

Parent/Student Handbook



St. John the Baptist School
2028 Sandridge Road
Alden, New York 14004
www.stjohnsalden.com

Revised August 2020

Dear Parents of St. John's Students:

I would like to personally welcome all of you to the St. John the Baptist School – those who have been with us for a while, as well as, those who have children coming here for the first time. Thank you all for your commitment to Catholic Education and for entrusting your children to the faculty and staff of our school.

My role as Pastoral Administrator is a new one for the Diocese of Buffalo. With anything new, there are benefits and challenges. In my time here, the school has been such a gift to me and the parish community as we begin to understand and embrace this new paradigm. I am hoping to help this parish and school to continue to grow and evolve into an ever more vibrant, outstanding community of faith and Catholic living.

Firstly, I want to assure you that we have a most outstanding principal. She has been working so hard to plan for the new school year and to find, train, and work with the best teachers and staff. Our goal is to keep quality Catholic Education as our hallmark. We are pleased and grateful for the leadership and vision for our school that she has demonstrated and for the teachers and staff who are so dedicated!

Secondly, I want you to know that our focus this year as a parish and school is families. The family is known as “the domestic church.” As our families love and forgive and share with those less fortunate, then the whole parish becomes more loving and forgiving; we are filled with mercy and charity. Please take advantage of every opportunity to be at mass on Sunday, to pray more, to participate in parish and school activities, and to find a way to get more involved in service to those in need. Parents model so much with their behavior and their choices, so please keep trying to grow in your own faith. Our job here at the school is to supplement what you are doing at home.

Finally, I want to encourage you to recognize the value of Catholic Education and the financial challenges it leaves the parish and school. The more we can engage everyone in the process of stewardship, the more successful we will be. We need maximum support of time, talent, and treasure to keep things moving forward. I know this means sacrifice, but if we all share the burden the load will be lighter. Please give and do as much as you can for this great endeavor!

Please know you are in my prayers and I will do everything I can to support and grow the school community. May God bless you and your family as we begin this new school year together.

Sincerely,

Deborah Brown
Pastoral Administrator

Dear St. John the Baptist School Families,

Whether you are a returning family or whether you are new to Catholic Education, I want to thank you for choosing St. John the Baptist School. In this ever changing world, I believe there is this constant- the importance of our faith and the education of our children. Children need the opportunity to grow academically and spiritually so they can become well-rounded individuals.

St. John the Baptist School is deeply rooted in the Catholic faith and our belief in God is the heart of all we do. We are a faith filled community and as such we treat each other with love, respect, kindness, and consideration. We strive to live our Catholic faith and values throughout each day. Instruction in our faith, participation in the liturgy, and daily prayer helps to deepen our faith and continue to walk in the way of the Lord.

St. John the Baptist School is committed to the education of all students. We believe in the importance of guiding and preparing our children for their future. High academic standards combined with a supporting and nurturing environment help to ensure that our students are able to find academic success. Our staff utilized best teaching practices, and participate in regular professional development. Our students are not only being instructed using the most effective instructional techniques, but are also becoming fluent in the integration of technology and its practical application in education. We strive to create 21st Century learners that will be able to actively engage in an ever changing technological world, and will be able to navigate that world.

I hope that you will find this handbook helpful and that it will answer any of the questions you may have throughout the school year. If a question or concern should arise, please don't hesitate to contact me directly.

Many Blessings,

Mrs. Jonna M. Johnson, Principal

Mission Statement: St. John the Baptist Catholic School, guided by the principles of Christianity and the teachings of Jesus Christ, provides high quality academic education within the context of a faith-based environment, allowing each student the opportunity to reach his/her fullest potential academically, morally, socially and spiritually.

Education Philosophy: St. John's School is committed to the education of all our students. The children of today are our future, and we, as parents and educators, need to guide and prepare our children to be the adults of tomorrow. High academic standards, a hallmark of Catholic education, mean that our students are challenged intellectually. We expect our students to work to their personal best and strive for excellence in all they do. We encourage them to become aware of their responsibility as citizens and protectors of our environment. Together, we share the responsibility of passing on the rich heritage of our Catholic faith and providing the educational excellence each child deserves.

Outlined in this handbook are the guidelines and procedures that govern the school. The topics are listed in alphabetical order to assist you in finding information quickly and easily.

Guidelines and procedures related to COVID 19 are available on our school website in our school's ReOpening Plan. These guidelines and procedures supersede anything that is outlined in this handbook and will remain in effect until the CDC guidelines and NYSED deem them obsolete.

