

Student/Parent Handbook



SY 2024-2025
INTRODUCTION

St. John Neumann Catholic School
625 St. John Court
Knoxville, TN 37934
Phone (865)777-0077
Fax (865)777-0087
www.sjnks-knox.org

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 7:40 AM – 3:45 PM

School Accreditation

St. John Neumann Catholic School (SJNCS) is a parochial school fully accredited by the State of Tennessee through the Schools Office of the Diocese of Knoxville and by COGNIA.

General Information

A partnership of faculty, family, church, and community, guided by the Holy Spirit, provides a foundation that supports the growth and development of faith in our students. A commitment to academic excellence and the development of each student to his/her full potential is central to our curriculum. Prayer, sacramental life, and Gospel values are at the heart of our school program. Our curriculum fosters curiosity, creativity, cooperation, fidelity, and responsibility. All this is accomplished in an environment of love, trust, and understanding.

It is important to note that our Catholic school's academic endeavors flow from our mission of teaching the Gospel through our Catholic faith and tradition. This is what distinguishes a Catholic school from other schools. We are first a faith community, intent on bringing students to Jesus. All other activities flow from this reality.

Vision Statement

St. John Neumann Catholic School, in union with the Catholic faith community, is dedicated to forming Disciples of Christ who live their faith and pursue academic excellence. We encourage students to seek greater knowledge, awareness, and expression of their gifts to glorify God. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we provide an exceptional education and foster the Christian virtues of faith, hope, and love.

Mission Statement

The mission of St. John Neumann Catholic School is to:

Serve God with loving hearts

Joyfully embrace our Catholic faith

Nurture individual and academic excellence

Belief Statements

St. John Neumann Catholic School believes

- Each child is created in the image of God with unique physical, social, emotional, and intellectual gifts.
- Schools should strive to do the very best in all endeavors. We prepare, support, and assist our students to glorify God and to be successful members of society.
- All students learn in different ways and need to apply their learning in meaningful contexts.
- A student's self-esteem is enhanced by positive relationships and mutual respect among and between priests, staff, and students.
- Curriculum and instructional practices should incorporate a variety of activities to promote academic excellence.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

- At SJNCS, we believe discipline should be directed toward fostering and maintaining Gospel values conducive to learning and teaching. Remember that discipline comes from the word disciple. We promote individual discipleship, which requires each child to grow in good judgment and become a self-disciplined member of the community.
- Respectful cooperation is expected within the staff of SJNCS including pastor, administrators, teachers, teaching assistants, custodians, cafeteria, BAC employees, and volunteers. We must strive to work together in a professional and positive atmosphere.

ADMISSIONS

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

Admission Priority

Catholic students will be admitted to SJNCS in the following order:

Active members of St. John Neumann parish

Active members of Knoxville-area parishes **without** schools

Active members of Knoxville-area parishes **with** schools

These admission priorities are the same as other Catholic schools in the Diocese of Knoxville.

Age Requirement

According to the laws of Tennessee, a child must be five (5) years old by August 15 of the year entering kindergarten unless transferring from an accredited school in another state whose age requirements differ. Children ages 3 and 4 must also be *of that age* by this date to be enrolled in the SJNCS preschool program.

TUITION

Please contact the business office for all financial matters.

St. John Neumann Catholic School operates on a balanced budget and must collect tuition in a timely manner to do so. All student records are held at year-end for any outstanding balances. Access to report cards may be held at the end of each grading period on delinquent accounts.

Supplemental Tuition Support

All supplemental tuition support comes from the Diocese of Knoxville Regional Catholic Schools Operating Fund, funded primarily by regional parishes. Families who feel they cannot afford to pay the net Catholic tuition should request supplemental tuition support. Tuition evaluation packets are available from the school business office. All requests are handled confidentially. The application process is time sensitive. Failure to meet the deadline may hinder the opportunity to receive supplemental tuition support. Please contact the school business office for further information about tuition support.

