

# **St. Stephen Martyr School**

*“Faith and Education Since 1926”*

## **Family Handbook 2018-2019**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME TO ST. STEPHEN SCHOOL.....	3
ST. STEPHEN SCHOOL FAMILY COMMITMENT FORM .....	4
ST. STEPHEN MARTYR SCHOOL FACULTY AND STAFF.....	5
ST. STEPHEN MARTYR SCHOOL ADVISORY BOARD.....	6
ST. STEPHEN MARTYR SCHOOL PARENT GUILD.....	6
ST. STEPHEN MARTYR SCHOOL HISTORY.....	7
SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY.....	7
MISSION STATEMENT.....	7
SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS.....	7
ADMISSION.....	8
Non-Discrimination Policy, Guidelines for Admission, Admissions Requirements, Admissions Procedures, Inclusion Procedures, Registration/Re-Registration, Consultative School Boards and Parent Organizations	
CONSULTATIVE SCHOOL BOARDS AND PARENT ORGANIZATIONS.....	10
ATTENDANCE.....	10
Daily Attendance, Absence, Tardiness, Truancy, Appointment/Release of Student During School Hours	
SCHEDULES.....	11
Daily Schedule, General Assembly	
ACADEMIC PROGRAM.....	11
Curriculum, Homework, Technology, Field Trips, Standardized Testing, Grading System, Academic Honor Roll, Graduation Cords, Positive Recognition, Graduation, Probation, Retention, Tutoring, Counseling Policy	
UNIFORM/GROOMING.....	15
Uniforms, Additional Uniform Guidelines, P.E. Uniform, Appearance and Attire, Free Dress	
HEALTH AND SAFETY.....	18
Required Immunization, Basic Health Rules, Medication, Student Insurance, Morning Daycare, Morning Drop-Off, Afternoon Pick-Up, Emergency/Disaster Cards, Emergency Evacuation Procedures, Animals on Campus, Leaving School Grounds, Parental Supervision	
BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE.....	21
Verbal/Written Confidence Policy, Archdiocese of Los Angeles “ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY”, Safe Environment for Children and Youth, Student Expectations, Referrals, Detention, Disciplinary Probation, Suspension, Expulsion, Student Threats, Harassment/Bullying, Parent(s)/Student(s) Complaint Review Process, Code of Christian Conduct for Students and Parents, Actions/Attitudes of Parents/Guardians, School Searches	
FAMILY OBLIGATIONS.....	29
Tuition and Fees, In-Parish Rate, Out-of-Parish Rate, Non-Catholic Rate, Instructional Fees, Family Service Program, Mandatory Participation-Parent Guild Meetings, Fundraisers, Scrip, Parish Festival Hours	
COMMUNICATION.....	31
Family Envelopes, Report Cards and Progress Reports, Conferences, Communication Procedures	

SCHOOL PROGRAMS.....32  
Athletic Program, Academic Decathlon, Fine Arts Academy Workshop, Choir, Student Council, Dance, Drug Education/AIDS Education, Extended Care

GENERAL INFORMATION..... 34  
Campus Visitors and Volunteers, Access to Student Records, Transfer of Records, Separated or Divorced Families, Child Abuse, Birthdays, Inappropriate Items, Cell Phones, Lost and Found, Breakfast/Lunch, Work Permits, Questions

PRIVACY AND ACCESS TO RECORDS.....36

FORMS..... 39  
Parent Authorization for Use of Child’s Image Form, Computer Network User Agreement, Medical Authorization, Field Trip Permission Slip, Permission to walk, BOUNDARY GUIDELINES FOR JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH WORKING OR VOLUNTEERING WITH CHILDREN OR YOUTH

## **WELCOME TO ST. STEPHEN MARTYR SCHOOL**

The administration, faculty, and staff of St. Stephen School welcome you and your family to our school community. The teachers and staff are dedicated and committed to the philosophy, mission, and school wide learning expectations. We ask you and your children to join us in this commitment. Together we can provide a quality Catholic education for the children of St. Stephen School.

The FAMILY HANDBOOK contains the policies and procedures for St. Stephen School in accordance with directives from the Department of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The principal reserves the right to amend or add to the handbook at any time. Notices of new or amended policies are published in the principal's newsletters or family bulletins.

We ask you to read the Family Handbook and sign the **Agreement Form** as an indication of your understanding of your responsibilities in the school community. Failure to sign the form does not relieve the family from following the regulations noted herein. Registering and enrolling your child at St. Stephen Martyr School is the agreement to follow the regulations stated by the school and its administration.

**Students who do not turn-in required forms may not be able to attend classes.** EMERGENCY cards are state mandated.

## **ST. STEPHEN MARTYR SCHOOL HISTORY**

St. Stephen Martyr School opened its doors in 1928 to provide the families of Monterey Park with an opportunity for their children to receive a Catholic school education. Under the leadership of Father Michael Conneally, four classrooms were opened and staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. The school celebrated its first graduating class in 1928.

The needs of the Catholic community in Monterey Park continued to grow. As a result, a new church and convent were built. New classrooms were added to the school until it became a fully enrolled 16-room school serving students in grades 1 through 8. When the 16-room configuration was completed in 1964, the school served 743 pupils. By the early 80s enrollment was approximately 600 students.

The community of Sisters of the Holy Names served St. Stephen School from 1926 until 1993 when a lay principal was appointed. The school successfully added a kindergarten classroom in 2000. A science lab and new computer lab were added in 2003, and a library was opened in 2005. On December, 2008, the school's preschool was established to accommodate the needs of the community. St. Stephen School continues to work with families to provide an education that reflects Catholic values, traditions, and academic excellence.

## **SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

At St. Stephen Martyr School, we believe that parents are the primary educators of their children. At St. Stephen School, parents, teachers, students, and staff form a learning and faith community committed to helping each student:

develop academic and communication skills.

grow in understanding of Catholic faith.

demonstrate Christ-like qualities of compassion, tolerance, and respect.

become life-long learners who demonstrate personal responsibility and commitment to the larger community.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

At St. Stephen Martyr School, our mission is to provide a quality Catholic education and faith formation through instruction, worship, and service.

## **ADMISSION**

### **Nondiscrimination Policy**

The school, mindful of its mission to be a witness to the love of Christ for all, admits students regardless of race, color, or national and/or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, sex, or national and/or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies and practices, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs, although certain athletic leagues and other programs may limit participation.

While the school does not discriminate against students with special needs, a full range of services may not always be available to them. Decisions concerning the admission and continued enrollment of a student in the school are based upon the student's emotional, academic and physical abilities and the resources available to the school in meeting the student's needs.

### **Guidelines for Admission**

- Under Archdiocesan guidelines for financial considerations, the optimum number of students per classroom is 35
- The recommended age for kindergarten students is five 5 years of age on or before September 1, but required by December 1
- The recommended age for first grade students is six 6 years of age on or before September 1, but required by December 1, unless waived by the principal
- All students must comply with current California immunization and health requirements prior to enrollment  
The parish school will strive to have Catholic education accessible to as many students as possible, both with
- its educational programs and financial considerations; however, it may have insufficient resources to meet the educational and financial needs of all students
- The pastor and principal will review a students' continued eligibility for enrollment in the parish school Each school shall establish procedures for admission and enrollment

### **Admissions Requirements**

All students who apply for St. Stephen School are given consideration, however:

Incoming kindergarteners should be 5 years of age by December 1. Entering first graders should be 6 years of age by December 1.

All children will be tested before being admitted.

All required papers, documents, and immunizations must be presented before applications will be considered.

### **Admissions Procedures**

1. Interested families request an Application Packet from the school office. Packets are available all year.
2. All forms and documents must be submitted with the completed application. Copies of birth, baptism, Eucharist certificates, and the current report card are required.
3. A non-refundable one time testing fee per family must be paid (\$25 for each child).
4. Appointments are set up for testing.
5. Notification letters are mailed when the testing is completed.
6. The newly accepted family must pay the non-refundable registration fee in order to secure the classroom placement.

### **Inclusion Procedures**

Through the mission of the Archdiocese, our schools strive to serve children with varied learning needs. All educators in Archdiocesan schools follow "Directions for the Inclusion Process in Catholic Schools: Support Team Education Plan Process (STEP) and Minor Adjustment Plan Process (MAP)". Parents or guardians who feel that their student may need a minor adjustment to enable him/her to participate in the general education curriculum of the school should consult the student's teacher and principal to determine how best

to meet the students needs. Parents or guardians may request the “Disability Discrimination Complaint Review Process” from the principal to address unresolved issues.