Absence:

Please call the school office by 8:30 a.m. when your child is absent or will be tardy. Parents please send in a written excuse to the teacher within 3 days of the absence. Include the student's name, date(s) of absence, and reason (vague reasons such as just "illness" are **not sufficient**). If an excuse is not received after this time period, an illegal absence is recorded on the student's record. If a child is absent for **more than three days**, parents can request to have homework sent down to the office for parents to pick up. For absences less than 3 days students may collect assignments upon their return to school. **Students who miss 20 days of school, and have not met periodically with the principal, are in jeopardy of retention.**

Students must be fever free or have not vomited for 24 hours prior to returning to school. If a student is sent home due to fever or vomiting that student should not return to school the next day to allow for the overall safety of the school community.

Tardiness: A student who arrives in the homeroom after 8:10 a.m. is tardy and the parent must sign the student in at the office. Tardy due to weather related reasons are excused. **Five unexcused tardies will constitute the loss of the student's perfect attendance award.**

Legal Absence: Student attendance and tardiness are recorded on the student's permanent record card. The following circumstances are recognized legal excuses for school absences: personal

illness, sickness or death in the family, approved school visit, court, quarantine, religious holiday or attendance at a health clinic. All other absences are unexcused.

Doctor, dentist, orthodontist appointments: Please make every effort to schedule these appointments outside of school hours. If an appointment occurs during school hours, a student brings a note to school in the morning stating the time and date of the appointment.

Parent/Guardians must report to the office to pick up the student and sign the student out upon departure or sign the student in upon a late arrival due to an appointment.

Vacation: The school calendar outlines all extended breaks and long weekends. Parents should give serious consideration before taking vacations during other times. If extended vacations are planned, teachers should receive written notice in writing for the period the student will be out of school. Since the majority of student learning occurs within the classroom please be aware that it may be difficult to generate assignments for students to use while on vacation. Teachers are not required to prepare work ahead of time or to provide make-up tests. Missed assignments and missed tests may be made up no later than one week upon the student's return date.

Extra Curricular Activities: Students may not participate in after school activities, including sporting events, on days they are absent.

Academics:

Curriculum:

St. John the Baptist school uses instruction that is aligned with New York State Common Core Learning Standards and is compliant with the Diocese of Buffalo Curriculum. Textbooks and instructional materials have been selected following these guidelines. Information regarding curriculum can be found on the Diocese of Buffalo website.

St. John the Baptist School offers learning and student growth in the following areas:

Religion – Students will receive daily Religion instruction. Instruction is based on the Catholic doctrine and traditions, study of scripture and gospel, examination of social justice issues, preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Combined with daily prayer and weekly attendance of mass on Fridays, and participation in Adoration for First Friday we strive to make Religion study a daily occurrence through our words, our actions, and our deeds.

Computer Literacy – Students receive direct instruction from PreK – 5th grade during the course of their core content classes. Students will learn the foundations of computers/technology and progress to daily independent use of computers. Students will learn word processing, databases, spreadsheets, presentations, keyboarding skills, and appropriate and responsible use of technology.

Fine Arts – Students will participate in weekly Music and Art classes. Students will have opportunities to participate in our band and instrumental instructions.

Language Arts – Students will receive daily and grade appropriate instruction in reading, writing, comprehension, spelling, and vocabulary skills. Students will develop an appreciation for literature and will be able to discuss and write about texts. Students in grades 3rd – 8th will take the New York State ELA tests that are delivered over a two day period in the Spring. Specific testing and make up dates are listed in the school calendar. All students are encouraged to participate in this testing so that we may use student's scores to evaluate and modify our instruction and instructional materials. Parents and guardians have the right to opt their child out of these exams, but must do so in writing one week prior to the exams so that there is sufficient time to make accommodations and prepare materials. Opt out requests cannot be honored on the day of each exam.

Math – Students will receive daily and grade appropriate instruction in math computation, skills, and problem solving strategies. Through use of a standards based spiral curriculum students will be able to build on early foundational skills and extend into higher order problem solving and operational skills. Students in grades 3rd – 8th will take the New York State Math tests that are delivered over a two day period in the Spring. Specific testing and make up dates are listed in the school calendar. All students are encouraged to participation in this testing so that we may use student's scores to evaluate and modify our instruction and instructional materials. Parents and guardians have the right to opt their child out of these exams, but must do so in writing one week prior to the exams so that there is sufficient time to make accommodations and prepare materials. Opt out requests cannot be honored on the day of each exam. Students that have shown mastery of 7th grade skills and have an average of 90 or higher may be placed in 8th Grade Algebra. The placement is probationary and is contingent of continued acceptable academic performance. Upon completion of the course students may take the New York State Regents exam and qualify for high school credits.

Physical Education – Students will participate in P.E. classes one time per week on Monday or Tuesday. Students in K-8th grade are required to wear their P.E. uniform on these days. Students will receive age appropriate lessons that allow students to engage in physical activities, games, and encourage positive sportsmanship.

