

**IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ELEMENTARY**  
**PreK-5<sup>th</sup> grade**  
**St. Joseph Club**

**(St. Francis Preschool Handbook coming soon)**

314 Vine Street, Traverse City, MI 49684  
231-947-1252

# HANDBOOK

REVISED SEPTEMBER 2023



## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools are dedicated to providing a Catholic education – ensuring educational quality for all families willing to enter into a partnership to develop each child to his or her fullest spiritual and academic potential.

[www.gtacs.org](http://www.gtacs.org)

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# OUR MISSION & PARTNERSHIP WITH YOU

## PARENT ACTIVITY COMMITTEE

All parents/guardians with children enrolled at Immaculate Conception are members of the Parent Activity Committee (PAC). The mission of the PAC is as follows:

- *The GTACS PAC recognizes that a child's spiritual and educational development is a shared responsibility between school and family during the entire period the child spends in school.*
- *To support the goal of GTACS to educate all students effectively, the school and parents must work together as knowledgeable partners.*
- *The mission of the GTACS PAC is to contribute to the educational success of the students attending GTACS by fostering a partnership between families, staff, administration, and the community, which promotes a positive faith-based environment, valuing everyone's participation. The PAC will fulfill its mission by focusing on the following core values: open communication, educational enrichment, sense of belonging; school spirit, and fundraising.*
- *By-laws are available in the school office.*

## NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

The schools abide by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, our school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. 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.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Individual issues involving discipline, academic progress, socialization, etc. are private concerns to be shared and discussed only among those persons directly involved. No staff member shall discuss such matters outside the school, and within the school only with those other persons who have a legitimate need to know. Parents are also expected to refrain from discussion of such issues unless they are directly involved in the matter. Questions or concerns should be addressed to the principal.

## VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY 3350 School Form

In the course of working with students in classroom settings, school activities, or accompanying students on field trips away from the school, volunteers may occasionally develop their own opinions or insights, or become aware of possible sensitive information regarding students or their families. The volunteer should hold any such opinions, insights, or information in confidence.

**If the information potentially involves abuse or other harm to the student or others, the volunteer should convey the information to the school principal immediately. When in doubt as to the nature of the information, the volunteer should discuss the information with the principal.**

**Parents wishing to volunteer on a regular basis will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and possible background checks as part of a Diocesan Policy effective Oct. 1, 2003.**

## ADMINISTRATION 1135-School

## THE HUMAN BODY AS A CONSTITUTIVE ASPECT OF THE HUMAN PERSON

*The Church teaches that our differences as male and female are part of God's good design in creation, that our bodies –including our sexuality – are gifts from God. In fact, "'being man' or 'being woman' is a reality which is good and willed by God" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 369). A person cannot change his or her sex. A person should accept and seek to live in conformity with his or her sexual identity (sometimes called "gender identity") as given by God. The human person is a body-soul union, and the body-created male or female-is a constitutive aspect of the human person. Having a proper understanding of the human body- and more generally, of the moral law - enhances, rather than restricts, man's freedom.*

1. **It is the policy of the Diocese of Gaylord that all schools, shall respect the biological sex of the human person as given by God and shall apply all policies and procedures in relation to that person according to that person's God-given biological sex.**
2. **Employees and volunteers shall conduct themselves in accord with their God-given biological sex.**
3. **Diocesan schools partner with families to educate and form students consistent with the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. Students and parents (or legal guardians) shall conduct themselves in accord with their God-given biological sex.**

Policy Adopted: June 28, 2021

Policy Revised:

Approved by the Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley

## COMMUNICATION

Weekly school newsletters are included in the email containing the GTACS News. Classroom newsletters also serve as a vital link between home and school.

In grades one through five, each student is given a personal planner in order to keep track of daily assignments and projects. The planner can be used as well by parents and teachers to monitor student effort and to communicate daily/weekly progress and expectations.

All families are encouraged to become actively involved in the school. Suggestions for improvements, constructive criticism, and positive comments are always welcome. Concerns regarding policy or the general operation of the school should be addressed to the principal. The protocol for resolving grievances regarding classroom issues is to be handled as follows:

1. *All parental inquiries and/or concerns are to be directed first to the specific teacher involved in verbal or written form. If written, it must be signed.*
2. *Irresolvable issues between a parent and teacher then need to be addressed by the principal.*
3. *After sufficient time has elapsed to address issues, the protocol for grievances then proceeds to the following: superintendent/presiding pastor, Vicar, Vicar General, Diocesan Secretariat for Education.*
4. *Severe concerns and/or highly critical issues are reserved for the Diocesan Secretariat for Education. The final authority in all matters rests with the Bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord after all other means of appeal have failed.*

## CONFERENCES

Elementary parent/teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of the first marking period. Preschool conferences are in January. All parents are required to attend these conferences.

Individual conferences are encouraged and may be called by either parent or teacher whenever necessary. If a conference is desired, parents must call the office or schedule an appointment with their child's teacher.

## REPORT CARDS

Elementary report cards are sent home with the students four (4) times each year, the week following the end of each quarter. Preschool evaluations will be shared at the January conferences and sent home at the end of the year.

The grades for each term are based on the criteria that have been outlined by the classroom teacher. In grades 4-5, warnings for inadequate performance (dropping two or more letter grades) must be sent to parents/guardians four (4) weeks before the end of each marking period.

## VISITORS

To ensure the safety of our children and enable communication with visitors should they need to be reached while on the premises, all adult visitors entering the building are asked to sign in at the school office and wear a visitor's sticker.

## MESSAGES AND DELIVERIES

To ensure the safety of our children and minimize interruption to the learning process, **all messages and deliveries must be made through the school office.** This includes lunches, books, and musical instruments. End of the day transportation changes must be done through the main office. Please do not email teachers changes as it may not be seen in a timely manner.

## OFFICE

The school office is managed by the secretary from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday - Friday. The school answering machine is closely monitored and all messages will be promptly returned.

## ADMISSIONS

Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools (GTACS) are open to students regardless of race, sex, color, religion, political belief or national origin whose needs can be reasonably met. GTACS will not deny admission to students because of a demonstrated financial need. In the admission of students to GTACS, consideration will be given to these criteria in order:

1. *To children of families currently enrolled in GTACS*
2. *To children of the five participating Catholic parishes*
3. *To children of non-parishioners*

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It is imperative that we have up-to-date address, email, and phone information for you and the persons you authorize on the emergency cards. Please update your profile in FACTS or call the school office if changes need to be made.

## **ENROLLMENT/TRANSFERS**

Enrollment of students is considered incomplete until receipt of permanent records from a sending school. Transfer students with special needs will be referred to the intermediate district. Immaculate Conception (IC) Elementary School have limited provision for "special needs" students and cannot necessarily accommodate all students. The building principals have the final word as to the enrollment of the student. Our school automatically forwards records of such a nature to requesting schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

## **CLASSROOM AGE RECOMMENDATIONS**

To ensure a rewarding school experience, we recommend the following:

- For 3-year old class, child is to be 3 by September 1, 2023
- For 4-year old class, child is to be 4 by September 1, 2023
- For PreK class, child is to be 5 by May 1, 2024
- For Kindergarten, child is to be 5 by September 1, 2023

These are only guidelines, but are based upon the State mandated 5 years old by September 1 to enter Kindergarten.

Preschool children must have a completed Health Appraisal including up-to-date immunization record, before the child can start school. The health form must be signed by a physician and is good for two years.

## **TUITION, SAVINGS PLANS AND SUPPORT**

Tuition schedules, tuition assistance forms, and loan applications are available at the Business Office at 946-0652.

### **TUITION ASSISTANCE**

A tuition assistance program is funded by the Grand Traverse Education Foundation (GTEF). The GTEF allocates funds based on an independent outside firm's assessment. The assessment requires an application, a copy of the last income tax return, and a small fee. Personal finances are kept confidential.

### **TUITION SCHEDULE**

Tuition must be paid by July 1 prior to the start of the school year. This can be paid directly to the school or a loan may be requested at the time of registration. The school arranges with a local bank to lend the tuition money to the parents to be repaid in 10 installments with reasonable simple interest. These payments are made directly to the bank. Further details and current rates are available from the Business Office during registration.

