressed according to the school dress code;
- Completes assignments on time;
- Has a charged Chromebook for the school day and other necessary materials; and
- Has lunch money available in his/her account and has a nutritional sack lunch every day.

### **Student Responsibilities**

- Treat each other respectfully
- Refuse to bully others
- Refuse to let others be bullied
- Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied
- Try to include everyone in play, especially those who are left out
- Report bullying to an adult

### **School Advisory Council**

The St. Ambrose School Council is an advisory body in matters pertaining to the educational programs and facilities of the School.

The purposes of the Board are:

- A. To advise the Pastor in the establishment of policies and development of goals and objectives relative to the School;
- B. To advise the Principal in the implementation of those policies.

The Council will consider all aspects of the educational program of the School. In all its work, the Council will aim to integrate the teaching of Catholic values within the total school curriculum.

### **School Visitation Rights**

The School Visitation Rights Act permits employed parents or guardians, who are unable to meet with educators because of a work conflict, the right to time off from work under certain conditions to attend necessary school functions such as parent-teacher conferences, academic meetings, and behavioral meetings. Letters verifying participation in this program are available from the school office upon request.

### **Sexual Abuse Awareness and Prevention, Grooming Behaviors, and Boundary Violations**

Child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, and boundary violations harm students, their parent or guardian, the school's environment, and the community at large, while diminishing a student's ability to learn.

## **Warning Signs of Child Sexual Abuse**

Warning signs of child sexual abuse include the following.

### **Physical signs:**

- Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or other genital infections
- Signs of trauma to the genital area, such as unexplained bleeding, bruising, or blood on the sheets, underwear, or other clothing
- Unusual weight gain or loss

### **Behavioral signs:**

- Excessive talk about or knowledge of sexual topics
- Keeping secrets
- Not talking as much as usual
- Not wanting to be left alone with certain people or being afraid to be away from primary caregivers
- Regressive behaviors or resuming behaviors that the child had grown out of, such as thumb sucking or bedwetting
- Overly compliant behavior
- Sexual behavior that is inappropriate for the child's age
- Spending an unusual amount of time alone
- Trying to avoid removing clothing to change or bathe

### **Emotional signs:**

- Change in eating habits or unhealthy eating patterns, like loss of appetite or excessive eating
- Signs of depression, such as persistent sadness, lack of energy, changes in sleep or appetite, withdrawing from normal activities, or feeling "down"
- Change in mood or personality, such as increased aggression
- Decrease in confidence or self-image
- Anxiety, excessive worry, or fearfulness
- Increase in unexplained health problems such as stomach aches and headaches
- Loss or decrease in interest in school, activities, and friends
- Nightmares or fear of being alone at night
- Self-harming behaviors or expressing thoughts of suicide or suicidal behavior
- Failing grades
- Drug or alcohol use

## **Warning Signs of Grooming Behaviors**

School employees are expected to maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students based upon students' ages, grade levels, and developmental levels. Prohibited grooming is defined as (i) any act, including but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity, (ii) by an employee with direct contact with a student, (iii) that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Examples of grooming behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors:

- Sexual or romantic invitations to a student
- Dating or soliciting a date from a student
- Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog with a student
- Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student
- Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature
- Sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with a student
- Failing to respect boundaries or listening when a student says "no"
- Engaging in touching that a student or student's parents or guardians have indicated as unwanted
- Trying to be a student's friend rather than filling an adult role in the student's life
- Failing to maintain age-appropriate relationships with students
- Talking with students about personal problems or relationships

- Spending time alone with a student outside of their role in the student's life or making up excuses to be alone with a student
- Expressing unusual interest in a student's sexual development, such as commenting on sexual characteristics or sexualizing normal behaviors
- Giving a student gifts without occasion or reason
- Spending a lot of time with a student
- Restricting a student's access to other adults

### **Warning Signs of Boundary Violations**

School employees breach employee-student boundaries when they misuse their position of power over a student in a way that compromises the student's health, safety, or general welfare. Examples of boundary violations include:

- Favoring a certain student by inviting the student to "hang out" or by granting special privileges
- Engaging in peer-like behavior with a student
- Discussing personal issues with a student
- Meeting with a student off-campus without parent or guardian knowledge or permission
- Dating, requesting, or participating in a private meeting with a student (in person or virtually) outside of a professional role
- Transporting a student in a school or private vehicle without administrative authorization
- Giving gifts, money, or treats to an individual student
- Sending a student on personal errands
- Intervening in a serious student problem instead of referring the student to an appropriately trained professional
- Sexual or romantic invitations toward or from a student
- Taking and using photos/videos of students for non-educational purposes
- Initiating or extending contact with a student beyond the school day in a one-on-one or non-group setting
- Inviting a student to an employee's home
- Adding a student on personal social networking sites as contacts when unrelated to a legitimate educational purpose
- Privately messaging a student
- Maintaining intense eye contact with a student
- Making comments about a student's physical attributes, including excessively flattering comments
- Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog
- Making sexually suggestive comments directed toward or with a student
- Disclosing confidential information
- Self-disclosure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature
- Full frontal hugs
- Invading personal space

If you believe you are a victim of child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, or boundary violations, or you believe that your child is a victim, you should immediately contact the Building Principal, a school counselor, or another trusted adult employee of the school.