Science – Students will receive classroom instruction that follows the Diocese of Buffalo Science curriculum and aligns with New York State Standards. Students will participate in STREAM academies once per week and will have the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning and experiments. Students in grades 8 will take the New York State Science exam in the Spring. Specific testing and make up dates are listed in the school calendar. All students are encouraged to participate in this testing so that we may use student's scores to evaluate and modify our instruction and instructional materials. Parents and guardians have the right to opt their child out of these exams, but must do so in writing one week prior to the exams so that

there is sufficient time to make accommodations and prepare materials. Opt out requests cannot be honored on the day of each exam.

Social Students – Students will receive classroom instruction that follows the Diocese of Buffalo Social Studies curriculum and aligns with the New York State Social Studies Framework. Students will focus on History, Geography, Economics, State History, and Current Events.

Spanish – Students are encouraged to learn basic vocabulary and are introduced to Spanish culture. Students in Grades 6th – 8th receive regular instruction and are given a numerical grade in their ability to read, listen, and speak in Spanish.

Admission Information:

Nondiscriminatory Policy

St. John the Baptist school admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to St. John the Baptist school:

1. Members of St. John the Baptist Parish
2. Members of other Catholic Parishes
3. Non-Catholic Students

PreK 3 Program – Students entering this program must be 3 years old by December 1st and be completely able to independently attend to their toileting needs.

PreK 4 Program – Students entering this program must be 4 years old by September 1st.

Early Kindergarten - Students entering this program must be 4 years old by December 1st.

Kindergarten – Students entering this program must be 5 years old by December 1st.

Admission requirements include:

1. Verification of active parish affiliations/stewardship
2. Health Records
3. Immunization Records – See Immunization for details
4. Birth Certificate
5. Baptismal Certificate (Catholic Applicants only)
6. Report cards/Progress reports (If previous attendance in school)
7. Standardized Test Results (If age or grade applicable)
8. Record of IEP

Students applying for admission in Grades 1st – 8th must present a copy of the most current report card and standardized testing results. These records will be reviewed to determine whether or not the programs at St. John the Baptist School will meet the specific educational needs of each student. Prospective students and their parents/guardians must conduct a face to face interview with the School Principal. A shadow day for the student may be arranged prior to acceptance. While a shadow day is not required it is strongly recommended.

At the time of registration all new students are accepted on a conditional basis and will be evaluated at the 5 week progress reports for full acceptance upon the student’s ability to display grade and age level appropriate skills. Each new student will continue a probationary period through the first semester. If during this period there are any problems both socially or academically a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at St. John the Baptist School. The recommendation and decision of the school is final. St. John the Baptist School is limited in its capital resources and will make reasonable accommodations for learning differences when possible; however St. John the Baptist School cannot make accommodations for students that have extraordinary learning differences/challenges that extend past school resources.

Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy of St. John the Baptist School will be accepted and are expected to participate in all religious observances.

Financial Obligations:

Tuition Schedule for 2020-2021 School Year

(Our tuition schedule reflects the parish contribution which offsets the cost to families)

Kindergarten - 8th Grade

Parishioner Rate*		Non Parishioner Rate	
1 child	\$ 3,198	1 child	\$ 3,836
2 children	\$ 5,248	2 children	\$ 6,298
3 children	\$ 6,715	3 children	\$ 8,058
4 children	\$ 8,953	4 children	\$ 10,744

Pre K Program

Pre-K 3 (2 day Program)

\$ 2,150

Pre-K 4 (3 day program)

\$ 3,150

Early Kindergarten Program/ PreK 4 (5 Day program)
\$ 4,750

School Fee Schedule

Registration Fee \$45 per child (Due at the time of registration)
Technology Fee \$150 per family (Due by August 31st)
School Supply Fee \$15
0 per child (Due by August 31st)

Financial Assistance is available through the Bison Children's Fund, Friends of St. John, and several other specific scholarships. Additional information regarding tuition assistance can be found on the school website. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to complete paperwork in a timely manner. Applications received after the due date may not be considered.

Tuition Payment Options:

Annual due by August 31st, Semi-Annual due in August and February, and Monthly (10 payments Sept - June)

If a student's tuition is in arrears more than two months at any time during the school year, the student may be placed on tuition hold, or be asked to withdraw from school until the arrears has been paid. Exception is made if both the parent and the school have agreed upon a written deferred plan of payment. It is the parent's responsibility to initiate this request in due time without a reminder or notification from the school. Deferred plans will be approved only in those instances where a genuine need is evident and income will be definitely available at a known time later in the school year to meet tuition obligations.