### **PRESCHOOL TUITION POLICY**

When a child enrolls in the Preschool, a \$30, non-refundable fee is made payable to GTACS. This amount is not deducted from your total tuition due. Tuition will be billed to you and may be paid in full or in nine (9) monthly installments. Your first tuition payment is due September 1<sup>st</sup> to hold your child's place in the preschool. If your child misses preschool due to illness or vacation, full tuition is still billed. This also includes days off for any teacher in-service, scheduled school holidays and snow days. Make checks payable to GTACS and mail or drop them off in the Elementary office, 314 Vine Street, Traverse City, 49684

### **PRESCHOOL WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

A family that wishes to withdraw shall notify the Preschool in writing two (2) weeks in advance of withdrawal. We need this time in order to fill the vacancy and ensure our Preschool no financial burden due to loss of tuition. There will be no refund of tuition for non-attendance of a child. If a family gives two weeks prior notice of a withdrawal, they will receive a refund for any tuition paid beyond the date of withdrawal.

### **TUITION REDUCTION INCENTIVE PLAN (TRIP)**

TRIP helps each family reduce their individual tuition costs by receiving tuition dollars based upon purchases from participating local and national retailers and businesses. Participation is easy through the use of gift cards or certificates (universally known as "SCRIP" or "substitute money") which may be purchased either "on hand" (available upon request) or by pre-ordering a day or more in advance of pick-up at the GTACS TRIP office in the St. Francis gym lobby. SCRIP participating retailers agree to sell gift certificates to the TRIP program at a discount. You are able to redeem them at full face value, and the difference, anywhere from 1% to 15% of your purchases, goes toward your own personal GTACS "tuition savings account." Certain retailers offer Internet redemption programs where certificates may be used on line.

In April of each year, the balance in your individual account may be used for your family's tuition, to sign over your balance for another GTACS family's tuition, or to P.A.C.E. (People Aiding Catholic Education). There are regular program participants who, through simply buying where they typically would (Meijer, Home Depot, Speedway Gas, etc.), save several hundred dollars a year. The most creative families who network family members, friends, friends' businesses and relatives to purchase gift cards or certificates have saved enough to cover an entire year's tuition! The TRIP program operates year round, even during the summer months. To have your order filled and waiting for you on Wednesday for pick-up, TRIP order forms may be dropped off up until 6 p.m. Tuesday. Orders may also be filled while you wait during TRIP hours.

**The TRIP office is open Tuesdays from 2-6 p.m. Wednesdays from 12-2 p.m. and Thursdays 8-10 a.m. in the lobby of the St. Francis**

**gym. For more information call our TRIP coordinators Kate Fly and Lynn Montroy at 932-4848.**

## SCHOOL ATTIRE

Uniforms are an important aspect of Catholic education. We remind students to “dress for success!” Please take a moment to review our uniform policies <https://gtacs.org/parents/uniforms-jean-days/>. Our uniform vendor is Dennis Uniforms. Orders can be placed online by using our school code: HGT. Note that the only approved skirt for IC is the two tabbed option. All other styles are for SEAS and SF. Please remember that all school shoes should be neutral in color; black, brown, gray, blue, white (no patterns on shoes). Socks, tights, and leggings should be solid in color and blue or white. Thank you for your partnership in helping children adhere to the uniform code daily before leaving home. Uniforms are required K-5 and optional, but highly encouraged, for preschool. Please label all outerwear and uniform fleeces and sweatshirts.

### UNIFORM NOTES

- Undershirts must be white in color
- Hair styles are to be neat. Hair should be clean, neat, well-groomed and out of eyes. Boys hair must be above the collar. Hair color must be of natural tones.
- Jewelry should be simple and not detract from the uniform. Boys cannot wear earrings.
- A separate pair of non-marking tennis shoes are to be kept at school and used only for PE class
- During the winter months, all students should have a separate pair of boots to wear to and from school and at recess
- No hooded sweatshirts are allowed in the classrooms but may be worn outside
- No coats, jackets or hats worn in class. Hats should be removed when entering the building

### PRESCHOOL UNIFORM GUIDELINES

Starting in the 2023-2024 school year, our pre-kindergarten students will have the same uniform guidelines as listed.

### UNIFORM NON-COMPLIANCE

The first non-compliance with any specific dress-code issue will be a request by the teacher to rectify the situation in the least disruptive manner with the family/student. A second uniform non-compliance will result in communication home to the parent from the office. Repeated uniform violations will result in the student being sent to the office to change into proper uniform clothing or parents will be contacted to assist in providing the compliant uniform code items.

Any uncertainties regarding the appropriateness of the uniform will be the responsibility of the parent and student to check in advance of wearing the attire. All final decisions on uniform issues will rest with the principals.

### WINTER WEATHER GUIDELINES

Please ensure that your child is properly dressed for cold and wet weather. Boots, hats, gloves, and snow pants must be worn during the winter season. Notification that such outerwear is mandatory will be communicated in the school newsletter. As mentioned in our uniform code, boots are not permitted in the classrooms. All students must have a change of footwear to wear in the classrooms during the winter months. Please adhere to the dress code when purchasing boots and shoes.

### Casual for a Cause

Casual for a Cause are days when children may wear jeans, sweatshirts, T-shirts, shorts, (when the weather is appropriate) and other types of “dress-down” clothing. Proper consideration must be given to the mission of a Catholic school in the selection of clothing or particular lettering or logos. Clothes must be neat in appearance, modest (not too tight, short, or revealing). Parents may be called to bring items if students are not in compliance with the dress code. Casual for a Cause days typically fall on the 3rd Friday of the month. Students are asked to bring a donation which will be donated to a designated monthly charity.

### LOST AND FOUND

Lost items are put in a “Lost and Found” box located at the school and may be reclaimed there. Such articles will be held for the semester and then given to a charitable organization. Children finding possessions of others are asked to turn them in at the office. Please label all clothing, especially tennis shoes, mittens, gloves, hats and jackets.

## UNIFORM CODE

	Girls	Boys
<b>Shirts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• White Dennis Uniform shirts with GTACS logo; see approved styles</li><li>• Shirts must be tucked in</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• White Dennis Uniform shirts with GTACS logo; see approved styles</li><li>• Shirts must be tucked in</li></ul>
<b>Dresses and Bottoms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All pants and shorts must be purchased from Dennis or a cotton pant and short option is available from the Lands’ End</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All pants and shorts must be purchased from Dennis or a cotton pant and short option is available from the Lands’ End</li></ul>

	<p>uniform website. Please use the school codes when ordering.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short season is from May 1-October 15</li> <li>• Only navy blue is allowed. All pants and shorts must have approved logo on them.</li> <li>• Girls may wear a jersey polo dress, pleated pique polo dress, Tyler plaid shift dress, or a skort that meets modesty standards; all must be from Dennis Uniform</li> </ul>	<p>uniform website. Please use the school codes when ordering.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short season is May 1-October 15</li> <li>• Only navy blue is allowed. All pants and shorts must have approved logo on them</li> </ul>
<b>Optional Layering Items</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navy blue bike shorts are available to be worn under skirts/jumpers/dresses</li> <li>• Plain and solid color (navy or white) <u>ankle length</u> leggings may be worn under skirts/jumpers/dresses</li> <li>• Solid color white or navy tights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ties are optional</li> <li>• Coordinating ties are available from Dennis</li> </ul>
<b>Accessories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain navy, black or brown belt</li> <li>• Simple coordinating hair accessories. No scarves or bandanas. Optional accessories are available through Dennis</li> <li>• White or navy socks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain navy, black or brown belt</li> <li>• Ties may be worn and are encouraged on Mass days</li> <li>• White or navy socks</li> </ul>
<b>Cool Weather Options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All cool weather options must come from the Dennis Uniform; see approved styles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All cool weather options must come from the Dennis Uniform; see approved styles</li> </ul>
<b>Shoes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed-toed, secured on the heel</li> <li>• Neutral in color (black, brown, gray, blue, white)</li> <li>• No light up shoes or sparkles</li> <li>• No wheelies</li> <li>• No high-heeled shoes</li> <li>• Boots are only allowed to and from school and at recess. A separate pair of shoes should be packed for the classroom.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closed-toed, secured on the heel</li> <li>• Neutral in color (black, brown, gray, blue, white)</li> <li>• No light up shoes</li> <li>• No wheelies</li> <li>• Boots are only allowed to and from school and at recess. A separate pair of shoes should be packed for the classroom.</li> </ul>

## TRAVEL TO AND FROM SCHOOL

To ensure their safety, students should arrive at school between 7:20 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. to begin school at 7:50 a.m. Students arriving earlier than 7:20 a.m. are in an unsupervised situation. Personnel are not available to supervise students until 7:20 a.m. School personnel are advised that their supervisory duties end 30 minutes after dismissal. The school cannot be held responsible for students during those unsupervised times.

**BICYCLES** Students may ride their bicycle to and from school during the months of August, September, October, April, May, and June only. Students in grades K-2 must always be accompanied by an adult. Riders must agree to walk their bicycle when on school property, follow all bicycle safety procedures, and yield to all pedestrians.