### **St. Stephen Preschool Policy/Admission Requirements**

St. Stephen Preschool is open to all children, regardless of race, sex, national origin, or religion. Enrollment is open to all children who turn 3 by September. All children must have current immunizations in accordance with the California Department of Health Services. All children must be toilet trained and able to attend to their own toileting needs (excluding accidents or illness). Our commitment to each child as an individual, combined with a dedicated professional staff, provides a warm and stimulating environment where children feel safe and free to explore the world around them. Our program helps children gain confidence as they become learners, adapt to group experiences, and learn to respect the feeling of others. At St. Stephen Preschool we are honored to share in your child’s future.

### **CONSULTATIVE SCHOOL BOARDS AND PARENT ORGANIZATIONS**

It is expected that each Catholic elementary school will establish a Parent Teacher Organization and a Consultative School Board. Both groups exist to support the school and are critical to the school’s viability, but they have very different functions.

#### **Parent Organizations**

The main functions of the Parent Teacher Organization are to raise funds for the school’s current operational expenses, to promote parental support for the school program, and to increase mutual understanding between school and parents. The membership of the parent teacher organization shall include the pastor, the principal, the parents or legal guardians, and the faculty of the school.

Financial operation of a parent teacher organization shall be governed by the regulations for financial operations as found in the Parent Teacher Organization Bylaws (see Administrative Handbook).

#### **Consultative School Boards**

The general responsibilities of the Consultative School Board are in the following areas: strategic planning; policy development; resource development; institutional advancement; advice and counsel with regard to financial planning, management and reporting; marketing of the school and evaluation of the board’s goals and activities.

The membership of the Consultative School Board should include the pastor, principal, parents (no more than one-third of the total membership), alumni parents, parishioners, members of the civic and local business community, and area educators. Under Canon Law and Archdiocesan guidelines (see Administrative Handbook for Bylaws), the members advise the administrative team (pastor and principal) and cannot make decisions binding for the parish education program without the approval of the administrative team (A Primer on Educational Governance in the Catholic Church, the CACE/NABE Governance Task Force, NCEA, 1998).

The regional supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools is available to assist and guide schools in the implementation of a Consultative School Board.

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **Daily Attendance**

Regular attendance is mandatory. All students should be on the school grounds by 7:55 a.m. and be prepared to enter the classroom at 8:00 a.m. attendance after 8:00am is considered tardy. Three tardies in two weeks will result in Detention for grades K-8, three unexcused tardies in a quarter will result in the student losing eligibility to receive awards.

#### **Absence**

If a student will be absent from school, parents must call the school office by 9:00 a.m. A note explaining the reason for absence must be sent to the homeroom teacher on the day the student returns to school even if verbal notice has been given. The dates and the reason for the absence must be documented. After an extended illness or one involving a contagious disease, the student must have a doctor’s written permission before returning to school. A student who is in attendance for at least half of his/her morning classes is considered to be in attendance for the morning; likewise, a student who is in attendance for at least half of his/her afternoon classes is considered to be in attendance for the afternoon. Students may not participate in after-school activities or extended fieldtrips on days that they are absent.

## **Tardiness**

Students are required by state law to be in full attendance in school. It is extremely necessary that every effort be made so that students come to school on time. A student's academic progress is affected by attendance. A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in the classroom at 8:00 a.m. **For every 3rd tardy in two weeks(after 8:00 a.m.), students will receive a detention referral along with a notification to parents. A collaborative plan of action will be in place after a discussion between teacher and parent.**

## **Truancy**

A student who is absent from school more than 3 days in one school year without verification or is tardy in excess of 30 minutes on each of 4 days or more in one school year is truant and can be reported to the attendance office of the local public school district. Habitual truants are subject to expulsion.

## **Appointments/Release of Students During School Hours**

No student will be allowed to leave the school during the day without being signed out by a parent/guardian listed on the Emergency Card. Advance notice in writing should be sent to the office if a student must leave early. If the student returns that same day, the students must be signed in by a parent/guardian. Parents should make every effort to schedule appointments after school hours.

## **SCHEDULES**

### **Daily Schedule**

**7:30 a.m.** Gates open for arrival of children

**7:55 a.m.** Teachers pick up student in line

**8:00 a.m.** Classes begin (tardy after this time) Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must report to office Students arriving after 8:10 a.m. **must be** signed in by parent **9:40 –**

**10:00** Recess grades K - 4

**10:00 – 10:20 a.m.** Recess grades 5 - 8

**12:00pm -12:40pm** Lunch

**3:00 p.m.** Dismissal

**12:00pm** - Friday Dismissals

## **General Assembly**

Morning prayer, salutes, and announcements are held on Tuesdays at 8:15 a.m. All students are expected to be on time and present at this assembly. When salutes begin, students must be in line.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

### **Curriculum**

The school-wide learning expectations help structure St. Stephen School's academic program. St. Stephen School follows the California State Standards, Common Core, as well as the curriculum adopted by the Department of Catholic Schools. This curriculum prescribed for all elementary schools beginning in kindergarten and continuing through eighth grade includes Religion, Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Foreign language ( k-2) and Physical Education.

### **Homework**

The purpose of homework is to reinforce material already taught and to foster habits of independent study. Students are required to complete assigned homework. Each teacher determines the homework procedures for his/her classroom.

Parents are responsible for supervising homework and signing any tests, assignments, projects or book reports as required by teachers. Parents are responsible to access student progress through Gradelink.

### **Technology**

In order for a student to access the computer lab, parents and students must sign a *Computer Network User Agreement and Parent Permission Form*. The school cannot provide constant monitoring of all incoming email, Internet traffic, and data exchanges that go through the school's system, therefore parents must promote responsible, safe, and appropriate use of the school's computer systems.

Violation of computer use guidelines may result in loss of computer lab privileges, suspension, expulsion, or the involvement of law enforcement agencies depending on the gravity of the offense, at the principal's discretion.

## **Field Trips**

Educational field trips support and enhance the curriculum. No student will be allowed to go on a field trip without a signed permission slip worded exactly like the one in the family handbook (see forms section) and applicable fees. Permission given by phone or in person is not acceptable.

Costs of field trips are calculated based on the classroom count. Students are not allowed to opt out of the field trips and no refunds are made for field trips.

Field trips are privileges and a student may be kept in school if they do not meet academic and/or behavioral requirements. Teachers may require a parent to accompany a child if there are concerns about the child's health or behavior.

## **Field Trip Chaperones**

If you are a chaperone on a school field trip:

Chaperones must be at least 18 years of age or older.

Chaperones must provide valid identification to the office.

Please arrive promptly at appointed time and check in at the office.

Wear comfortable and appropriate clothing for the particular destination.

Remember that you are an authority figure, and responsible for a group of students.

Do not use this time to socialize with other parents on the trip.

Do inform the teacher of problems- either involving students or others.

Be proactive when chaperoning.

No siblings or visitors are allowed on the trip; the students need your undivided attention.

Discipline will be handled by the homeroom teacher.

Field trip volunteers are required to be finger printed and must attend VIRTUS training.

## **Standardized Testing**

The Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) is an achievement test administered to students in grades 2-8 in October of each year. These tests are given to assess academic standing, determine the growth of each individual student, and plan for academic improvement. The results of these tests are given to the parents in November.

The Cognitive Abilities Test (CoGat) is administered to students in grades 3, 5, and 7 in October of each year (with the ITBS).

The Assessment of Catholic Religious Education (ACRE) is a national religion test administered to students in grades 5 and 8 in the spring of each year. The purpose of these tests is to evaluate students' values, attitudes, and knowledge of Catholic doctrine.