Withdrawal Policy:

Tuition and fees will be prorated for each month of enrollment and refunds will be made for overpayments of tuition in whole month increments. There will be no refund for a partial month of attendance.

Allergy Policy:

St. John the Baptist school recognizes that an allergy is an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all students with allergies. We encourage children with allergies to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by all members of the school community. Teachers and new staff will be made aware of allergies in their classroom and will be versed in school policy and protocols regarding allergies. At the beginning of each school year we ask that medical information be updated to

include new allergies or changes in existing allergy protocols. If there are changes occurring during the school year the office must be notified immediately.

1. Asthma Medication – Immediate access to inhalers is vital. It is encouraged that all students that have inhalers have an inhaler in the school office. All inhalers must be prescribed and include the student's name and dosage instructions.
2. The School Environment – The school does all it can to ensure that the school environment is favorable to children with asthma and allergies.
3. Food Allergy Policy – St. John the Baptist School recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all students with food allergies. In order to minimize the incident of a life threatening allergic reaction, the school will maintain system-wide procedures for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student whose parents/guardians and physicians have informed the school in writing that a student has a potentially life threatening allergy.
4. Classrooms – Teachers will be familiar with the Emergency Action Plan for students in their classes and will respond to emergencies per the emergency protocol document in the plan. Information will be kept about the students' food allergies in the classroom and in the substitute folders, as well as, in the school office. A parent/guardian is responsible for providing food for his/her own child. Snacks that are to be shared with the entire class should meet allergy requirements of the class. If necessary, separate snacks may be used during whole class food events.

Birthday Observances:

Students in PreK through 8th Grade are encouraged to celebrate their birthday with the school community. Please refer to individual classroom policies regarding birthday celebrations and comply with all outlined policies and procedures regarding treats and food items. Due to the high instances of food allergies, non food items are always encouraged.

Blue Family Folder (BFF):

In order to ensure that all communication from school reaches home in a timely manner, St. John the Baptist School uses a bi-weekly folder that is sent home every other Wednesday. Official correspondences are sent home in this folder along with a newsletter, and school flyers. Your child is responsible for bringing the folder home and returning it back to school. Lost folders will incur a \$2.00 replacement charge. Official school wide communication will also be sent home using the School Reach Messenger system (Phone, text, email options)

Buckley Amendment/ Family Education Rights and Privacy Act:

St. John the Baptist School adheres to the Buckley Amendment, or Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in regard to the privacy of student records and the rights of non custodial parents. It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information decided through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the principal. In the absence of any court documents, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof. The school reserves the right to charge a shipping and processing fee for extra records sent to multiple addresses.

Be advised that if a teacher is subpoenaed to testify in a child custody case, the parent will need to pay the cost of a substitute teacher and any other costs associated with the testimony (mileage, food, parking, etc.)

Bullying/Cyber bullying:

St. John the Baptist School makes every attempt to provide a safe environment for all students, and incorporates anti bullying prevention in Religion, specialized lessons, and assemblies. Bullying encompasses but is not limited to physical (hitting, punching, kicking, taking of belongings), verbal (taunting, teasing, name calling) and psychological (spreading rumors or intimidation) carried out repeatedly over time. Students engaging in such behavior will face disciplinary consequences that may include detention, suspension, and /or expulsion.

Cell Phones:

The use of cell phones are not permitted during the instructional day or during after school clubs. Students are to store devices in their locker in the "off" position. Cell phones that ring during the day or that are used during the day by students will be confiscated by staff and will need to be picked up by a parent/guardian from the school principal. Repeated offenses will result in the probation of these items in the school. Administration reserves the right to search the contents of any confiscated phone.

Cheating:

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, detention, suspension, and /or expulsion. A student athlete or a student involved in extracurricular activities will be unable to participate in sports/extra-curricular competition.

Child Abuse/Mandated Reporter:

All staff and faculty of St. John the Baptist School are considered mandated reporters by New York State, and as such, are required by law to report a suspected case of child abuse/neglect to the state. Please be advised that excessive absences from school in grades 1st through 8th are considered educational neglect and must be reported to the state.

Conduct:

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school, which emphasizes deep respect for human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all actions. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the learning environment of the school, and many other factors of age and grade level appropriateness.

The Principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action and make the determination of appropriate consequences that may include detentions, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Counselor:

A certified counselor that is provided through Catholic Charities serves the needs of students through whole class lessons and individual consultations.

Crisis Plan: St. John's School has implemented a "crisis plan" incase of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep your children safe.

Custodial Rights:

It is the responsibility of the parents to share official custodial information deded through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in confidential files that are locked. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof.

COVID 19:

St. John the Baptist School is committed to the safety and welfare of our students. In accordance with governing agencies, our school has developed a ReOpening plan that details the response to reducing the spread of this virus through social distancing and increased cleaning measures. This document is posted on our website and is meant as a companion document to our school handbook.