## BUS TRANSPORTATION

1. *Students must be on time at the designated bus stop. Buses cannot wait, as they are on a strict time schedule. Students should cross in front of the bus when crossing a road.*
2. *Written permission from the parent/guardian and verification by the principal are necessary in order for a child to leave the bus at another place other than his/her regular stop.*
3. *Parents wishing students to ride the bus to a bus stop other than the normal bus stop must send written notice to the office. Bus passes will be*

issued from there. Please be advised that TCAPS does not allow switching busses for convenience purposes. This service is for emergencies only, sports activities or going to a friend's house are not included in this service.

4. Student conduct on the buses reflects not only on the parents, but also on the school. Transportation "referrals" from the Traverse City Public School are reviewed by the principal before inclusion in the student's school record.

5. It is a privilege to ride the bus. Students must follow all directions of the driver and obey all bus rules. Discipline is handled jointly by the bus driver, principal, and TCAPS director of transportation. Final authority, however, for all bus related decisions, rests with the public school director of transportation.

**DISMISSAL** In order for us to provide our students with a safe and orderly dismissal, we have established the following procedures that must be followed. **Dismissal is from 2:30-3:00 p.m. Any students who are not picked up by 3:00 will wait for their parent in the office. Please be mindful of the fact that we often have meetings at 3:10 p.m. and there is no supervision after that time.**

#### **Drop-off and Dismissal**

- The safety of your children is of the highest importance. We have a well-run and efficient car line, and the success of it is due to the partnership with our families. All families are encouraged to use the morning and afternoon carline where we have eight staff members ready to welcome you.
- **Carline enters from Elmwood and turns onto Second Street through the neighborhood and right onto Cedar. Staff members will be there to assist with directing the flow and maps will be sent out and available at Back to School Night and Preschool Conferences. To help us maintain good relationships with our neighbors, please do not block driveways, alleys, or drive through alleys.**
- **PikMyKid**-Each child will be assigned a number that we will provide on a car tag at Back to School Night and Preschool Conferences. A staff member will input this number on an iPad and will signal to your child waiting in his/her classroom that it is time to come to carline. This allows for students to remain inside during inclement weather and increases the safety of our campus.

#### **Important carline reminders:**

- Carline runs from 7:20-7:48 am. The bells rings at 7:45 am and all students are expected to be in their classrooms at 7:50 am for morning announcements. Students who arrive after 7:50 am will need to stop in the office for a tardy slip. To allow for students to start on time, please be in our car line by 7:40 am. Any late arriving preschool students need to be brought to the office by a parent/guardian.
- For any families who have a SEAS student(s) and are using the shuttle, it will depart from Vine Street behind the school at 7:30 am. Please enter from Cedar Street onto Vine as we make this a one-way street in the morning to allow room for the two shuttle buses. If you also have an IC student, please drop off your SEAS student(s) only and then proceed to the IC carline entering from Elmwood Street.
- Refrain from cell phone usage once in the parking lot.
- Drive slowly through carline.
- Have your car in park when staff is loading or unloading students.
- In the afternoon, place your carline tag in the passenger side visor so that a staff member can enter your PikMyKid number into the iPad. Be sure to get your PikMyKid number at Back to School Night or Preschool Conferences.
- Assist the staff with unbuckling your child. Staff are not allowed to buckle children at dismissal. Cars will need to pull to the left in front of the church if extra time is needed for buckling.
- Dismissal will begin at 2:35 pm. Carline will run the same as the morning with eight designated pick-up spots in front of the school.
- Preschool students who are half day will follow the morning car line routine and be picked up in front of the school at 11:00 am. Please remain in your car and wait for teachers to bring your children to you to keep the line moving.
- There is no IC student drop-off or pick-up behind the school on Vine Street. This area is for our SEAS shuttle students and where walkers are crossing.
- Be sure to wave and smile at staff members who work car line in rain, shine, sleet, or snow!

#### **Important reminders for parents walking their children to school:**

- If you are walking your children to the school door, please park in the church lot at the corner of Cedar and Second Streets or in the Sleder's lot in the morning. **The Sleder's lot is closed to all school traffic after morning drop off for the remainder of the day.** In the morning, please do not park along Cedar Street so we can keep the car line moving.
- Use cross walks at the corners or behind the school where we have staff on duty to assist.
- Once children are on school property, they may walk themselves in. The exception is for our preschool students who need to be walked to the door by a staff member, parent, or other adult.
- Be careful to not block driveways of neighbors
- Avoid walking on the grass or through yards.
- Do not park in the lot in front of the school, in front of the rectory or behind the school as that is for staff parking and rectory visitors.
- If you are walking to pick your child up, please wait in the designated on the sidewalk in front of the school and a staff member will enter your PikMyKid number for your child to come meet you.

**AFTER SCHOOL CARE - ST. JOSEPH CLUB** is modeled after Jesus' father, who cared for Jesus as if he were his own child. After school care begins from dismissal at 2:40 p.m. (11:00 on half days) until 5:45 p.m. All children will be supervised by staff from the time of their arrival until they are dismissed to either the parent or person approved on the child's information card. Care is not available on Snow days, Holidays, Professional Development Days. (See SJC Calendar) Contact St. Joseph Club via email at [jtinkler@gtacs.org](mailto:jtinkler@gtacs.org)



## ATTENDANCE

### STARTING TIME: FULL OR HALF-DAY IS 7:50 a.m.

Students at Immaculate Conception should not arrive earlier than 7:20 a.m. as there is no supervision on the playground until that time. The bell rings at 7:45 a.m.; however, school begins at 7:50 a.m.

**DISMISSAL TIME-FULL DAY. . . . .2:35 p.m.**  
**DISMISSAL TIME-HALF DAY. . . . . 11:00 a.m.**

Each student is expected to attend school regularly and on time. Once children get off the bus or arrive on the grounds, they may not leave the grounds for any reason without the permission of the principal.

### HEALTH POLICY

- Your child's health is a matter of importance to all of us. Parents will be contacted regarding:
  1. Any changes in their children's health
  2. Accidents
  3. Injuries
  4. Incidents
  5. At any time a child is too ill to remain in the group
- Parents will be notified immediately of the above mentioned health changes using contact information provided by parents.
- A parent/guardian is responsible for transportation home of a sick child.
- If your child has contracted or been exposed to a communicable disease, the parent is required to notify the school of that disease and its symptoms so that we may inform parents. Children under a doctor's care may return to school when the doctor believes the child is well enough.
- Any child, staff or volunteers that exhibit any of the following symptoms, we encourage you to stay at home:
  1. Fever (any temperature of 100 degrees or less if the child is not feeling well. The child, staff or volunteer should be 'fever free' for 24 hours before returning.
  2. Severe sore throat
  3. Runny nose that is thick, cloudy, green or yellow in discharge
  4. Earache – until the cause is determined
  5. Severe chest cough
  6. If they have vomited in the last 12 hours
  7. Any draining sore – until drainage stops or it can be properly treated/covered

**ABSENCES** As a safety measure and as a courtesy to the school staff, parents/guardians are requested to call the school office on the first day of a particular illness. All absences must be reported to the school office by the parent or guardian. Please call by 8:30 a.m. School secretaries begin calling parents of any students marked absent at 8:30 a.m. If parent or guardian cannot be reached within a reasonable amount of time, the students will be marked unexcused. Excessive tardiness and absences may be referred to the Grand Traverse County Truancy Intervention Program.

**EXCUSED ABSENCES** Absences will be excused on the basis of verified contact with the parent or guardian, as well as by a written explanation for the following reasons:

1. *Personal illness of the student;*
2. *Medical and dental examination and /or treatment of the student when such appointments cannot be scheduled other than during the school hours;*
3. *Student participation in school sponsored activities taking place during school hours;*
4. *Death in the immediate family;*
5. *Reasons of extenuating circumstances to be judged by the principal.*

**UNEXCUSED ABSENCES** Absences other than those mentioned above, or any absence without a written explanation from parents/guardians, will be considered unexcused. In case of an unexcused absence, the teacher is not required to instruct again, give credit for work missed, or provide make-up tests. If a student has been absent for twenty five percent (25%) or more of the grading period, the teacher may choose to withhold grades for that period.

**APPOINTMENTS** Should you find it absolutely necessary to schedule appointments during class hours, please notify the school by note. Appointments will be judged excused or unexcused according to the criteria listed above. Parents or guardians coming to school for dismissal of a student are to go to the office to sign the student out of the building. Please do not go to the classroom. Students will be called to the office through the public address system. Likewise, when dropping a student off after an appointment, parents/guardians should report to the office

and sign the student into school.

**MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS** Students are encouraged to make up missing assignments. When a child is absent, even for a day, it is wise to get his or her books and any missed assignments. Every school day is important. Good study habits are essential to the academic progress of the child. Parents/guardians may go to their child's classroom and pick up homework only at the end of the school day. Homework/tests missed at the end of a marking period may result in a grade of "I" (Incomplete). Students have an equivalent number of days to make up the incomplete if absences occur at or near the end of a marking period. For example, if a student misses 3 days, they will have 3 days for make up after their return.

**TARDY STUDENTS** Students are marked tardy if they arrive after 7:50. Tardy students must report to the office to pick up a slip, which allows them to join their class. When buses are late, students are not marked tardy.

**TRUANCY** Regular and consistent attendance is not only a vital part of a student's success; it is necessary for compliance with the Michigan Compulsory Attendance Law, and the Michigan School Code. (We recognize that there are those occasions when students are not able to attend school because of illness, accidents, family obligations, etc.)

To follow the Michigan Compulsory Attendance Laws, we use these guidelines:

- *At 10 absences or tardies of any kind per semester, we notify the parent/guardian.*
- *At fifteen absences or tardies per semester, we again notify the parent/guardian of our concerns.*
- *At twenty absences or tardies or ten consecutive tardies per semester, we file a report with the Truancy Intervention Coordinator, who may review the file.*

We thank you for your attention to this policy and appreciate your cooperation in curbing unnecessary tardiness and absences demonstrating good work ethic.

**VACATIONS** Vacations during regular school days are discouraged. If we value education, then we must value time spent in school. Various vacation times are provided throughout the school year (Thanksgiving, Christmas, an occasional Mid-Winter break, and spring) for vacations. Spring break in our district has been aligned so that it will always be in conjunction with the Traverse City Public School System. Family vacations should be taken at those times. Teachers are not required to give assignments in advance of vacation times. It is the student's responsibility to seek and make up any missed work. There is no replacement for time spent in school with the classroom teacher.

**WEATHER CLOSINGS/DELAYS** We follow Traverse City Public School's decisions on CLOSING OR DELAYING for inclement weather. When the public school is closed, we are closed. Listen to radio stations or TV stations for announcements or visit GTACS.org or GTACS Facebook page for postings.

## THE SCHOOL DAY CURRICULUM

Immaculate Conception School strives to educate the whole person; heart, mind, and soul. A strong academic curriculum is supported by Catholic Tradition and an emphasis on Christian family values. All aspects of student formation (intellectual, spiritual, psychological, physical, and social) are evaluated in light of how the mission of the school is to be lived out. Those families wishing to enroll at our schools must be willing to accept the standards, values, and regulations of the school. The curriculum is in keeping with Diocesan guidelines and the Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools accrediting directives. Ongoing assessment and continual improvement is necessary to the school's continued certification. The core curriculum consists of Religion, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education, Art, Vocal and Instrumental Music. All students, regardless of their religious affiliation, are expected to participate in Religion classes, school liturgies, and religious services/functions.

## SCHOOL BAGS

Each child need a school bag and pocket folder. Please label your child's bag with his/her name. This bag should be large enough to carry snow pants/boots/shoes. It is important to check your child's school bag daily.

**ACCELERATED READER** Accelerated Reader is a school-wide reading enrichment program. The program is networked for use in our computer lab. The library and each classroom have a title list of those books included in the program. A list of book titles is also posted on our web site at [www.gtacs.org](http://www.gtacs.org). Books for the program may be borrowed from the school library, public library, and classroom library. Further information will be provided by each school regarding the specifics as to how Accelerated Reader is used in the classroom.

**BAND** All 5th grade students will have the experience of music with an instrumental emphasis during the school year. Additional information will be provided by the band director.

**MOBILE COMPUTER LAB** The Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools (GTACS) strongly promote the use of electronic technologies (such as computers) in the educational process. One such example would be the Accelerated Reader program. These technologies allow students and staff to access current and relevant resources, provide opportunity to communicate in a technologically rich environment, and become responsible, self-directed lifelong learners. All users must read, understand, and abide by the Acceptable Use Policy which is part of the

registration process online via FACTS.

*(See also code of conduct – technology use)*

**ENRICHMENT** Out of gratitude to the Lord for all that we have to share, we offer Enrichment classes to further enable our students to grow in wisdom, knowledge, and service. At Immaculate Conception School, eager learners have a robust selection of after school teams, service clubs, and Enrichment class options. Your child can sign up for quarterly, semester, or year-long activities like Foreign Language, Robotics, Challenge Island STEAM, Fine Arts, Physical Education, Competitive Robotics, Battle of the Books, Athletics, Choir (a service club for our school liturgies), Little Flowers (a service club for girls), and more. Watch your email and the weekly school newsletter or contact [jwinkler@gtacs.org](mailto:jwinkler@gtacs.org) for more information.

**FIELD TRIPS** Field trips are extensions of the classroom. They are scheduled as part of regular class activities for one or more of the following reasons:

1. *To enrich students' knowledge through exposure to resources, culture, and information unavailable in the classroom.*
2. *To provide a spiritual retreat experience.*
3. *To demonstrate Christ like living through service and charity to both our parish and city.*
4. *To develop friendship, cooperation, and community outside the normal academic environment.*

Parents will always be notified in advance with specific information. Students must have a permission slip signed by their parent/guardian in order to participate. Phone permission is no longer accepted. A new form must be signed for each trip. Some field trips may require a nominal fee to cover student participation. The fee should accompany the permission slip prior to student participation. To ensure all children have an opportunity to participate, please discuss any financial assistance concerns with the principal. Field trips are a special time for the children in the class. While the teacher is ultimately in charge of the field trip, drivers/chaperones are responsible for watching and assisting those children who have been assigned to them. All Volunteer Drivers must complete a volunteer driver form available through the school office.

**PRESCHOOL FIELD TRIPS** Preschool classes participate in occasional field trips. You will be notified of these in advance. To ensure a safe and pleasurable experience for all the children, the regular school rules apply on field trips. Parents are required to fill out the approved "Diocesan Field Trip Form" for all trips. Permission will only be accepted on these forms. We cannot accept phone permission. Field trips are a special time for the children in the class. While the teacher is ultimately in charge on a field trip, chaperones are responsible for watching and assisting those children that have been assigned to them. With this in mind, we ask that siblings do not accompany us on field trips. Fees, if any, may be required dependent upon the trip and will be noted on the permission form.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION** Students are required to wear gym or tennis shoes while participating in PE class. These may be left in the student's room when not in use. There should be a separate pair of shoes for PE as shoes worn outside bring in sand and grit, which ruins the gym floor. Please purchase shoes with non-marking soles so that we may keep the gym floor in good condition.

**HOLIDAY AND BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS** Classroom celebrations are limited to a few a year (typically All Saints Day, Christmas, and Valentine's Day). Planning and organizing are the duties of the teachers with the assistance of the room parents. Please see classroom teachers newsletters for plans and procedures for celebrating birthdays. Please consult with the classroom teacher prior to bringing in treats. Gum is not permitted. In order to avoid hurt feelings, birthday invitations should not be distributed at school. Please see the school librarian if you would like to donate a book that would be inscribed to commemorate a birthday, anniversary, or memorial.

**HOMEWORK** Homework is assigned on a regular basis in order to review and reinforce the work done in school. Achievement cannot be attained without study. Parents should help their child to understand that the study and review of assignments are needed for practice, as well as the further development of classroom instruction. The amount of home study per night should be approximately as follows:

*Grades 1-2 not more than 30 minutes*  
*Grades 3-4 30-45 minutes*  
*Grade 5 30-60 minutes*

Daily homework time does not include long-range assignments or projects. In most instances, students will need parental guidance with time management skills. All children vary in their abilities to perform any task. Parents should provide proper conditions in the home, and, as far as possible, a specific routine or time span in which work for school can be done. In Grades 1-5, each student is given a personal planner in order to keep track of daily assignments and projects. Parents are expected to show an interest in their child's homework, and to provide only the kind of help that encourages them to succeed on their own merit.

*(See also communication)*

**LIBRARY** Students in grades Preschool-5 are assigned a weekly library period. Students may check out books from the library, and are reminded of the special care that they should give to the books. A fine may be charged for all books that are not brought back to the library on time. There is also a fine for damaged or lost books. Please see the school librarian if you would like to donate a book that would be inscribed to commemorate a birthday, anniversary, or memorial.