## **Grading System**

### **Grades 2-8**

**A** 93-

100% **B+**

90-92%

**B** 87-89 %

**B-** 85-86%

**C+** 80-84%

**C** 75-79%

**C-** 70-74%

**D** 65-69%

**F** 64% and below

### **Grade 1 Skills**

O = Outstanding S = Satisfactory + = Area of Strength

G = Good NI = Needs Improvement = Area for Improvement

### **Kindergarten**

M = Demonstrates expected development T = Needs more time to develop



X = Demonstrates emerging skill No = Not expected at this time

### **Academic Honor Roll**

Students in grades 7 and 8 are eligible for the Academic Honor Roll. To be eligible for Honor Roll each quarter, students must have a minimum grade point average (G.P.A.) of 3.0 with no grade lower than a C in the seven major academic subjects (Religion, Math, Science, Reading, Social Studies, English and Vocabulary/Spelling). A student must also have at least a B in conduct/effort. Two detentions within a quarter, any disciplinary suspension, or habitual disregard of uniform regulations are all reasons for disqualification. G.P.A. is computed as follows:

- A 4.0
- B 3.0
- C 2.0

### **Graduation**

Students who have successfully completed the prescribed course of study for their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year and have followed the school-wide learning expectations are permitted to graduate. Students who receive a D or F in any core subject will be placed on academic probation and a meeting will be held with their parents, teachers, and principal. Once a second F is received in any subject, a meeting will be held with the aforementioned parties to discuss further action.

### **Probation**

Students who receive two Ds or one F in conduct, work habits, or in any academic subject on their report cards will be placed on probation for one quarter. Students on probation may not participate in any extra-curricular activities such as fieldtrips, sports, student council, etc.

### **One on One Assistance Program:**

Should the school deem necessary for the progress of a student for academic and social needs, parents/guardians could be required to provide resources to fund the hiring of an aide for one-one-assistance for their child/children. A student's admission at the school may be affected should the parent be unable to provide the resources for such support. The school will take all necessary steps prior to availing of this option.

### **Tutoring**

If a student requires private tutoring or parents wish to have a student tutored in school subjects, the parents are responsible for engaging the tutor and paying all tutoring costs. The school may assist the parents in identifying tutoring resources.

Teachers may not be paid for tutoring students assigned to their classes. With prior permission from the principal, teachers may tutor other students who attend the school and be paid for such tutoring by the parents. A school may arrange with independent contractors or entities, who are not teachers or staff at the school to provide tutoring on a fee basis. Independent entities must have appropriate licenses, agreements for use of the premises and insurance.

All tutors and entities must comply with the procedures and policies of the extended school day program and the Archdiocesan Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Minors at Parish or Parish School Activities or

### **Events. Counseling Policy**

The mission and purpose of the school is education. Schools do not assume the responsibilities proper to the family and to society. Schools may not assume the responsibility for psychological counseling or therapy because they are not qualified or licensed to provide such counseling or therapy.

Schools may engage in the following activities in addition to providing classroom instruction:

Provide advice regarding academic subjects and student progress in school;

Give limited guidance to students who present with non-academic personal issues or situations;

Provide referrals to marriage and family counselors, child psychologists, licensed academic psychologists, psychiatrists and similar professional for diagnosis and treatment. If the school provides referrals to parents, the list must include at least three names of qualified persons or entities;

Provide career counseling through career information centers and plan periodic career days or career sessions during which students meet representatives of different professions;

Retain, where necessary, appropriate professionals to provide educational testing that is needed for assessment of a student's academic ability, learning patterns, achievement motivation, and personality factors directly related to academic learning problems, or psychological counseling services for the school. Prior to entering into such a contractual relationship, the principal will ensure that the person is credentialed, licensed or otherwise properly qualified. The school may refer a student for specific or additional testing, as appropriate, generally at the parent or guardian's expense.

Provide high school and college counseling, including providing information to parents and students about high school and college application procedures, entrance exam tests, scholarships and financial aid. Schools may also provide high schools college and university catalogs and information sessions.

In cases of actual or suspected child abuse or neglect or abuse of vulnerable adults, the Archdiocesan Victims' Assistance Ministry is available as a resource. The Victims' Assistance Ministry provides outreach and guidance to those suffering from abuse; sponsors a faith-based trauma recovery program; and assists in informing parish, school, archdiocesan and governmental authorities of the allegations of abuse or neglect. Referral to the Victim's Assistance Ministry is not a substitute for mandated reporting of suspected abuse. Such a report must be made in accordance with Archdiocesan policy.

## **UNIFORM/GROOMING**

### **Uniforms**

You have chosen to place your child in a Catholic School environment. Wearing the uniform is part of the required responsibility that every student and parent should be aware of. We ask parents and students to follow through and to make sure that the student wears the uniform appropriately at all times. Details regarding uniform rules/infractions are stipulated as follows:

#### **Boys Preschool-5 Required Dress Uniform (for Mass):**

Khaki or Gray pants  
Hunter Green or White polo with school logo or button-down shirt  
Green cardigan sweater  
White/Navy Blue, Black socks (no low-cut, athletic socks)

#### **Boys Optional:**

Green uniform jacket  
Green pullover sweater  
Green vest  
Khaki or Gray walking shorts (**Non Mass**)

#### **Boys 6-8 Required Dress Uniform (for Mass):**

Khaki or Gray pants  
Green or white with school logo polo or button-down shirt  
White or Navy Blue, Black socks (no low-cut, no athletic socks)  
Khaki or Gray walking shorts (**Non Mass**)

#### **Boys Shoes:**

##### **Boys (Preschool-8)**

ALL Black-laced shoes  
For PE: Any colored shoes with effective support to play sports.

#### **Girls TK-5 Required Dress Uniform (for Mass):**

Green plaid jumper or skort  
White polo or blouse  
Green cardigan sweater  
White, Navy Blue, Black or Hunter Green crew socks (no low-cut, athletic socks)

#### **Girls Optional:**

Green uniform jacket  
Green pullover sweater  
Green vest  
Khaki or Gray walking shorts  
Khaki or Gray pants  
White turtleneck (worn under white blouse in cold weather)

Green, Navy Blue or white knee socks  
White tights

### **Girls Shoes:**

#### **Girls (Preschool-8)**

White/ Black Saddle Back Shoes, All black shoes or Black Mary Jane's  
P.E. (Preschool-8) Any color as long as there is effective support to play sports

#### **Girls 6-8 Required Dress Uniform (for Mass):**

Grey Skirt or Skort  
Green, White polo with school logo or blouse  
Cardigan sweater  
White, Navy Blue, Black, Grey or Hunter Green crew socks (no low-cut, athletic socks **without** designs or visible logo shown)

#### **Additional uniform guidelines**

Shirts must be tucked in at all times.

For girls, hems of uniform skirts/skorts and shorts may not be higher than 3 inches above the knee.

Boys walking shorts by definition have the hem slightly above the knee.

Undershirts must be plain white

The dress uniform is required on mass days. P.E. clothing may not be worn to mass.

Boys in grades K - 8 must wear a solid black, gray or brown belt with plain, traditional buckle on regular uniform days.

Girls in grades K – 8 must wear a plain black, gray or brown belt with plain, traditional buckle when wearing pants or walking shorts.

All clothing should fit appropriately.

Parents are responsible for labeling all uniform items with the child's name and grade. The school is not responsible for lost items.

Uniform sweaters/sweatshirts may be worn in the classroom; uniform jackets may be worn inside and outside of classroom.

### **P.E. Uniform**

Students in grades Preschool-8 may come to school dressed in their P.E. uniforms on Wednesday's unless it is a mass day. Repeated failure to be in full P.E. uniform will result in a reduction of the student's physical education grade.

#### **Required Uniform**

Gray tee shirt **with St. Stephen School logo**

Green sweat shorts **with St. Stephen School logo**

Green sweats **with St. Stephen School logo** (sweats may be worn on cold and rainy days)

Any other pre authorized shirts

### **Appearance and Attire**

Our dress code is based on modesty, neatness, cleanliness, and good taste. The administration and staff reserve the right to determine whether a style of dress or hair is appropriate.

#### **Boys**

Hair must be simple and well groomed (out of the eyes, off the collar, and above the ears). Extreme hairstyles (shaved heads, tails, roosters, mohawks, excessive spiking, long hair, bleached/colored/tinted/dyed hair) are not allowed.

Boys may not wear earrings to school or to any school-related event/activity. No other piercing is allowed. Temporary tattoos are not allowed.

## **Girls**

Hair must be neat, clean, moderate, and of one natural color only. Hair must be worn away from the face. Any hair accessory must be simple and match the color of the school uniform. Exaggerated styles (bleached/colored/ tinted/dyed hair, frilly bows, excessive use of gel/spray) are not allowed.