Discipline:

Detention

Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. The day, date, and time of the detention are at the discretion of the Principal. Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, tutoring, or sporting commitments.

Suspension

Students are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to the office on the day of the suspension, and their activities will be monitored by the Principal. Students that receive and out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on school grounds during the time of their suspension. This includes any and all after school activities. Students must complete all class work during this time, and at the discretion of the Principal may be allowed to make up any quizzes and tests administered during their suspension.

Expulsion

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the school without prior permission from the Principal.

Drugs and Alcohol:

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

Emergency Drills:

State law requires that the school routinely practice Fire Drill, Lockdown Drills, and Shelter in Place Drills. Teachers have been given instructions on how to manage students during each one of these drills. We practice routinely so that in the event of a real emergency faculty, staff, and students will be prepared and know how to react. While these drills are required, we stress that they are only practice and are necessary to insure the overall safety of our students.

Field Trips:

1. Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
2. Field trips are a privilege and not a right.
3. There are no “traditional” field trips. Class participation in a particular field trip over consecutive years does not mean that this trip has become a school tradition.
4. All grades do not have the same number of field trips.
5. Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience ensure a successful learning opportunity.
6. Individual teachers, in consultation with Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation in any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
7. A written, official permission slip, signed by the parent/guardian, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. **Verbal permission cannot and will not be accepted.** Permission slips are due in the office 48 hours prior to the field trip date.
8. If your child fails to bring his/her permission slip home you may contact the office for one additional copy. Note: A fax does not take the place of an original signature.
9. A telephone call or an email will not be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission forms.
10. Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the permission slip. Students that do not attend the field trip will remain at home and will be marked absent for the day.
11. All monies collected for the field trip are non-refundable.
12. Cell phones are not allowed on field trips.
13. Parents that are not “official” chaperones may not drive their car to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on the field trip.
14. Parents who chaperone a field trip must be Virtus compliant, may not bring preschool age siblings, and must refrain from using cell phones and other devices that distract from their ability to monitor children safely.

Grading:

Students in PreK - 2nd grade will be given a standards based report card. The following scale applies:

4- Exceeds Proficiency Standards

3-Meets Proficiency Standards

2-Meets Basic Standards

1-Below Standards

S - Satisfactory

N-Needs improvement

N/A - Not applicable or Not Assessed at this time

Students in 3rd -8th grade will receive a numeric report card that represents grades as percentages. Any grade lower than a 70% is considered a failing grade.

In the event that our school must institute a remote learning policy, the necessary changes will be made to our grading policy to help accurately reflect student learning.

Home School Association (H.S.A): The purpose of H.S.A. is to offer an opportunity for parents and teachers to cooperate in their efforts to educate children according to Catholic principles; to correct and improve the neighborhood's environmental conditions which influence children's behavior; to lend assistance to the school whenever needed; and to support all activities which will achieve these purposes. By enrolling your child in St. John's School, you are automatically a member of St. John's Home School Association. St. John's H.S.A. consists of parents, teachers, administrators, and all others who have an interest in the betterment of St. John's school and Home School Association. H.S.A. is a fundraising organization whose sole purpose is to make St. John's School a better place for teachers and students.

Homework:

Formal home-study is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed.

Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement and enrich class work, and to prepare for certain examinations.

Since each student has different capabilities and interests, it would be difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. A good range would be approximately 10 minutes for each grade level (example: 10 minutes for 1st grade and 50 minutes for 5th grade).

If a problem arises while students are working on assignments, please contact the teacher directly.

Homework may be assigned Monday through Thursday. Homework will not be assigned over the weekend, with the exception of Regents classes.

Homework Policy due to Illness: When absent due to an illness, students complete missing work. The student is responsible for getting assignments from their teacher. If a child is absent for more than three days, parents can request homework through the office when calling in the absence. **(Please make the request by 8:30am)** If a student is absent for one day they may get their assigned work upon their return to school the following day. The materials will be available by 2:30 p.m.. Please do not ask to pick them up earlier as teachers need time to gather the materials needed.

Immunizations: No child will be admitted to school or allowed to attend without appropriate proof of immunization. Please note that NYS recently passed a vaccination law in 2019 that no longer allows our school to grant religious exemptions to immunization. Any family previously granted a religious exemption by our school must now meet the NYS requirements for immunization in order to attend our school in September. If you are in this situation, please contact the office immediately if you have any questions about which vaccines your child must have before entering school in September.

Library: The school has a well equipped library. Students are encouraged to use the library for curricular enrichment and pleasure reading. Borrowed books are expected to be returned on time and in good condition. Books damaged or lost must be paid for by the student before any other materials may be checked out.