The library exists for the use of all of our students in order to:

- Support the instruction and learning taking place in the classroom;
- Provide for personal intellectual growth;
- Promote interest in good literature; and
- To assist students in learning how to use reference materials.

## **LUNCH AND RECESS**

1. Students should walk to and from cafeteria in an orderly fashion following rules of courtesy for other classes in session-do not disturb other classes in session.
2. Students are expected to show respect to the lunch supervisor and follow instructions the first time they are given.
3. Students are not permitted to "save" seats or say, "You can't sit here."
4. Students should sit down and eat/visit quietly for the allotted lunch time. Students will not be permitted to move from table to table or wander around the lunch-room at will. (Trash and trays will be handled at dismissal.)
5. Once students leave the building for recess, they may not re-enter without permission.
6. Rules of courtesy and common sense apply at all times.

**LUNCH FUNDING** Grades K-5, school-prepared lunch is included in the price of tuition. This fosters healthy habits as local fresh ingredients are included in every meal. Preschool students may pay as they go, or prepay for lunches by check or an electronic payment service.

**MASS** School liturgies are held weekly at Immaculate Conception Church.

Holy Days and special Feast Days are also observed. Periodically, a special "All Systems Mass" is held in the St. Francis gym in which all students K-12 and their welcomed family and friends experience Mass together. K-2 students will attend Mass on Wednesdays at 8:15 and students in grades 3-5 will attend Mass on Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. There will be times during the year that this varies and will be communicated in the weekly newsletter.

Students are given an active role in the liturgy as: greeters, lectors, altar servers, cantors, choir members, and gift bearers, with classrooms "hosting" (performing these duties) on a rotating basis. This is a special time for students to participate in the Mass and all parishioners, especially family members, are invited to attend. **In keeping with the dignity and sacredness of the Mass, please refrain from taking flash photography.**

**ELEMENTARY SNACK TIME** A morning break time will be provided each day for grades K-5. Nutritious snacks are encouraged, such as: fruit, yogurt, granola bars, cheese/crackers, etc. and should be able to be eaten in a 10-15 minute period. Please refrain from packing cookies, chips or other sugary treats for your child's snack. Gum is not permitted anywhere on parish or school grounds. Due to carpeting in our classrooms, we ask that students do not bring snacks that can spill and stain the carpet. Students may bring a water bottle. Only water is permitted in the classrooms.

## **PRESCHOOL SNACK TIME**

The snack area is as much of a learning experience as any other area in the preschool classroom. It is a perfect time to develop social skills, fine motor skills, and healthy eating habits. Preschool students who attend half day need to bring a snack from home. Students who attend full day will need to bring two snacks (one for the morning and one for the afternoon). Filtered water will be provided on-site.

**ASSESSMENTS** In accordance with Diocesan regulations, standardized tests will be administered yearly and results will be shared with parents/guardians. These tests for grades K-5 include the Northwest Evaluation Association, AimsWeb, a Literacy testing tool for comprehension and fluency, and for 5<sup>th</sup> grade only the Assessment of Catechesis and Religious Education (ACRE).

**STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM** Our Student Assistance Program (S.A.P.) is available to help students who are having difficulty succeeding in the everyday classroom/school environment. Working together, a team of teachers, including the school social worker, and principal, designs an intervention plan aimed at promoting success in school. Reasons for referral include, but are not limited to: the need for academic individualization, difficulty interacting with other students or adults, problems with appropriate conduct, medical reasons, or a suspected learning disability. Students may be referred to S.A.P. by either staff or parents, and extreme care is taken to ensure the privacy of the individuals involved.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **SCHOOL SAFETY**

School safety is of utmost priority. In order to ensure safety at all times, the following items are addressed throughout the school year:

1. All parents/visitors are to check in at the Elementary office.
2. All outer doors will be kept locked during school hours with the exception of the door by the school office.
3. Students participate in six (6) fire drills, two (2) tornado drills and three (3) lockdown drills during the school year.
4. A teacher or assistant will remain with children at all times.

5. Staff may ask for identification or driver's license if a different person is picking your child up.

**ANIMALS ON SCHOOL PREMISES** Persons must receive prior permission from the building principal before bringing animals into the school. Animals may not be transported on school buses. Domesticated felines, canines, and ferrets must be inoculated against rabies before the student may bring such animals to the school. The teacher or principal may request verification of inoculation before the animal may be brought to school. Caged domesticated mammals such as hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, rats, mice, rabbits, and chinchilla may be brought to school when permission has been granted. Live mammals obtained from the wild are not to be brought to school except as part of a professional wildlife presentation. Staff and students should be aware that turtles, foxes, skunks, raccoons, and bats may pose serious health risks to humans through transmission of rabies, parasites, and disease. Teachers must assume primary responsibility for the humane treatment of any animal in the classroom. Animals must be appropriately housed, humanely cared for, and properly handled. Animals should not be placed in the care of students without proper direction on their care and handling.

**BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS** As a precautionary measure concerning blood borne pathogens, we may notify parents to bring in a change of clothing in the event of exposure to body fluids (blood, urine, vomit, etc.) in which we are unable to supply an appropriate change of clothing.

#### **ILLNESS POLICY**

**1. FEVER OR ILLNESS** *Please do not send your child to school if he/she is running a temperature or has had a temperature recently. In most cases, if a child is too ill to go outside for recess, they are too ill for school. If a child needs to miss recess for more than two (2) days in a row, a note from a physician or nurse practitioner is required. Children should be fever/vomit free for 24 hours without medication prior to returning to school.*

**2. IMMUNIZATIONS** *All students at Immaculate Conception Elementary School must follow the Michigan Public Health Code (P.A. 368) regarding immunizations. Parents/guardians will be required to show proof of immunization for their children.*

**3. EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL** *Students contracting head lice (For the protection of all students, families, and staff, GTACS holds a "no nit" head lice policy), impetigo, pink eye or ringworm, and other such highly contagious diseases will be excluded from school attendance. If the child is exhibiting symptoms at school, he/she will be removed from the classroom, if possible, and parents will be notified.*

#### **COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

If your child has contracted or been exposed to a communicable disease, the parent is required to notify the school as we are required to report it to the local Health Department as well as families in the child's classroom. Children under a doctor's care may return to school when the doctor believes the child is well enough.

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL FORM** This form must be updated each year for each student in school through the registration process on line via FACTS. This form contains emergency numbers where parents/guardians or responsible parties may be contacted in case of emergency. It also contains vital information regarding allergies or other information invaluable to medical personnel. These forms travel with children during field trips and are authorization for emergency medical treatment.

**FIRE DRILLS/TORNADO ALERT/EVACUATION** Fire and tornado drills are conducted regularly throughout the school year in compliance with the State School Code. As part of our accreditation with the Michigan Association of Non-Public Schools, we are required to conduct six fire drills, two tornado drills, and two lock-down drills per year.

**MEDICATIONS** Any medication (prescription or over-the-counter, including Tylenol and throat lozenges) dispensed at the school will require written permission and direction from the parents or guardian. All prescription medication will be sent to school in the container issued by the pharmacy. All medications will be kept in the office and will be dispensed from there by school personnel. No student may keep any medication in his/her possession, or administer his/her own medication. The only exception to this would be for a student to carry his/her own inhaler if there is a written note from the physician on file in the school office.

**NOTIFICATION OF INJURY OR ILLNESS** Parents or guardians will be notified whenever there is a head injury; chipped, broken, or loose teeth; injuries to the eyes that cannot be rectified by cleansing; and injuries involving swelling or bleeding. Exceptions are spontaneous bloody noses and/or scraped knees, elbows, etc. In serious cases if the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the school will contact the emergency number listed on the Emergency Medical Form. If the parent/guardian or emergency number cannot be reached, treatment will be taken care of at the discretion of the principal. This procedure also applies to all student illnesses.

**PESTICIDES** The Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools utilizes North Shore Services Inc. to facilitate its integrated Pest Management Program (IPM) at all school buildings for the control of unwanted pests and organisms. IPM is a system that utilizes various methods and techniques in a total pest management program with the intent of preventing pests from reaching unacceptable levels or to reduce an existing population to an acceptable level. A few of the techniques include pest exclusion, sanitation and biological controls. However, as with most pest control programs, chemical controls may also be utilized periodically. You have the right to be informed prior to any liquid spray able or dust application of an insecticide, fungicide or herbicide made to school grounds or buildings during this year. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to prevent injury to students; however, you will be notified following any such application that takes place during the school day. If you need prior notification, please contact your building principal to fill out a Prior Notification Request Form that will be submitted to the Director of Operations.