Cosmetics such as lipstick, mascara, make-up, nail polish, and fake fingernails are not allowed at school or at any school-related event/activity. Temporary tattoos are not allowed.

Girls may only wear small, post earrings. Excessive ear piercing over one hole in each ear is not acceptable. No other piercing is allowed. Loops or dangling earrings are not allowed. Excessive jewelry/accessories are not part of the uniform.

## **Free Dress**

On free dress days, students must dress appropriately and modestly. Failure to comply with free dress guidelines will result in the loss of free dress privileges. The following items are inappropriate:

Excessively short, tight, baggy clothing or low-rise pants

Any article of clothing with offensive or inappropriate pictures, logos, or print

Halter tops, tank tops, spaghetti straps, midriffs, short shorts, or mini skirts

Sandals, heels, boots, steel-toe/hard-toe shoes, or platforms

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Required Immunization**

California law states that all children must complete all immunization requirements and the TB skin test before being allowed to enter school. Immunization records must be kept in each student's file.

### **Basic Health Rules**

To ensure the protection of all students, the following rules have been set. A student having one or more of the following symptoms will be sent home:

Fever

Suspected contagious disease/illness

Vomiting

Diarrhea

Undiagnosed rash

Uncontrolled coughing

Undiagnosed mental/physical behavior

If your child should show any of the above symptoms prior to coming to school, please keep him/her at home. A child with any type of rash or cold symptoms should be kept home for your observation. A child should not return to school until his/her temperature has been normal for 24 hours.

### **Medication**

The school may not give medication to any student. Students may not keep any medications (prescription or over-the-counter, including cough drops) with them on school grounds. School personnel will not administer medication. Medication may not be kept in classrooms.

No exceptions will be made to the procedures for medication. These regulations apply to both prescription and non-prescription medications, including cough drops. If a child must receive medication during the school day, these guidelines must be followed:

*Archdiocese of Los Angeles Medication Authorization and Permission Form* must be completed by parent **and** physician (obtain form from school office).

Original prescription container must be labeled with child's name, dosage, name of medicine, expiration date, and doctor's name.

The child is to come to the office for medication at the prescribed time. The office is not responsible if the student does not remember to take his/her medication. When reasonable and feasible, medication is to be self-administered in the presence of the office personnel.

Parents who do not submit a complete *Medication Authorization and Permission Form* must come to school and personally administer the medication.

If a student must carry an inhaler, a special release from the doctor and parent/guardian must be completed and remain on file in the school office. Students may not carry inhalers without this request on file.

### **Student Insurance**

The student insurance program is provided for all full time students in Archdiocesan schools. This program assists only with medical expenses incurred because of accidental bodily injury sustained by students while attending school, while traveling to or from school or while participating in a school sponsored and supervised activity, including school sponsored sport and extended day programs.

### **Morning Drop-Off (7:30 a.m. – 7:55 a.m.)**

Parents may use the student drop-off lane located on Ramona Avenue. To keep the line moving quickly, students should be ready to exit the car; parents may not exit their cars while using the drop-off lane. Do not park along Ramona Avenue or use driveways/parking lots of nearby apartments/businesses (such as the bank across the street) to drop off students. This is extremely dangerous to pedestrians.

Students for grades PK-K-1-2 need to be dropped off and picked up from the classroom.

Please send your child to daycare if dropping off before 7:45am. Students arriving at 7:30am in Daycare will not be charged.

Parents need to follow the school guidelines for carpool and drop off as provided by the administration.

For your child's safety, please do not allow him/her to jaywalk or cross in front of traffic.

### **Afternoon Pick-Up**

All students should be picked up at 2:45 p.m. (12:00 p.m. on Mondays or early dismissal days) in the **front campus only**. You may use the carpool line that enters off Garvey and exits onto Ramona to the right. Please be prepared to continually pull forward, remain in your car at all times, and be patient while in the carpool line – it is there to ensure the safety of all students. If you need to get out of your car for any reason, please park in a designated parking space (not in the carpool line). Please make sure to watch the traffic supervisor for instructions while crossing to pick up your child. **ALL parents/guardians** are required to walk with their child(ren) to the car at all times. Students may not be picked up on the back campus since there is no adult supervision. Parents need to pick up students in designated areas only.

Afternoon supervision is provided until 3:00 p.m. 12:10pm on Fridays and early dismissal days. Any students not picked up will be sent to St. Stephen's Extended Care and parents will be charged the daily rate. Only students involved in after school activities (sports, fine arts, choir, etc.) may remain on campus with their teacher/coach. Siblings of students involved in after school activities must be picked up or be sent to Extended Care. On days when games are played on campus, students may not stay to watch the games without a parent/guardian.

**Students who walk to and from school must have a signed form on file in the office.** They leave the campus at dismissal through the pedestrian gate off Ramona Avenue. Please caution children to obey traffic laws and cross only in marked crosswalk areas. Only students above Grade 5 are allowed to walk home.

For safety reasons, students may not linger on campus or surrounding areas after school hours.

### **Emergency/Disaster Cards**

Each student at St. Stephen School must have **2** completed yellow Disaster/Emergency Cards on file. The completed cards will have the names of at least 4 persons other than the parent/guardian who can be called in case of disaster release. Parents are responsible for keeping data current by notifying the school of changes of addresses and telephone numbers. This emergency information must be on file when the school year begins. We can only release your child to the persons listed on the Emergency Card. This also applies when the student is ill and goes home during a regular school day. Unless we are notified in writing, we will not release your child to any person who might come into the office requesting to take your child home.

### **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

Should we experience a lock down, threat, fire, earthquake, or other natural disaster, all students will be retained at school until dismissed in the care of an adult listed on the Emergency Card. Any adult picking up a child must sign him/her out. Adults will only be allowed at the designated pick-up area. When a child enters school for the first time, they are required to purchase an Emergency Kit from the school. The kits have a 5-year shelf life and are inventoried on a regular basis. Fire drills are held once a month and earthquake drills are held once per semester.

### **Animals on Campus**

Animals are not allowed on the school campus without special written permission from the principal. **If permission is granted**, the animal(s) must be confined or on a leash to ensure student safety.

### **Leaving School Grounds**

No student may leave the school grounds during school hours without being signed out by a parent/guardian. No student may leave after school and then return the same day unless accompanied by an adult.

### **Parental Supervision**

Students are not to be on the school grounds unsupervised. Students may not be left alone in cars. This includes before and after school, evenings, and weekend events on parish/school property. All children must be supervised at all times.

## **BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

Discipline is an aspect of moral guidance and not a form of punishment. The purpose of discipline is to provide a school climate conducive to learning and one that promotes character development.

Discipline is maintained in a classroom or school when students work cooperatively with the principal, the teachers, and their classmates towards the attainment of the class and school objectives. However, it should be noted that the legitimate interest of the school extends beyond the school day and beyond the school hours.

The purpose of discipline is to provide guidance and develop a school climate conducive to learning. Effective discipline is maintained when there is reasonable silence and order in the building, positive correction of behavior, encouragement of acceptable classroom/playground conduct, firm but fair treatment of students who do not follow rules, and consistent follow-through.

**Levels of Discipline:** *First* (Student with a discipline issue will have detention with the teacher)

*Second* (Student with a discipline issue will have detention with the Dean of Discipline)

*Third* (Student with a discipline issue will have a meeting with the Principal)

### **Verbal/Written Confidences Policy**

The principal, teachers, and other school personnel will respect the verbal or written confidences of students, except in cases where the health or safety of the student or others is involved.

## **Archdiocese of Los Angeles "ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY"**

Under the "Zero Tolerance Policy" of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, any person guilty of sexual misconduct with a **minor under the age of 18:**

**May not have any paid or volunteer assignment in any "ministry" in the Archdiocese, and  
May not volunteer in any "non-ministerial" activity or event where he/she has any possibility of more than incidental contact or supervisory or disciplinary power over minors.**

Any parent or guardian who is a registered sex offender must contact the principal to discuss the requirements in order to assure compliance with the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Zero Tolerance Policy. As members of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles community, we want to assure that we are in compliance with both Megan's Law and our "Zero Tolerance Policy."

### **Safe Environment Training for Children and Youth**

Each school and religious education program must establish an ongoing safe environment training program for the children at its site. Home-based materials must be provided to all parents to help them understand and support their children's education regarding child sexual abuse. The approved programs include **Good-Touch/Bad-Touch®** and **VIRTUS® Teaching Touching Safety** (*Mandated September 1, 2006*).