Additional Resources include:

National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800.656.HOPE (4673)

National Sexual Abuse Chatline at [online.rainn.org](https://online.rainn.org)

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Hotline at 1.800.25.ABUSE (2873)

### **Faith's Law Notification**

#### *Employee Conduct Standards*

Schools are required to make available the school's Employee Code of Professional Conduct. These standards, in part, define appropriate conduct between school employees and students. A copy of these standards can be requested from the school office.

### **Mandated Reporters**

All school personnel, including teachers and administrators, are required by law to immediately report any and all suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

### **Sexual Abuse Response and Prevention Resource Guide**

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) maintains a resource guide on sexual abuse response and prevention. The guide contains information on and the location of children's advocacy centers, organizations that provide medical evaluations and treatment to victims of child sexual abuse, organizations that provide mental health evaluations and services to victims and families of victims of child sexual abuse, and organizations that offer legal assistance to and provide advocacy on behalf of victims of child sexual abuse. This guide can be accessed through the ISBE website at [www.isbe.net](http://www.isbe.net) or you may request a copy of this guide by contacting the school's office.

### **Sex Offender Notification Law**

State law prohibits a convicted child sex offender from being present on school property when children under the age of 18 are present, except for in the following circumstances as they relate to the individual's child(ren):

1. To attend a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the progress of their child.
2. To participate in a conference in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to their child's special education services.
3. To attend conferences to discuss issues concerning their child such as retention or promotion.

In all other cases, convicted child sex offenders are prohibited from being present on school property unless they obtain written permission from the school administration or pastor. Anytime that a convicted child sex offender is present on school property – including the three reasons above – he or she is responsible for notifying the principal's office upon arrival on school property and upon departure from school property. It is the responsibility of the convicted child sex offender to remain under the direct supervision of a school official at all times he or she is in the presence or vicinity of children. A violation of this law is a Class 4 felony.

Information about sex offenders or violent offenders against youth is available to the public on the Illinois State Police (ISP) website. The ISP website contains the following:

Illinois Sex Offender Registry, <https://isp.illinois.gov/Sor/Disclaimer>

Illinois Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry, <https://isp.illinois.gov/MVOAY/Disclaimer>

Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Sex Offenders, <https://isp.illinois.gov/Sor/FAQs>

### **Visitors**

All visitors, including parents and siblings, are required to enter through the front door of the building and proceed immediately to the main office. Visitors should identify themselves and inform office personnel of their reason for being at school.

Visitors must sign in, identifying their name, the date and time of arrival, and the classroom or location they are visiting. Approved visitors must take a tag identifying themselves as a guest and place the tag on their outer clothing in a clearly visible location. Visitors are required to proceed immediately to their location in a quiet manner. All visitors must return to the main office and sign out before leaving the school.

Any person wishing to confer with a staff member should contact that staff member to make an appointment. Conferences with teachers are held, to the extent possible, outside school hours or during the teacher's conference and preparation period.

Visitors are expected to abide by all school rules during their time on school property. A visitor who fails to conduct himself or herself in a manner that is appropriate will be asked to leave and may be subject to criminal penalties for trespassing or disruptive behavior.

No person on school property or at a school event shall perform any of the following acts:

1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, board member, sports official or coach, or any other person.
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law, possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device.
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.
5. Damage or deface school property.

6. Violate any Illinois law or municipal, local or county ordinance.
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug.
9. Be present when the person's alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug consumption is detectible, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.
10. Use or possess medical cannabis unless he or she has complied with Illinois' Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Act and district policies.
11. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner).
12. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the board.
13. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized district employee's directive.
14. Engage in any risky behavior, including rollerblading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.
15. Violate other district policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or district employee.
16. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the district or a school function.

Any person who engages in prohibited conduct may be ejected from or denied admission to school property in accordance with State law. The person may also be subject to being denied admission to school athletic or extracurricular events for up to one calendar year.

**Parent-Student Handbook Acknowledgement and Pledge**

**Parent or Guardian Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge receiving and/or being provided electronic access to the 2025-2026 Student/Parent Handbook and Diocesan policies. I have read these materials and understand all the rules, responsibilities, and expectations.

I acknowledge receiving and/or being provided electronic access to the 2025-2026 Technology Acceptable Use and Safety Policy.

I understand that the Student/Parent Handbook and School/Diocesan policies may be amended during the year and that such changes are available on the School or Diocesan website or in the school office.

I understand that I have an obligation to actively support the Catholic culture of my school that begins with treating my peers, teachers, school administrators and staff, priests, seminarians, and all campus visitors with respect at all times, as being made in the image and likeness of God.

I understand that my failure to return this acknowledgement will not relieve me or my child from being responsible for knowing or complying with School and Diocesan rules, policies, and procedures.

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Parent or Guardian Signature

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Date

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Print Parent Name

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Print Student(s) Name(s)