**ASBESTOS** In accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act that was passed by Congress in 1986, we have inspected all Grand Traverse Area Catholic School buildings and have identified all sources of asbestos in various locations. It is our paramount concern to limit the release of any asbestos fibers. Therefore, we have developed a plan for controlling asbestos containing materials. This plan has been submitted to the State of Michigan and a copy for public inspection is on file with the GTACS Director of Buildings and Grounds as well as at the Diocese of Gaylord. Additionally, if you would like a copy of the management plan for personal review, you may make a request in person to purchase one from either GTACS or directly from the Diocese of Gaylord.

## WELLNESS POLICY

**INTRODUCTION** In the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, the U.S. Congress established a requirement that all school districts with a federally funded school meal program form a Wellness Committee to draft a Wellness Policy by the start of the 2006-2007 school year.

**The law requires that these policies must, at a minimum:**

1. *Include goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote student wellness.*
2. *Establish nutrition guidelines for all foods available on campus during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.*
3. *Provide assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture.*
4. *Establish a plan for measuring the impact and implementation of the local wellness policy.*
5. *Involve parents, students, and representatives of the school authority, school board, school administrators, and the public, in development of the local Wellness Policy.*

**There are several basic principles that served as a guide for this Wellness Policy:**

- *Healthy children are the foundation of a healthy society;*
- *Healthy, well-nourished children are better able to learn;*
- *All children deserve nutritious, safe, and deliciously prepared food;*
- *Eating habits developed in childhood will affect health throughout life;*
- *Knowledge of food—how it is grown, who grows it, how it is prepared, its connection to tradition, and its influence in shaping the future of society—is integral to a healthy education;*

## CODE OF CONDUCT - GENERAL

Our schools are committed to providing a safe and orderly learning environment. The school has an obligation to expect an attitude of respect and cooperation from their students. Discipline is fundamental in education and a respectful atmosphere is essential for academic, social, and spiritual growth. In order to establish and promote an atmosphere of Christ-like living in the school community, the following standards of conduct are expected:

- **Respect for self, students, teachers, staff, and guests.**
- **Respect for personal and communal property.**
- **Respect for rules and regulations.**

Self-discipline is an expectation we place on our students. Helping students learn self-discipline is a shared responsibility of the school and parents/guardians. Rules and regulations are devised by the administration to help the school community function smoothly. Students are expected to follow the rules and regulations. By enrolling at GTACS, parents and students have accepted the conditions expressed.

**COUNSELING** In keeping with the Mission Statement of our school, we are privileged to have a counseling department that provides periodic instruction and guidance in life-long skills. Students may request to see the counselor or social worker, and may be seen one time without prior notification to parents or guardians. Subsequent visits (if any) require both parental knowledge and consent.

**GENERAL CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS** The following activities are not permissible anywhere on school or Parish property:

1. *Cursing or obscenity (words, pictures, or gestures).*
2. *Fighting.*
3. *Killing statements, put-downs, and threatening statements.*
4. *Throwing of any object not meant to be thrown, taking hats or belongings of others, etc.*
5. *Disregard of safety rules.*
6. *Disrespect of others (children or adults).*
7. *Aggressive behavior/putting your hands or feet on another student or "play fighting".*
8. *Gum is not permitted anywhere on parish or school grounds.*

**GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES** Normal discipline is the responsibility of the student with the guidance of the classroom teacher. Students may be asked to write apology letters, review more appropriate choices, or attend practice academies where the student practices more

appropriate alternatives to the undesired behavior. If poor conduct or attitude becomes an insistent problem, the teacher is to make contact with the parents/guardians to enlist their cooperation. If this fails, the student is reported to the principal. The principal will assess the situation and then determine the action to be taken. The principal has final discretion on all disciplinary actions. The principal may determine an "in-school" or "at home" suspension of one to three days. Parent conferences (with teacher(s) and principal) are required in all cases of chronic or serious discipline cases. If a child is suspended, parents will be notified directly and be requested to attend a joint conference with their child, the school principal, and possibly a faculty member. Depending on the case and in accord with Diocesan guidelines (4110), the principal will place the student on probation, suspension, or in rare instances, recommend expulsion to the (president) Pastor.

**MINOR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS** Disciplinary action to include, but not limited to detention, parent conference, loss of privileges, and behavioral contract.

1. *General: Disruptions in the class, hall, restrooms, locker room, lunchroom, playground, etc., which are: unsafe, disrupt school routines, or interfere with students' ability to learn.*
2. *Violation of classroom rules: Students shall abide by the classroom rules as determined by the teachers at the beginning of the year.*
3. *Leaving the classroom without permission: Students shall not leave the classroom or their assigned area without permission from the supervising teacher.*
4. *Tardiness: Students shall arrive at school and for each of their assigned classes at the scheduled time.*
5. *Chronic failure to complete assignments.*

**MAJOR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS** A student will be subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion for any of the following reasons:

1. *Disruption of school: A student shall not by use of violence, force, coercion, threat, or false alarm cause disruption or obstruction of normal school operations.*
2. *Damage of school property: A student shall not cause or attempt damage to any school property. This will include books, equipment, furniture, vehicles, and buildings. Students/parents are responsible for restitution of all damages.*
3. *Assault: A student shall not act or behave in such a way as could cause physical injury to other students, any school employee or other persons on school property or during school sponsored activities.*
4. *Dangerous weapons and instruments: A student shall not possess, handle, or conceal any dangerous weapon or instrument while on school property or during school sponsored activities.*  
*NOTE: A weapon is an object that can be used to threaten or injure another person. The school vicinity refers to any of the buildings on the Parish compound, as well as the adjacent grounds (including parking lots, playgrounds, play fields, and/or the perimeter of all parish property).*
5. *Procedures regarding weapons policy (In compliance of The Michigan School Code and The Diocese of Gaylord Weapons Policy 4112):*
  - a) *Any student discovered to have, or suspected of carrying, possessing, concealing, or transferring a weapon on school grounds shall be immediately removed from classes pending further investigation.*
  - b) *A search may be conducted to verify the suspicion. Questions may be asked by the principal, a member of the administration team, a teacher, the pastor, or any other person acting on behalf of one of these individuals.*
  - c) *Depending on the nature of the weapon, the local police department may be notified immediately and the pupil may be detained.*
  - d) *A pupil found to be in violation of the school's policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.*
6. *Alcoholic beverages, drugs, controlled substances: A student shall not possess, use, deliver, conceal, or be under the influence of the aforementioned items while on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activities.*
7. *Repeated violations, gross disrespect, insubordination: A student shall not repeatedly fail to comply with directions of teachers, substitute teachers, teacher aides, principals, or other authorized school personnel or school volunteer while the student is under the authority of school personnel.*
8. *Stealing: Students shall respect the personal ownership rights of others.*
9. *Verbal abuse/profanity: A student shall not verbally abuse and/or use profanity to harass another student, teacher, administrator, staff member, or other school personnel or volunteer. This includes "Killing Statements" and put-downs of other students.*
10. *Smoking/chewing tobacco: Students shall not possess or smoke cigarettes, cigars, or other tobacco products. Tobacco of any kind is prohibited.*
11. *Cheating: Students shall not cheat on tests.*
12. *Physical abuse: Students shall not engage in inappropriate touching or physical abuse of another student, teacher, administrator, staff member, or other school personnel or volunteer.*
13. *Hands-Off Policy: All students are to keep their hands and feet to themselves in order to avoid any misunderstandings. Unfortunately, the most innocent of touches can be interpreted as being aggressive and can lead to fighting.*

**IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION** The pupil is removed from daily classes but not from the building. They are expected to complete daily assigned work in silence by themselves. Parents will be informed by the principal of all suspensions.

**SUSPENSION (OUT OF SCHOOL)** Suspension procedures according to Diocesan Policy 4110 will take effect when a student has been found to seriously impair the development of Christian education, respecting the rights of all involved.

**EXPULSION** The following is taken from Diocesan Policies 4114:

*Expulsion is defined as the permanent dismissal of a student from the school.*

*Like suspension, it is enacted as a last resort after all other means of motivation and correction have failed and/or circumstances of crime, scandal, morality, or disruption necessitate this extreme disciplinary action.*

There are two general situations that may lead to expulsion:

1. *When the moral or physical well-being of the student body or staff is endangered.*
2. *When there is prolonged and open disregard for school authority.*

The school principal shall exercise the right of expulsion only after suspension and having had a conference with the student, parents/guardians, and pastor.

#### **PRESCHOOL & ST. JOSEPH CLUB DISCIPLINE POLICY**

• Our St. Joseph's Club philosophy is based on the belief that each child is special and unique. One of our goals for our children is to foster a strong, positive self-concept.