**Good-Touch/Bad-Touch®** is being implemented in Grades K-9 in Catholic elementary schools throughout the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The program is designed to be age-appropriate, to support children in understanding occasions of abuse, and to give them confidence in reporting and asserting themselves in situations where they feel unsafe.

**VIRTUS® Teaching Touching Safety** is a K-12 program being implemented in religious education programs and Catholic schools. This program is a vehicle through which parents, teachers, catechists and youth ministers give children and young people the tools they need to protect themselves from those who might harm them. The Archdiocesan Office of Safeguard the Children will work with principals at the schools and Directors of Religious Education in the parishes to establish these programs. During the 2007-2008 year, training is expected to reach most of the children in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Questions concerning this program can be forwarded to Sister Mary Elizabeth Galt, B.V.M., Chancellor, and Coordinator of Children's Programs at 213 637 7460.

### **Student Expectations**

All students are expected to behave appropriately in the classroom, on the playground, and at any school related activity including off-campus activities. We will not tolerate any child interrupting a teacher from teaching or a student from learning, and we want to guarantee all the students at St. Stephen School the excellent learning environment they deserve. Students are responsible for all the necessary materials required for class. Students must continually be respectful to all on campus and must respect the property of others as well as school furniture, equipment, etc.

Disruption of the learning environment by misbehaving students hinders the learning process of fellow students. Misbehaving students are subject to disciplinary actions. The teacher will communicate with parents when serious or chronic discipline problems arise by means of a letter, telephone call, or conference. Parents are responsible for reviewing any behavior contract with their child at home. Serious and/or chronic behavior problems may lead to probation.

Disregard for school regulations, property, and other misbehavior may result in detention, suspension, probation, or expulsion. Failure to comply with school regulations may lead to disciplinary action.

### **Referrals:**

Referrals are disciplinary notices used in the classroom and on the playground. Any inappropriate behavior, uniform violations, tardies, etc. will be documented on the form which must be signed by parents. After 3 referrals of any combination (uniform, behavior, misconduct, etc.) the student will receive detention.

### **Detention**

Detention is given to students in grades 1-8 for cumulative tardiness, uniform violations, or behavioral problems. Detention is held on designated days. Failure to serve detention will result in double detention and a parent-teacher conference will be required.

### **Disciplinary Probation**

A student may be placed on probation for serious or continued misconduct over a period of time. Parents will be informed of action taken.

## **Suspension**

The principal is authorized to suspend a student for misbehavior, disregard for school regulations, or disregard for authority figures. Suspension for misconduct applies to behavior in the classroom, in or about the school building or grounds, to and from school, and at school-related activities. Suspension may be "in-house," meaning on campus but apart from the regular classroom, or off campus at the discretion of the principal. Parents will be notified by phone and/or formal disciplinary notice. Usually a suspension requires a parent conference before the student is readmitted. No student shall be suspended from school for more than 2 consecutive weeks.

Any of the reasons listed for expulsion where mitigating circumstances exist may be adequate cause for suspension of a student:

No student shall be suspended from an elementary school for more than two consecutive weeks.

Notice of suspension must be given to the parents/guardians by telephone or in a conference.

The principal shall schedule a conference with the suspended student's parents/guardians to discuss matters pertinent to the suspension especially the means by which the parents/guardians and the school can cooperatively encourage the student to improve behavior. The suspended student may be present at the conference.

In no case will a teacher on his/her own authority suspend a student.

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion is an extreme but sometimes necessary disciplinary measure. Reasons for expulsion are, but are not limited to, the following offenses committed by students:

Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students.

Habitual profanity or vulgarity.

Assault, battery or any threat of force or violence directed toward any school personnel or student.

Bullying or harassing school personnel or other students.

Open, persistent defiance of the authority of the teacher.

Continued willful disobedience.

Use, sale or possession of narcotics, drugs or any other controlled substance.

Use, sale, distribution, or possession of any alcoholic beverages on or near school premises.

Smoking or having tobacco.

Stealing

Forging signatures

Cheating or plagiarism

Willful cutting, defacing or otherwise injuring in any way property, real or personal belonging to the school.

Habitual truancy.

Possession of harmful weapons (e.g., knives, guns, etc.) or materials that can be used as weapons.

Membership in, active involvement in, or affiliation with a gang or group responsible for coercive or violent activity.

Actions in or out of school which are detrimental to the school's reputation.

Violation of the Electronic Communications Policy policies and guidelines.

Inappropriate conduct or behavior unbecoming a student in a Catholic school.

## ***Procedure for Expulsion***

When the reasons for expulsion are purely disciplinary, i.e., when serious moral reasons are not involved, the following steps must be taken:

A conference must be held with the parents/guardians, student, teacher, and principal present to advise the family that serious action is contemplated unless there is immediate improvement in behavior. In parish schools, the pastor should be notified of the conference, given an opportunity to attend and provided a report of the discussion.

If there is no improvement in behavior, the final decision will be announced at a second conference attended by the principal, teacher, and parents/guardians. If the parents fail, without cause, to attend the conference, the pastor, principal, and teacher will reach a final decision. The final decision rests with the pastor in consultation with the principal.

In no case will a teacher on his/her own authority expel a student.



Full credit will be given for all work accomplished by the student up to the moment of expulsion.

### ***Cases Involving Grave Offenses***

In cases involving grave offenses, which may include a violation of criminal law or actions so outrageous as to shock the conscience or behavior of the community, the student is immediately suspended and the initial parent-principal conference is dispensed with.

The procedure involving cases of grave offenses should be followed when the continued presence of the student at school (even for a short period of time) will, in the reasonable judgment of the principal, pose a serious threat to the health and welfare of another student or students, or faculty members.

When immediate suspension is imposed, with probable expulsion, while the case is being investigated, the rules and the consequences of the violation should be clearly explained to the student and parents/guardians.

### ***Time of Expulsion***

An expulsion may be made immediately if the reasons are urgent.

Only in exceptional cases shall expulsion of an eighth grade student who has been in the school one or more years be allowed.

If an expulsion is to take place during the last quarter of the school year or during the last semester in the case of an eighth grade student, prior approval of the Department of Catholic Schools is required before the expulsion can take effect.

If such action is contemplated, approval shall be obtained before the announcement of the final decision to the parents at the meeting described below.

### ***Reporting of Expulsions***

All expulsions even if they occur at the end of the year, are to be reported by telephone to the elementary supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools within twenty-four hours. The written report, Notice of Dismissal, should be mailed promptly to the elementary supervisor.

The attendance office of the local public school district shall be notified immediately of expulsions. A copy of the *Cumulative Student Record* should be held until requested.

### ***Right to Make Exceptions***

The principal, in consultation with the pastor, retains the right to make exceptions in cases where mitigating circumstances call for a different response than policy suggests.

### **Student Threats**

All threats by students to inflict serious harm to self or others, or to destroy property, will be taken seriously. Whoever hears or becomes aware of any threat made by a student should immediately report it to the pastor, principal, or a teacher. The principal will notify the police and the Department of Catholic School immediately. The student who has made the threat will be kept in the school office under supervision until the police arrive. The parents/guardians of the student who has made the threat will be notified. Any adult or student who has been identified as the potential victim, or mentioned in writing as a potential victim, will be notified immediately. The student who has made the threat will be suspended until the investigation by the police and school has been completed.

The decision to re-admit a student who has made a threat will be made by the principal and pastor on a case-by-case basis.

Practical jokes or offhand comments of a threatening nature will be taken seriously and will be investigated. The police may be notified and these actions may result in suspension or removal of a student from school.

St. Stephen School will take all threats to inflict harm to self or others seriously. The school will respond to any statements or behaviors of a threatening nature that could affect the well-being of students, staff, or others. If you become aware of a threatening situation, you must report it immediately to a teacher or the principal. Practical jokes or offhand comments of a threatening nature will be taken seriously and will be investigated. These actions may result in suspension or removal of student from school.

### **Harassment/Bullying**

St. Stephen Martyr School is committed to provide a safe and comfortable learning environment that respects Christian values and is free from harassment, bullying or hazing in any form. Harassment, bullying or hazing of any student by any other student, lay employee, religious, clergy, or school volunteer is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of any such conduct seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner. This policy shall be communicated clearly to faculty, staff, volunteers, parents/guardians, and students.