Lockers: Students in grades 4-8 are issued a locker to store textbooks and clothing. In order to maintain a quiet atmosphere for class, students are allowed to go to their lockers only at specific times. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers at any time without probable or reasonable cause. The lockers are the property of St. John the Baptist School. Lockers may not be decorated inside or out. Student schedules and pencil holders facilitate learning and may be posted on the interior of a student's locker door.

Lost and Left: The school will not be responsible for items lost by the student. Any items left in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school receptionist to be placed in the Lost and Left basket. Items placed in the lost and left basket remain there for 10 days. After 10 days, items are donated to charity. Students who lose a library book, textbook, or workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping in order to receive a new copy.

Lunch Program: St. John's school offers a hot lunch program daily. Free/reduced-priced lunches are available for students whose family income falls within the eligibility criteria established through federal guidelines. Applications for participation in the free/reduced-priced lunch program are required from all families for every new school year. These forms will be distributed to all students during the first week of school.

Monthly menus are sent home. Students may choose to bring their lunch each day. Students should not bring glass bottles, soft drinks or excessive amounts of candy. Parents should not bring lunches or drinks from carry-out restaurants.

Students are expected to use the same manners required in the classroom during lunch. Courtesy towards other students and cooperation with lunch monitors are in order at all times.

Medication: If a child must take any medication in school which is prescribed by a doctor, that medication must be sent to the School Nurse in the container received from the pharmacy and must have on its label the following information:

- a. Child's name
- b. Name of doctor prescribing the child's medication
- c. Frequency
- d. Dose
- e. Date

All non-prescription medication (cough drops, lip balm, etc) should be taken to the School Nurse with the following information:

- a. Child's name
- b. Frequency
- c. Dose
- d. Date

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

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

Out of Uniform Guidelines:

Students may wear: jeans, tennis shoes, short socks, shorts and skirts no shorter than three inches above the knee, skorts, sweatshirts, jogging suits, nail polish, jewelry, dresses, slacks.

Students may not wear: Flip-flop sandals, open back shoes, tank tops, T-shirts with inappropriate writing, tennis shoes that convert to roller skates, biker shorts, pajama pants, yoga pants, make-up, low cut blouses/tops, clothing that is extremely tight, or hats. ALL UNIFORM/NON-UNIFORM REGULATION AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL.

Parents as Partners: As partners in the education process at St. John's school, we ask parents: To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights;
- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
- Is dressed according to the school dress code;
- Completes assignments on time; and
- Has lunch money or nutritional sack lunch every day.

To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences;

To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;

To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy;

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 situation 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 religious and educational goals of the school;

To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;

To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems;

To not post negative comments about students, teachers, or the administration on social media.

Parents Role in Education: We, at St. John's School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life- physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of St. John's School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

During these formative years, (Pre-K to 8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither teachers nor parents can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. **To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority.** If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make an investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships. Talking negatively about a child's teacher at home will only create an attitude of distrust toward the teacher, the school, and the parent.

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

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other

assignments. Parents are encouraged to let their child experience a logical consequence for an inappropriate action or behavior. This responsibility also extends to times of absence. Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

Parties/Celebrations: Room parents will work together with the classroom teacher to establish and plan classroom parties each year. Our main focus throughout the school year is on academic success. Classroom teachers will make every effort to schedule parties/celebrations with the least amount of impact to student learning. We ask parents to be respectful of the scheduled times, and speak with teachers directly before coming to join the classroom.

Promotion Policy/Retention/Transfer: Advancement to the next grade at St. John's is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendation of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level.

Promotion to the next grade level depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as a requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

Report Cards/Progress Reports:

Sacramental Program: The sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religious program at St. John's School. Preparation for two sacraments, Reconciliation and Eucharist, form the core of instruction in Grade 2 and Grade 3. In accord with the diocesan guidelines, candidates for First Eucharist will receive the sacrament of Reconciliation prior to First Eucharist.

Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition.

School Hours: Students in PreK-4-8th grade need to arrive no later than 7:50am. Our day begins promptly at 8am. Students in PreK-3 are to arrive at 9am.

Students in PreK-4-8th grade will be dismissed at 2pm. We dismiss all bus students first and then will send out students that are being picked up last. Students in PreK-3 are dismissed at 12pm and will be brought out to parents through the side doors on Sandridge.

School Office Hours:

The school office is open Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 3pm. The school phone number is 716-937-9483 and the school email is school.office@stjohnsalden.org

School Property:

The parent of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount of repairs and labor replacement. Textbooks rented by the student must have a proper book cover. No writing in rented books is permitted. The student will pay a fine or replacement for damaged or lost texts before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

School Safety:

St. John's school attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (**seriously or in jest or online**) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

In the event that the school suspects danger to a student or the school community, the school reserves the right to call the police.