• We believe in firm, but loving discipline. We continually strive to provide affection, order, security, an interesting and developmentally appropriate program, and an unconditional positive regard for each child.

• Children need to have their boundaries defined to foster a sense of security. Within the limits, they need freedom to make the decisions. We have simple and direct rules. Children will respect themselves, respect others, and respect program materials and supplies. These rules are applied through positive reinforcement and emphasizing the desired behavior.

• In extreme cases such as a tantrum, children are removed from the situation in a firm but caring manner. Children in our program are never physically disciplined. We believe in positive discipline, which helps build self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-control.

• Appropriate discipline would be handled by Teachers, Aides, Program Director and/or Caregivers and would include:

- a. Verbal direction and redirection
- b. Time-outs
- c. Apologizing
- d. Time-out from certain play equipment, as necessary due to miss-use
- e. Speaking with parents
- f. Suspension from the program for a period of time
- g. Out of school suspension and expulsion are permissible, but hopefully, infrequent

**CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES** All electronic devices, including but not limited to music players, cell phones, smart watches and video games, must remain in the student's locker during the school day. Students should not have electronic devices in their possession during school hours; however, their use is acceptable once school dismisses. During the day, these devices must be turned off and not visible. If an emergency arises and the student must make a phone call, they are welcome to use the school or office telephone. Unauthorized uses of electronic devices will result in the following consequences: First offense, device is confiscated by the teacher until 2:35p.m. and the parents are notified. A second offense will result in confiscation and the parent needing to retrieve the device; third offense results in confiscation, parent retrieval, and the student being banned from having a cell phone at school. Special arrangements must be made with the supervising adult outside these hours if amendments are to be made to this policy. **The principal has final discretion on all disciplinary matters.**

**Because it is impossible to foresee all problems that arise, the faculty and administration are empowered to take disciplinary action for any behavior that violates the spirit and philosophy of GTACS**

#### **CODE OF CONDUCT - PLAYGROUND**

During recreation and play, it is expected that students show respect to each other and adults by:

1. *Giving all students the opportunity to participate in games;*
2. *Taking time to apologize and make amends if someone is hurt; and*
3. *Taking the corrections of adults positively and with a cooperative attitude.*

**At our schools, we don't say, "You can't play."**

#### **OUTDOOR RECESS CONDUCT**

1. *Play on designated playground areas within sight of supervisors.*
2. *Respect the rights and feelings of others (No pushing, fighting, teasing, or foul language.)*
3. *Obey the supervisors, the first time a direction is given.*
4. *Rough play of any kind is not permitted, i.e. "chicken", red rover, tackle football, wrestling, martial arts fighting, etc.*
5. *Use the play equipment properly.*
6. *NO food, drinks, candy, or gum are allowed on the playground except on special occasions.*
7. *Snow pants and boots are required attire in order to play in the snow.*
8. *In the winter, students may only climb on the snow hill when properly supervised by a team of teachers/playground helpers. There will be times when the snow hill will be closed due to icy conditions. Sliding on ice is also not permitted.*
9. *Students are not to re-enter the building until the bell rings, unless permitted by a playground supervisor. When the bell rings, playtime is over. Students should line up quickly and quietly.*



## CODE OF CONDUCT – ANTI-HARASSMENT

**DIOCESAN POLICY** It is the policy of the Diocese of Gaylord and GTACS to make every effort to provide an educational environment that is free from all types of harassment. This policy applies to the actions of all faculty, staff, and students at GTACS, as well as others who may be in a working relationship with the school. The Diocese of Gaylord and GTACS School are open to and respect any/all complaints brought under this policy. At GTACS, every individual should be treated with dignity and respect. Faculty, students, staff members, and anyone else who works and/or visits the school are entitled to work/attend school in an environment free from discriminatory practices, including sexual and other forms of harassment. All will be held by standards of conduct that ensure that the school is free from sexual and other forms of harassment. Students are expected to treat all persons with respect and dignity. Thus, inappropriate sexual behavior or comments, which are directed at faculty, students, or other staff members, will not be tolerated. The school will investigate all complaints of harassment in a confidential, professional manner. Appropriate action will be taken when warranted. Individuals involved in any allegations will be given due process. However, it should be noted that individuals who are found in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. A complete copy of the Diocese of Gaylord Sexual Harassment Policy is on file at the school office and is available for review.

## CODE OF CONDUCT – TECHNOLOGY USE (COMPLETED IN ONLINE REGISTRATION)

Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools Computer, Network, and Internet Student and Staff Acceptable Use Policy. All students and staff at GTACS are required to abide by the following code of ethics:

**INTRODUCTION AND CODE OF ETHICS** The Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools (GTACS) strongly promote the use of electronic technologies in the educational process. GTACS provides access to information resources in a variety of formats. Together these allow students and staff to access current and relevant resources provide opportunity to communicate in a technologically rich environment, and become responsible, self-directed life long learners. The use of technology within the GTACS is a privilege extended to students, faculty, and community members to enhance learning and exchange information. When using GTACS technology, the user must realize that he/she represents the Catholic community, and therefore must uphold Christian, ethical, and legal requirements. All users must read understand, sign, and abide by the Acceptable Use Policy. Access privileges may be revoked; school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action for violations that may constitute a criminal offense.

**RIGHTS** All GTACS students and staff have the right to make educational use of the following censored resources; internet access, limited hard drive space on our servers, and access to GTACS approved software on the workstations, in a manner consistent with Catholic school philosophy.

**RESPONSIBILITIES** It is important that users of electronic technologies within the GTACS represent themselves with ethical, Christian responsibility. As such, the following points are a partial list of unacceptable behavior:

- *Users may not damage or mistreat equipment or facilities under any circumstance.*
- *Users must not leave their work station unattended for any reason and must properly logout at the end of their session*
- *Users must make sure that all food or drink are kept away from computer equipment*
- *Users may not intentionally waste computer resources*
- *Users may not transmit any material in violation of any United States or State of Michigan Regulations*
- *Users may not employ the network for personal financial gain or commercial purposes*
- *Users may not violate regulations prescribed by the network administrator*
- *Users may not engage in practices that threaten the integrity of the network (e.g., knowingly download files containing viruses).*
- *Users may not engage in personal business that is unrelated to the research being done or the performance of the job*
- *Users may not write, use, send, download, or display obscene, threatening, harassing, or otherwise offensive messages or pictures, including pornography, violence, or hate sites.*
- *Users may not use the equipment for any illegal activities, including the violation of copyright laws and software piracy.*
- *Users may not load or copy any software or other programs to or from GTACS equipment unless permission is explicitly granted by an authorized party (e.g., the network administrator).*
- *Users may not use anyone else's password, nor may they share their password with others.*
- *Users may not trespass into anyone else's folders, documents, or files.*
- *Users may not disclose anyone else's personal information (e.g., address, phone number, or confidential information), including and especially that belonging to students, community members and families, or fellow employees*
- *Users may not use the network, or the internet for unauthorized game playing, unauthorized "chat" or chain letters*
- *Users may not use the network for acts of vandalism against persons or resources including the uploading of viruses.*
- *Users may not use another person's computer file, access accounts, and or files without proper authorization*

**PRIVILEGES** The use of the Internet and related technologies is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use may result in cancellation of those privileges.

**ADMINISTRATION PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS COPYRIGHT** It is the policy of the Diocese of Gaylord and the GTACS that all

employees, volunteers, and students will abide by federal copyright laws. Employees, volunteers, and students may copy, print, or non-print material allowed by:

1. *Copyright laws*
2. *Fair use guidelines*
3. *Specific license or contractual agreements*
4. *Other types of permission*

**POLICY ENFORCEMENT GUIDELINES** Depending on the nature and severity of the policy violation, the technology director, or school administrator may take one or more of the following actions:

1. *Verbal or written warning*
2. *Temporary access denial*
3. *Permanent access denial*
4. *Suspension*
5. *Expulsion*
6. *Legal action*

Demonstrated intent to violate policy will be considered the same as actual policy violation. Demonstrated intent means evidence of actions, which if successful or carried out as intended, would result in a policy violation.

Evidence of attempted or actual system security, integrity, or performance-related incidents will be cause for immediate access denial.

If warranted, the school administrator will refer the case to Local, State, or Federal authorities for further disposition.

**LIMITATION OF LIABILITY** The Diocese of Gaylord and the GTACS makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the school/district system will be error-free or without defect. The school/district will not be responsible for any damage suffered, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The school/district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The school/district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system. In addition, it is understood that despite reasonable efforts at supervision, access control, and filtering, students may inadvertently or otherwise access inappropriate materials.