Substantiated acts of harassment, bullying or hazing by a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal of the student. Students found to have filed false or frivolous charges will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. For students in grades K-3, this disciplinary action shall depend on the maturity of the students and the circumstances involved. For students in grades 4 through 8, the disciplinary action may include suspension or dismissal. Actions that may lead to the physical harm of any student may be cause for suspension or expulsion.

**Harassment** occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment that is hostile or intimidating based upon a legally protected class, such as race, sex, ethnic origin or religion. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

Verbal harassment: Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another person.

Physical harassment: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.

Visual harassment: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, and gestures.

Sexual harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Bullying** is the habitual harassing, intimidating, tormenting, browbeating, humiliating, terrorizing, oppressing and/or threatening of another person. Bullying typically consists of direct behaviors, such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, shoving, and stealing that are initiated by one or more students against a victim or victims. In addition to direct attacks, bullying may also be indirect, such as spreading rumors that cause victims to be socially isolated through intentional exclusion. Whether the bullying is direct or indirect, the key component of bullying is physical or psychological intimidation that occurs repeatedly over time to create an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse. Bullying actions that may have lead to the physical harm of any student may be cause for suspension or expulsion.

**Hazing** is any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or student body or any pastime or amusement engaged in with respect to these organizations which causes, or is likely to cause, bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm, to any student or other person. Hazing actions that may have lead to the physical harm of any student may be cause for suspension or expulsion.

Students also may be involved in cyberbullying, which occurs when they bully each other using the Internet, mobile phones or other cyber technology. This can include, but is not limited to:

Sending inappropriate text, e-mail, or instant messages.

Posting inappropriate pictures or messages about others in blogs or on Web sites.

Using someone else's user name to spread rumors or lies about someone.

It is the responsibility of the school to:

Establish practices and provide staff development training and age-appropriate information for students, designed to create a school environment free from discrimination, intimidation or harassment.

Make all faculty, staff, students, parents/guardians, and volunteers aware of this policy and the commitment of the school toward its strict enforcement

Remain watchful for conditions that create or may lead to a hostile offensive school environment. It is the student's responsibility to:

Conduct himself or herself in a manner that contributes to a positive school environment.

Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating, harassing, bullying or hazing.

If possible, inform the other person(s) that the behavior is offensive and unwelcome.

Report all incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying or hazing to the principal or teacher.

As appropriate, the students involved may be asked to complete a formal, written complaint which will be investigated thoroughly and will involve only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible.

### **Parent(s)/Student(s) Complaint Review Process**

Concern for the dignity and rights of each person are intrinsic to the Church's mission as a true witness to the spirit of the Gospel. Circumstances may give rise to conflicts among students, parents and school staff. All parties are encouraged to use every available means to resolve these conflicts when they occur. However, if the

involved parties are unable to resolve their conflicts, families may use the Parent/Student Complaint Review Process for additional assistance. All those participating in the Complaint Review Process are responsible to strive toward reconciliation and act in good faith. Legal representation is not permitted during the Complaint Review Process. Any person filing a complaint is to be free from restraint, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal in any form.

### **School Level**

The person bringing the complaint is encouraged to try to resolve the complaint by discussing it with the persons directly involved.

If resolution is not achieved, the complaint should be discussed with the principal (or the pastor, if the principal is the subject of the complaint).

For elementary schools, if the principal is unable to resolve the conflict, the principal will bring the pastor into the process as appropriate.

After reviewing the facts and facilitating discussion of the problem the principal will respond to the person bringing the complaint.

### **Department of Catholic Schools Level**

If the complaint is not resolved at the school or parish level, the complaint may be submitted in writing to the supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools, outlining the concerns and reviewing the local process.

The supervisor will review the complaint (with such consultation as may be appropriate) in a timely fashion and will endeavor to mediate and resolve the matter.

However, if no agreement can be reached, the supervisor will make a final determination concerning the resolution of the complaint, based on the application of Archdiocesan and school policies and/or regulations, and communicate that determination, which will be final and binding, in writing to all parties.

### **Code of Christian Conduct Covering Students and Parents/Guardians**

The students' interest in receiving a quality, morally based education can best be served if students, parents and school officials work together. Normally, differences between these individuals can be resolved. In some rare instances, however, the school may find it necessary, in its discretion, to require parents or guardians to withdraw their children. It shall be an express condition of enrollment that the students and parents or guardians shall conform themselves to standards of conduct that are consistent with the Christian principles of the school, as determined by the school in its discretion. These principles include, but are not limited to any policies or procedures set forth in any student/parent handbook of the school.

These Christian principles further include, but are not limited to, the following:

Parents or guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting the academic, moral and behavioral expectations of the school.

Students and parents or guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the school operation and its personnel. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile or divisive.

Any parent or guardian or other person whose conduct in a place where a school employee is required to be in the course of his or her duties materially disrupts class work or extracurricular activities or involves substantial disorder is guilty of a misdemeanor. This statement does not apply to any otherwise lawful employee concerted activity, including but not limited to, picketing and the distribution of handbills.

Any parent or guardian, or other person who insults or abuses the principal or any teacher in the presence of other school personnel, students or parents and at a place which is on school premises or public sidewalks, streets, or other public ways adjacent to school premises or at some other place if the principal or teacher is required to be at such other place in connection with assigned school activities, risks the continuation of his or her child in the school.

These expectations for students and parents or guardians include, but are not limited to, all school-sponsored programs and events (e.g., extended care, athletics, field trips, etc.).

The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, when conduct is of such a severe nature as to warrant immediate action without warning.

### **Actions/Attitudes of Parents/Guardians**

Any parent/guardian or other family member whose conduct, in a place where a school employee is required to be in the course of his/her duties, materially disrupts class work or extracurricular activities or involves

substantial disorder is guilty of a misdemeanor. This statement does not apply to any otherwise lawful employee concerted activity, including but not limited to, picketing and the distribution of handbills.

Any parent/guardian or other family member who upbraids, insults, or abuses **the principal or any teacher/faculty/staff** of the school is risking their child(ren)'s continuation in the school.

Any parent/guardian or other person who insults or abuses **the principal or any teacher/faculty/staff** in the presence of other school personnel, students, or parents, and at a place which is on school premises or public sidewalks, streets, or other public ways adjacent to school premises or at some other place if the principal or teacher is required to be at such other place in connection with assigned school activities, risks the continuation of their child in the school.

### **School Searches**

A student's legitimate expectation of privacy in their person and in the personal effects they bring to school must be balanced against the obligation of the school to maintain discipline and to provide a safe environment for the school community. Accordingly, school officials may conduct a search of the student's person and personal effects based on a **reasonable suspicion** that the search will disclose evidence that the student is violating or has violated the law or a school rule.

School officials do not need a warrant or a parent's permission to conduct a search of the student and/or the school's or a student's personal property, as long as they have a reasonable suspicion that a law or school rule is being or has been violated. Whenever a school principal conducts a search of a student's person or personal effects, an adult witness should be present.

Students do not own their lockers or other school property. Lockers are made available to the student by the school. The student does have some expectation of privacy in his or her locker from other students. However, a student may not exclude school officials if the school official has a reasonable suspicion that a law or school rule has been violated.

A student has a greater expectation of privacy concerning his or her backpack, purse, clothing and other personal effects. A school official who finds it necessary to conduct a search of a student's backpack, purse, clothing or personal effects, must have a reasonable suspicion that the student is violating or has violated a law or school rule. The student's parents should be notified of any such search.

An alert from trained and certified detector dog is sufficient to allow the school official to have a reasonable suspicion and to conduct a warrantless search of the student's locker, car or his or her personal property and effects. In addition to this policy on searches by the school, every student is subject to the Archdiocesan and school use and privacy policies concerning cell phones and other electronic devices, whether the devices belong to the school or to the student.

If a student refuses to cooperate in a reasonable search of the school or student property (including electronic devices), the student's parents and/or the police may be called for assistance or referral.

In the event that any items belonging to a student are confiscated, the principal should document that fact and, when possible, take a photograph of the place where the confiscated object was found and of the object itself. It is also recommended that the school obtain a signature from the student acknowledging that the item was in his or her possession at the time it was found.