Search: The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property. This includes cell phones and other electronic devices.

Service Projects:

All 8th grade students are required to participate in a minimum of 15 hours of service as a requirement for graduation. There are many opportunities throughout the year to participate in service events and you may contact our 8th grade teacher with specific questions. Our Middle School has an active Service Club that meets on a monthly basis to help develop ongoing service projects that are in alignment with Christian values.

Sexual Harassment: It is the policy of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Buffalo that all students have the right to be free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment, in the school environment. Sexual harassment may take different forms. The following acts, although not automatically sexual harassment, may constitute sexual harassment under certain circumstances:

1. Verbal- sexual innuendos, jokes of a sexual nature, and sexually degrading language to describe an individual.
2. Nonverbal- displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, leering and making obscene gestures.
3. Physical- unwanted physical contact or touching, brushing up against the body and any other type of coerced sexual activity.

Any student who believes he/she has been the subject of sexual harassment should report the alleged act immediately to the administration. The administrator will thoroughly and immediately investigate all claims of sexual harassment. If the investigation reveals that the complaint is valid, prompt attention and disciplinary action to stop the harassment and to prevent its recurrence will be taken. The disciplinary action taken with respect to each violation to this policy will be determined in accordance with the seriousness of the particular offense and may range from written warnings, parent/guardian conference, mandatory counseling, suspension, dismissal or a combination of actions. The school administrator will advise the complaining party that corrective action has been taken.

The school will take reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of the student who files a complaint, to encourage the reportings of any incidents of sexual harassment, and to protect the reputation of any student wrongfully charged with sexual harassment.

Smoking: Smoking of any type is not allowed on campus. This includes the use of e-cigarettes or vapors.

Student Directory: Each family may receive a Student Directory listing students' and parents' names, addresses, home telephone numbers, and email addresses. Parents may choose to exclude any personal contact information from the Student Directory.

The Student Directory should be used to acquaint parents with the names of their children(s) classmates and parents. These directories should **not be used or sold** for other purposes.

Student Records: Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Mail. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school.

Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the School Office. All forms should be submitted to St. John's School Office for distribution.

Completed forms will be sent via the US Mail. Special handling will require that all postal fees be paid by the parents. **No records will be sent to transferring school of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.**

Technology:

Students in grades 1st -8th are assigned a chrome book to use throughout the school year. Prior to receiving this chrome book students and parents/guardians are asked to sign an "Acceptable

Use Policy”. Students in violation of this policy will risk the loss of their chrome book and/or use of school internet and computers.

Testing:

Assessments are a necessary part of good instruction as they provide feedback on student mastery of skills. Each classroom teacher will determine the grade appropriateness of quizzes, projects, and assessments as they relate to the specific grade level and content. Students will be notified of these assessments prior to administration.

St. John the Baptist participates in the following State Testing:

Grades 3-8: English Language Arts and Math

Grades 4 & 8: Science

Title IX: St. John’s School adheres to the tenets of Title IX: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, be subjected to the discrimination under any education program or activity receiveing federal financail assistance.”

Transportation: St. John the Baptist school does not offer transportation to and from school. Transportation, or busing, is done through a child’s district of origin. Students that live within a 15 mile radius of St. John the Baptist school are eligible for busing. Parents/Guardians must request, in writing, to the district by April 1st of the preceding school year. Requests received after this date may be denied. Parents/Guardians are responsible to know the non busing dates for their district, and are then responsible to transport their child to and from school on these dates. St. John the Baptist School will not make notifications on non busing days

Transfer of Students: Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare the necessary information and settle accounts. **No student records will be forwarded to another school until Business Office accounts have been settled.**

Uniform Policy:

Boys in Grades K – 5 wear navy blue pants and a three button white, dark blue, or light blue knit shirt (long or short sleeve).

Boys in Grade 5 - will have the option of following either following the K-5 uniform or the 6-8 uniform for the 2020-2021 school year as they complete the transition to Middle School.

Boys in Grades 6 – 8 wear navy blue pants and a white or light blue long or short sleeve dress shirt with a dark navy tie. A solid plain dark navy vest, cardigan, V-neck sweater or the gym uniform sweatshirt or gym uniform fleece may be worn with the uniform. A black or dark brown belt is to be worn with the uniform pants for all boys. Shirts must be long enough to be tucked in

at all times. The uniform is to look neat and clean. Cargo pants or any other fashion pants are NOT acceptable for boys. No earrings or band-aids covering an earring are allowed on boys. (SPORTS SOCKS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE)

Girls in Grades K – 4 wear plaid jumpers with a plain white or light blue blouse (long or short sleeve/peter pan or oxford collar). Please note that white, dark blue, or light blue polo shirts are permitted, but a blouse is encouraged.