## **Preschool & St. Joseph Club (Amendments)**

### **CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL:**

A student application must be submitted online via FACTS prior to receiving an invitation to enroll online. Preschool children must have a completed Health Appraisal including up-to-date immunization record, before the child can start school. The health form must be signed by a physician and is good for two years. Student emergency information records will be generated from the online SIS database, FACTS

SJC students are required to complete an application, annual registration fee, and submit the Child Information Record in August, or prior to enrollment in the program.

**SJC SIGN-UP and BILLING** In order to provide a quality experience and maintain appropriate staffing levels, we require online sign-up at the platform called Popsicle. You will be able to set up a Popsicle account after your registration form and fee is received. You will be billed weekly for charges related to St. Joseph Club usage. Payment is due on a weekly basis. Account must be in good standing to allow continued use of this service. The school has the right to modify schedules based on behavioral needs of the student.

### **PRESCHOOL & SJC TUITION & FEE POLICY (Refer to tuition & fee structure based on selected programs – pg. 23)**

When a child enrolls in the Preschool, a \$30, non-refundable fee is made payable to GTACS. This amount is not deducted from your total tuition due. Tuition will be billed to you and may be paid in full or in nine (9) monthly installments via check or online credit card payment. Your first tuition payment is due August 1<sup>st</sup> to hold your child's place in the preschool and at the 1<sup>st</sup> of each consecutive 8 months. If your child misses preschool due to illness or vacation, full tuition is still billed. This also includes days off for any teacher in-service, scheduled school holidays and snow days. Make checks payable to GTACS and mail or drop them off in the Elementary office, 314 Vine Street, Traverse City, 49684. SJC fees are billed weekly based on use of the program and can be paid via check or online with a credit card.

### **WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

A family that wishes to withdraw shall notify the Preschool in writing two (2) weeks in advance of withdrawal. We need this time in order to fill the vacancy and ensure our Preschool no financial burden due to loss of tuition. There will be no refund of tuition for non-attendance of a child. If a family gives two weeks prior notice of a withdrawal, they will receive a refund for any tuition paid beyond the date of withdrawal.

Immaculate Conception Preschool/SJC holds the right to modify schedules or dismiss a child for the following reasons: Consistent non-payment of tuition/fees, the suitability of the program for a particular child and specific behaviors that are deemed unacceptable as outlined in the discipline policy.

### **SCHEDULE OF OPERATION – Monday through Friday (Unless otherwise noted on the school or SJC calendar – pg. 24 & 25)**

**Car line begins at 7:20** - Students at Immaculate Conception should not arrive earlier than 7:20 a.m. as there is no supervision until that time  
**School day begins at 7:50 a.m.**  
**DISMISSAL Half Day. . . . . 11:00 a.m.**  
**DISMISSAL Full Day. . . . . 2:35 p.m.**

**Parent Notification Plan & Health Policy:**

- Your child’s health is a matter of importance. Parents will be notified accordingly:
  1. Any changes in their children’s health or too ill to remain in the group – Immediate phone call to parent
  2. Accidents/Injuries/Incidents – MINOR – First aid provided by teacher or office staff – Parent notified via email or at pick up time
  3. Accidents/Injuries/Incidents – MAJOR – Immediate phone call to parent
- Parents will be notified using contact information provided by parents in online SIS – FACTS
- If unable to reach parents, the emergency contact person will be called immediately for major, accidents/injuries/incidents, or a child needing to be picked up due to illness.
- If your child has contracted or been exposed to a communicable disease, the parent is required to notify the school of that disease and its symptoms so that we may inform parents. Children under a doctor’s care may return to school when the doctor believes the child is well enough.
- Any child, staff or volunteer that exhibits any of the following symptoms are asked to stay at home:
  1. Fever (any temperature of 100 degrees or less if the child is not feeling well. The child, staff or volunteer should be ‘fever free’ for 24 hours before returning.
  2. Severe sore throat
  3. Runny nose that is thick, cloudy, green or yellow in discharge
  4. Earache – until the cause is determined
  5. Severe chest cough
  6. If they have vomited in the last 12 hours
  7. Any draining sore – until drainage stops or it can be properly treated/covered

**PRESCHOOL FIELD TRIPS** Preschool classes participate in occasional field trips. You will be notified of these in advance. To ensure a safe and pleasurable experience for all the children, the regular school rules apply on field trips. Parents are required to fill out the approved “Diocesan Field Trip Form” for all trips. Permission will only be accepted on these forms. We cannot accept phone permission. Field trips are a special time for the children in the class, therefore, we ask that siblings do not accompany us on field trips. Fees, if any, may be required dependent upon the trip and will be noted on the permission form.

**CONFERENCES**

Preschool conferences are held prior to the start of each year and in January. All parents are required to attend these conferences.

Individual conferences are encouraged and may be called by either parent or teacher whenever necessary. If a conference is desired, parents must call the office or schedule an appointment with their child’s teacher.

**REPORT CARDS**

Preschool evaluation will be shared at the January conferences and sent home at the conclusion of the school year.

**PRESCHOOL & ST. JOSEPH CLUB DISCIPLINE POLICY**

- Our St. Joseph’s Club philosophy is based on the belief that each child is special and unique. One of our goals for our children is to foster a strong, positive self-concept.
- We believe in firm, but loving discipline. We continually strive to provide affection, order, security, an interesting and developmentally appropriate program, and an unconditional positive regard for each child.
- Children need to have their boundaries defined to foster a sense of security. Within the limits, they need freedom to make the decisions. We have simple and direct rules. Children will respect themselves, respect others, and respect program materials and supplies. These rules are applied through positive reinforcement and emphasizing the desired behavior.
- In extreme cases such as a tantrum, children are removed from the situation in a developmentally appropriate and caring manner. Children in our program are never physically disciplined, restrained, confined, shamed, deprived or excluded. We believe in positive discipline, which helps build self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-control.
- Appropriate discipline would be handled by Teachers, Aides, Program Director and/or Caregivers and could include:
  - a. Verbal direction and redirection
  - b. Time-outs
  - c. Apologizing
  - d. Time-out from certain play equipment, as necessary, due to miss-use
  - e. Speaking with parents
  - f. Suspension from the program for a period of time
  - g. Out of school suspension and expulsion are permissible, but hopefully, infrequent

## **FOOD SERVICE POLICY**

Immaculate Conception Preschool offers delicious, whole food lunches, served at 11:00 a.m. M-F

- Lunches are prepared by chefs in a commercial-level kitchen at Immaculate Conception.
- Local, fresh ingredients are an integral part of every meal.
- Menus are posted monthly on the Preschool bulletin board, emailed as part of our GTACS Newsletter and can be found on the GTACS website
- We follow Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines of providing a well-balanced meal.
- Menu options include a protein, baked or roasted vegetables, fresh fruit, whole grains and savory soups.
- Beverages and food shall be age appropriate, and if necessary modified for a child's individual nutritional requirements/dietary needs
- Our dining services team responsibly stewards the environment, with an emphasis on recycling, reduction of waste and composting.
- The GTACS "Life Balance Initiative," which includes its whole foods lunch program, has become a model for other schools.
- Parents may choose to purchase lunch from school, send lunch from home labeled with student name and date, or choose to do a combination of both – occasional lunch from home or purchase from school.
- The food policy and parent options are included in your online enrollment packet

## **SNACK TIME**

The snack area is as much of a learning experience as any other area in the preschool classroom. It is a perfect time to develop social skills, fine motor skills, and healthy eating habits. Preschool students who attend half day need to bring a snack from home. Students who attend full day will need to bring two snacks (one for the morning and one for the afternoon). Snacks need to be labeled each day with student name and date. Filtered water will be provided on-site. Preschool students will be provided a snack if one is not supplied from home. SJC students are provided snack by Immaculate Conception and contain at least 2 components of the following food groups: dairy, fruit/veggie, whole grain, or protein.

## **TYPICAL DAILY ROUTINE**

Each class attends morning specials at least one day/week: Music, PE & Library. These offerings are built in around their typical routine of morning guided activities, recess, snack, 11:00 lunch, 11:30-12:45 rest time, afternoon choice time. Schedules are tailored for age appropriateness and available for parents during back to school conferences.

## **LICENSING NOTEBOOK AVAILABILITY (Preschool & St. Joseph Club)**

Child care centers must maintain a licensing notebook which includes all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans (CAP).

- The licensing notebook is available to parents during regular business hours
- Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the past 3 years are available on the child care licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).
- The licensing notebook contains all the licensing inspection and special investigation reports and related corrective action plans and retains them in the notebook for 5 years.