## **FAMILY OBLIGATIONS**

### **Tuition and Fees**

The yearly tuition is divided into 10 equal payments that are due the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month from August through May, unless other arrangements are made with the principal and bookkeeper. **Any special arrangements must be made annually.** After the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month, tuition is late and a \$25 late fee is incurred. Checks returned due to insufficient funds will result in a \$35 service charge and accounts will be on a cash basis for the remainder of the school year. Non-response to notices will result to the student not being able to attend class. The fees will not be waived in any way. If an error was made on your tuition, please call the finance office at (626) 573-1716. If there are plans to un-enroll a student, there must be at least a 30 day notification to stop payments through FACTS.

### **In-Parish Rate**

In-Parish status is determined by attendance at Mass, active participation in parish-related activities and placement of the Sunday envelopes in the collection baskets. Church records are reviewed every January and July.

## **Instructional Fees**

Instructional and administrative fees are due and payable at registration. Instructional fees are non-refundable. Families will use FACTS Tuition to pay tuition. Each family will pay tuition by the fifth or twentieth of each month (unless other arrangements have been made). Families will be put on a ten or eleven month schedule and pay a \$25.00 late fee for payments after the 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. Tuition is considered **late** if payment could not be taken out of a set account the day agreed. If a family is **late up to three (3) different months, and have not made special arrangements**, students may not be able to return to school the next following school day until accounts are settled. Tuition is NOT prorated for refunds. Should a student withdraw or is expelled, there is no refund of tuition, fees or fund raisers.

## **Family Service Program**

The Family Service Program is the best way to ensure that our families get involved and equally share the responsibility of their child's education. We need parent involvement in many areas and appreciate your time and talents. Please refer to the OPTIONS list attached herewith or provided at the office.

***SERVICE HOURS ARE NOT TRANSFERABLE. Families are responsible for completing their own service hours. Any changes to the above need to be authorized by the principal in writing. Any incomplete service hours need to be paid in the office as due per quarter.***

A late fee will be assessed per family for money that is not paid by the deadline. **All fund raising efforts help keep tuition affordable.** Minor fundraisers include but are not limited to jogathon/walkathon, Mardi Gras, Book Fair, etc.

## **Scrip**

All parents are required to participate in the Scrip Program. This is a convenient and easy way to support St. Stephen School. For details on scrip purchases, please contact the school.

Two Parent Family \$2,000 scrip commitment per year

Single Parent Family \$1,500 scrip commitment per year

Families can enroll in e scrip on line at [www.escripinc.com](http://www.escripinc.com). Select St Stephen School organization with ID#136559346. NPO# for Ralphs and Food 4 Less is 83337. Albertsons organization #490001231402.

## **Fall Festival Hours**

All parents are required to work for a period of 4 hours at the Parish Festival. Failure to participate will result in a \$200 fine. Any hours over 4 will not be transferred to the school service hour commitment.

## **Family Mass**

The first Sunday of each month is Family Mass. All St. Stephen School families are encouraged to attend and participate in the special family liturgies.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **School Website**

<http://www.stsmc.org>

### **Family Envelopes**

Family Envelope will be used for important hard copy documents including Biweekly newsletters. **Report Cards**

Report cards are issued at the end of each quarter for students in grades 1-8. Kindergarteners receive report cards at the end of each semester. A report card for the quarter may be withheld after a total of 15 absences. Report cards must be returned by the student or parent within 5 school days from the date it was issued. Report Cards will be withheld incase of unfulfilled financial commitments.

### **Conferences**

St. Stephen School faculty strives to establish cooperative relationships with parents. Parent-teacher conferences are held in November at which time parents of students in grades 1-8 will receive their child's report card.

Teachers or parents may request conferences at any time. Parent requests may be made by calling the school office to leave a message for the teacher or by sending a note to the teacher.

### **Schoolreach Communication System:**

Phone calling system for regular announcements and emergencies. Please update your records in the office so we can reach you in case of an emergency.

### **Communication Procedures**

Effective communication between parents and teachers is essential to the spiritual and academic growth of the student. Research has proven that when parents and schools establish cordial and respectful communication, the student is more receptive and cooperative. All parents are asked to take the following steps to address any questions or concerns:

1. Call the school office during office hours to request an appointment with your child's teacher.
2. Put your concerns in writing so that these may be addressed accordingly.
3. The teacher and parent(s) will prepare a plan of action to address these concerns.
4. Maintain a respectful and cordial relationship with your child's teachers.
5. Unresolved classroom concerns or matters relating to the school in general should be brought directly to the attention of the principal.

## **SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

### **Athletic Program**

Students in grades 5 – 8 may be involved in the after-school sports programs. These activities include football, volleyball, basketball, softball, and track. The City of Monterey Park Recreation Department determines age eligibility for track.

#### ***Eligibility Requirements***

Students on sports teams must have at least an overall 2.5 GPA (C average) and at least a B in conduct. Any child with disciplinary issues will be removed from the team at the school's discretion. Participants and their parents are required to sign an agreement regarding these expectations. In order for students to participate in after-school sports the student must be in attendance that day. Fees for each season will be determined.

#### ***Transportation***

Each vehicle is to have adult supervision and have an individual seat belt provided for each student. Drivers transporting students must be at least 25 years of age, possess a current Class C driver's license, and current California automobile insurance. Copies of the driver's license and certificate of insurance must be on file in the office. Passenger vehicles are not to carry more than 10 persons, including the driver.

### **Academic Decathlon**

Ten junior high students plus alternates will be selected to represent St. Stephen School at the Archdiocesan competition held each spring. Students represent the school in a friendly academic competition. Students are selected based on their commitment to studies beyond regular class work, willingness to work with others, and the ability to balance curricular and extra-curricular activities. Students need to complete the requirements listed by the principal and coordinator.

### **Choir**

Students from Grades 2-8 are encouraged to participate in school choir. Those who play musical instruments may also join and be part of the group. The children's choir sings at all school masses and Sunday family masses. Practice schedule to be determined.

### **Student Council**

Students in grades 5, 6, and 7 are elected to student council by the student body for the next school year. Student government provides services to the school, church, and community, and helps develop personal responsibility in the student.

#### ***Eligibility Requirements***

To run for office, students must be entering 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup> grade for the next school year, must have grades stipulated in the Student Council Constitution, and have at least a B in conduct/Effort. A signed statement from teachers, parents, and the principal is required.

### **Drug Education/AIDS Education Programs**

The Monterey Park Police Department provides instruction in drug education. AIDS education and Family Life education, approved by the Archdiocese, is taught at age appropriate levels throughout the school.

### **Rainbows**

The Rainbows program is a support curriculum for children in grades 1 – 8 who live in single-parent families, stepfamilies, or who have experienced the loss of a family member. For more information about this program, please contact Mrs. Edie Mahon (626-573-1716).

### **St. Stephen's Extended Care**

Monday through Thursday from 2:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Friday from 12:00pm – 6:00pm. Extended care offers a variety of activities. There is time set aside for students to do homework in a quiet environment and participate in outdoor activities, arts & crafts and snack time. Services will only be provided when school is in session. Services will not be provided on school holidays, Christmas Break, and Easter Break. Registration information may be obtained from the school office. Courtesy Morning care will be provided, FREE-OF-CHARGE, from Monday through Friday 7:30am. **Please be advised that ALL parents or guardians are required to walk their child inside the room to sign them in. For safety reasons, parents are responsible for letting the Coordinators know that they are dropping their child/student off. Extended Care Fees is provided in the office.**

***Parents who do not pay their Extended Daycare dues through FACTS are responsible for paying their dues within 6 days of receiving the invoice, after which dues will be automatically added to their FACTS.***

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Birthday Celebrations**

We love to recognize our students' special days but we would like to be fair to all our children and their instructional time when it comes to Birthday celebrations. Please do not have flowers or balloons delivered to school. The students will not be provided these gifts in their classroom.

Please only send cupcakes or individual snacks for each student in the classroom to be given at recess. No pizza lunches or special lunches should be brought to school to celebrate birthdays from Monday through Thursday. Should you like to cater a birthday lunch please do so on Friday's ONLY.

When inviting students to birthday parties or celebrations out of school and the invitations are being handed out at school, it is required that all students in the classroom receive an invitation.