Girls only in Grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 wear a plaid skirt with a white or light blue blouse (long or short sleeve/peter pan or oxford collar) or plain white short sleeve polo shirt with buttons. Girl's jumpers/skirt length must fall below the knee for all girls. Blouses and polo shirts must be large enough and long enough to be tucked in at all times. A solid plain dark navy knit vest, cardigan with no hood, or V-neck sweater may be worn.

For all girls K - 8. Navy knee socks, leotards or plain white ankle socks are to be worn by all girls. The uniform is to look neat and clean at all times.

ABSOLUTELY NO MAKE-UP OR NAIL POLISH IS TO BE WORN DURING SCHOOL.

Earrings for girls are limited to ONE POST-TYPE earring in each ear. Cartilage earrings or dangling earrings are not allowed. Girls may wear a cross on a necklace during school as part of our Catholic identity. Wrist watches and only ONE ring may be worn. No other jewelry is to be worn.

Winter Uniform – From November through March a white or navy turtleneck may worn with a sweater or knit vest or the gym logo sweatshirts or fleece for both boys and girls in all grades. Turtlenecks must be neat, clean and large enough to be tucked in at all times, the neck should not be stretched out. Corduroy pants may be worn as part of the winter uniform from November to March for all students.

Girls also have the option of wearing uniform twill pants during the winter months Solid black or navy leggings may be worn under Jumpers/Skirts. No other exceptions are acceptable for girl's pants. Sweaters with no hood, vests, and the gym uniform sweatshirt and gym uniform fleece may be worn with the uniform.

Gym Uniform – All students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 are required to wear the school gym uniform to school on the designated gym days. Students purchase the gym uniform through the school. The Gym Uniform consists of a T-Shirt, shorts, sweatpants and sweatshirt with the St. John's gym uniform logo. The Gym uniform is only worn on gym days.

ALL STUDENTS - Hair should be neatly cut and well groomed. No bleached, extreme hair or hair dyed colors, streaked, spiked, razored, or mohawks. Short faux hawks that do not exceed 2

inches will be permitted. Boy's hair length may not exceed collar length. No tattoos of any kind will be allowed in school, including temporary or rub-on.

Shoes are always to be worn with the uniform and should always be appropriate AND safe for the school day. No clogs, sandals, open back or open toe shoes, as well as athletic shoes, hiking boots, combat style boots or fashion boots. The soles and heels on girl's shoes should not exceed an inch. Sneakers are worn on designated gym days only.

Pre K and Kindergarten students may wear sneakers on a daily basis.

Students are expected to be in the complete and proper uniform each school day. This is just one of the ways that both parents and the school teach students the importance of following school rules and developing responsibility in each child. After one warning of a uniform infraction parents will be called and asked to bring in whatever part of the uniform that is missing.

No deviation or interpretations of the uniform policy is acceptable.

Virtual Learners - Students that participate in virtual and on line instruction are encouraged to wear their full school uniform according to their grade level. Wearing a polo (white, navy, or light blue) is required during instructional periods.

Visitors: School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in and at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. All visitors/volunteers are required to wear a designated badge that may be picked up in the office. Visitors/volunteers are asked to sign out at the time of departure. Visitors may be asked to show identification in the form of a driver's license or other government issued identification.

Volunteers: Parents are critical to the success of our programs/activities which enrich our school. The Diocese of Buffalo Insurance Services Department does not allow any parent volunteers to bring younger siblings to classroom parties or field trips due to school liability issues. Please note that the Diocese of Buffalo requires all adults (over the age of 18) who are employees or volunteers and regularly work with children attend the Protecting God's Children workshop. After attending the workshop you will be assigned on-line monthly bulletins that must be read and one question answered in order to keep your status current. **The Diocese will be conducting audits of the schools and participation is mandatory when you are a room parent, cafeteria monitor, driver or chaperones for field trips, coaches, or anyone in regular contact in any way with St. John's children.** Regular contact is more than two times

per semester. We hope you understand our firm commitment to upholding the regulations of the Diocese when it comes to protecting your children.

Weather Emergencies: If it should be necessary to close school because of weather conditions, an announcement will be made over local television stations and a message will be sent to the home phone and/or cell phone number listed on a student's file via the School Reach system. School closures will also be posted on Channel 2, 4, and 7 and will be listed as " St. John the Baptist School -Alden". Please note that if Alden Public School closes due to weather, then we will also close school.

Right to Amend: St. John's school has the right to amend this Handbook at any time. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Blue Family Folder and through email communication.

Parent/Guardian Signature Page

I have read the 2020-2021 Parent/Student Handbook and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.

Family Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____