### **Campus Visitors and Volunteers**

Parents who wish to see a child during school hours must go to the school office and ask a staff member to page him/her to come to the office. Parents may not visit the individual classrooms or use the students' restrooms during school hours. Lunches, P.E. clothes, homework, etc. must be dropped off in the office. Parents may not wait on campus to deliver these items to their child(ren). Parents wishing to join their child(ren) for lunch must obtain a Visitor's Pass.

Parents may volunteer in the classroom upon the teacher's request. Volunteers must obtain a Visitor's Pass from the office. All volunteers must have a recent negative TB skin test (taken within the past 2 years) on file in the school office. Parents who volunteer in the classroom more than 20 hours per week must meet the TB requirement and must also be **Livescan** fingerprinted. Original records must be submitted for school personnel to copy. Required Livescan forms may be obtained from the office. The cost for Livescan fingerprinting is \$71.00. Livescan services are offered at Pasadena City College, Campus Center, Room CC108A. Hours of operation are Monday through Saturday: 8 AM to 9 PM. For campus information, please call (626) 585-3210.

Parents who chaperone field trips or work in classrooms around students must be Live-Scanned/ fingerprinted. VIRTUS training is also required. Please check [www.virus.org](http://www.virus.org) for information regarding training sites

### **Access to Student Records**

Student records are maintained by the school and are available for inspections by the student's parents or legal guardian in the presence of the teacher or principal. Records may not be removed from school grounds. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, St. Stephen School will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and the 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. The school will not be held responsible for failing to honor arrangements that have not been made known in writing.

### **Transfer of Records**

#### *Student Transfers and Graduation*

Whenever a pupil transfers from one school to another, a copy of the Cumulative Student Report and the original Health Record shall be transferred by the former school upon a request from the school where the pupil intends to enroll. The original Cumulative Student Report will remain at the school.

A record of the transfer, the reason for the transfer, and the name of the school to which the student is transferring or entering after graduation should be entered on the original copy of the Cumulative Student Report and in the Student Attendance Register.

Official transcripts are not given to students or parents.

### **Damaged or Loaned Property**

Under California law, a private school cannot refuse to provide student records to a requesting school because of any charges, including tuition or fees that are owed by the student or parent. However, the school may withhold from parents/guardians the grades, diploma, or transcripts of a pupil pending payment of certain amounts for damaged property, or the return of loaned property, in accordance with school policy.

### **Separated or Divorced Families**

Separated or divorced parents of children enrolled at St. Stephen School are expected to deal with one another in a courteous, Christian manner regarding their child's education. It is our policy to meet with parents *together* for conferences and to supply one report card. Parents enjoy equal rights in the education of their children regardless of custody arrangements or financial support. This policy will prevail unless there is a legal court order barring this participation on file in the school office. If custody, visitation, supervision restrictions, or restraining orders exist, they must be on file in the school office. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of any changes in these matters.

### **Child Abuse**

All St. Stephen School employees are mandated by state law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to a child protective agency.

### **Birthdays**

Once a month, "Free Dress" is given for all students celebrating their birthday in that month. Summer birthdays are given free dress in June or September (refer to calendar for dates).

In an effort to discourage alienating students, invitations for home parties that are distributed at school must include **all students in the class**. If all students are not included, invitations must be mailed. Birthday celebrations held at school must receive approval from the teacher and must be kept simple.

### **Inappropriate Items**

The following items are not allowed:

Any electronic device (IPODs, MP3 players, electronic games, CD players, cameras, radios, etc.)

Bikes, skates, and skateboards

Money in excess of \$10

Toys

Unapproved magazines

CD's and DVD's These items will be confiscated and will only be returned to a parent(s)/guardian(s).

Anything that can be construed as a weapon may also be confiscated. **The school is not responsible for loss, damage, or theft of these items.**



## **Cell Phones**

The use of cell phones is not allowed during school hours for any reason. If it is necessary for a student to carry a cell phone, written parent permission must be on file in the school office. The phone should be kept in the student's book bag and **must remain off** during school hours. The school is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen cell phones. Students are only allowed to use a cell phone **OFF CAMPUS. A cell phone will be confiscated if used anytime on school grounds. Parents will need to pick up the cell phone from the school office. Student(s) referrals will be issued and given to the parent(s).**

## **Lost and Found**

All lunch bags, clothing, materials, etc. must be marked clearly with the child's name and grade. Lost items are placed in the Lost and Found located in the bins adjacent to the school office. Students are responsible for their own items. Lost uniforms or lost classroom materials such as textbooks, pencils, pens, paper, etc., does not excuse a student from being unprepared for class.

## **Breakfast/Lunch**

All students should bring a **nutritious** lunch from home or purchase one from the Lunch Program program. Breakfast and lunch can be purchased daily. Students also have the option of purchasing prepaid tickets lunch at \$4.00 per day. Families who qualify can apply for free or reduced breakfast/lunch in early September.

*If a child forgets his/her lunch or money, please bring it to the school office marked with the child's name, grade, and room number. Do not deliver lunches/money to your child's classroom.*

## **Work Permits**

Under California law and other relevant laws, a minor student may not work without a work permit issued by the appropriate authority. To obtain a work permit, certain information is required from the student's school. Information regarding work permits and how to apply is available from the California Department of Education website: [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov).

The minor/student, after obtaining a promise of employment, must obtain a "Statement of Intent to Employ Minor and Request for Work Permit". The minor, the employer and the parent/guardian must each complete their sections and submit the completed application to the school. The school will verify the information entered on the application by the minor and parent/guardian and will also examine the student's records and consult the teacher to confirm the student's satisfactory academic achievement to date. The student must then submit the form to the "work permit issuing authority". If all requirements are met, the work permit issuing authority may issue the "Permit to Employ and Work". The "work permit issuing authority" is the Superintendent of the local public school or those persons authorized in writing by the Superintendent to issue the permit.

A copy of the signed work permit must be kept in the student's file.

## **PRIVACY AND ACCESS TO RECORDS**

Maintaining confidentiality is the legal, ethical and professional responsibility of every member of the school community, including students, parents/guardians, teachers, aides, and all other employees. Every member of the school community must respect the privacy of all students, families, employees, the principal and the pastor.

## **Pupil Records**

"Pupil records" means any record related to a student that is maintained by a school or one of its employees. It includes health records. It does not include "directory information" or a school employee's informal notes, if the notes remain in the sole possession of the maker and are not made available to others, except to a substitute.

Only the principal, as custodian of the records, authorizes the release of pupil records. Only teachers or administrators charged with pupil oversight have the right to view or use pupil records. A teacher's aide may view or use pupil records only with direct teacher supervision. Pupil records may be released by judicial order such as a subpoena or a search warrant. In specific cases, such as suspicion of kidnapping, police officers may be given access to records.

Parents and legal guardians of minors have the absolute right to access their child's pupil records in accordance with the school's reasonable procedures for providing such access. Parents or legal guardians may grant any specified

person written consent to access specifically identified pupil records. In cases of legal separation and/ or divorce, California state law gives the custodial parent and a non-custodial parent with visitation rights, the right to access and examine pupil records. However, only the custodial parent may consent to the release of records and has the right to challenge the content of the records and to write responses to information regarding disciplinary action. A non-custodial parent without visitation rights has no right of access to records of any kind.

### **Directory Information**

"Directory information" means one or more of the following items: pupil's name, address, telephone number, date and place birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous public or private school attended by the pupil.

The school will, to the extent possible, minimize access to student telephone numbers or personal email addresses, unless the parents or legal guardians consent to broader access. To the extent possible, users should try to minimize access to or distribution of student telephone numbers or personal email addresses, unless the parents or legal guardians consent to broader access.

Room parent rosters, class lists, telephone numbers, email address lists or any other personal information about families and students are considered confidential and may be used only for the purposes specified. In no cases should commercial enterprises be given access to Directory Information.

### **Verbal/Written Confidences**

Confidential information may be provided by students or parents/guardians to school employees in many ways. Students may confide in staff verbally, in writing, such as a note or a writing/journal assignment. All school employees must respect the verbal or written confidences of adults and students, except in cases where the health or safety of the student or others is involved. If the confidence received relates to a health or safety issue, the pastor, principal or other person in charge or appropriate authorities must be notified promptly, keeping in mind the rights of privacy that apply. Archdiocesan policy on reporting suspected abuse of children or vulnerable adults must be followed when applicable.

### **Calendars**

A tentative 2014-2015 calendar can be found on the website and may be emailed to parents. Please consult the monthly calendar for updated changes.