ATTENDANCE

Absences
Students must be in attendance for five hours or more to be marked present for a full school day. A note or email from the parent must accompany absences. The office must receive this written notification within five days of the student's absence. Absences will be considered excused for the following:

- Personal illness of the student
- Medical and dental examination and/or treatment of the student
- Death in the family

If a student misses more than one-half day of school or has experienced a fever, vomiting and/or diarrhea, he/she will not be permitted to participate in school sponsored after-school activities (i.e. sports, performances, etc.). Students need a physician's note to be excused from physical education classes due to injuries, recovering from illnesses, etc.

Frequent absences impede the learning process. After five (5) unexcused absences, the superintendent will be notified as stated in Tennessee Code annotated #49-6-3007. Since class participation comprises a significant portion of the grade, in the event a student has been absent for more than one-third of a grading period, the principal, in consultation with the teacher, will determine if a grade is assigned for that grading period. Furthermore, in the event a student has thirty absences (excused or unexcused) during a school year, the principal will determine if the student will be retained in the same grade.

When a student has 10 absences (excused or unexcused) families will receive an email reminding them of the importance of attendance. Disruption to the consistency of learning has shown to hurt students' overall school success. If the absences persist and academics are suffering the family will need to meet with administration to formulate a plan of action to help support the family with getting their student to school on a more consistent basis.

Each student's attendance record is noted on his/her report card. At the end of the year, these totals become part of the child's permanent record.

Tardies
It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that students arrive at school on time. Students not in their classrooms by the 7:55 AM bell will be marked tardy. After 7:55 AM, preschool students and students in grades K-4 must be escorted into the office by their parents. Students in grades 5-8 may sign in by themselves.

- Excessive tardiness impeding academic learning, social or behavioral progress for students may result in a conference with school administrators.

Check Outs
Students will be released from school only to their parents or to persons authorized by parents as identified on the "Authorization/Pick-up Form," which is kept on file in the school office. SJNCS reserves the right to request a picture ID before releasing a child from school.

Parents must send a note or email to school in these circumstances:

- Someone other than those listed on the "Authorization/Pick-up Form" is to pick up their child
- A child needs to check out of school at a time other than the normal dismissal time

Parents are encouraged to schedule all appointments for their children outside school hours.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

The school day begins at 7:55 AM and ends at 2:45 PM (Pre-K), 3:00 PM (K-4) and 3:20 PM (5-8). On Wednesdays, the school day ends at 1:45 PM (Pre-K), 2:00 PM (K-4), and 2:20 PM (5-8).

Arrival Procedure for Pre-K

Parents must park and walk preschool children to the classrooms using the outside classroom doors. Pre-K students must sign in with the teacher. Please do not park in the drop offline. For safety purposes, please use the crosswalk or park behind the church.

Arrival Procedure for K-8

Vehicles should follow single file along the route in front of the church and school pulling up to the cone at the cafeteria doors. Students may unload if vehicle is in between the cones. Drivers should not exceed 10 mph in the school parking lot and are to respond to the directions of the faculty on duty. Please do not pass cars. Patience is imperative for safety of all. If your child needs more time unloading please park in the parking lot and use the crosswalk.

Students should follow the procedures below based on when they arrive at school:

- 7:00 - 7:25 AM – check into the Before and After Care Program (BAC)
- 7:25 - 7:40 AM – report to the cafeteria (Students will be supervised in the cafeteria until the 7:40 AM bell rings.)
- 7:40 – 7:55 AM – report directly to the classroom
- After 7:55 AM – parents of students in grades Pre-K through grade 4 must come into the office to sign their child(ren) into school. Students in grades 5-8 may sign themselves in at the office.

Please allow your children to walk to the classrooms by themselves. This promotes self-confidence and independence. Teachers are on duty and cannot have conferences with parents during arrival (7:40-7:55 AM). Please send a note, email, or leave a message at the front office if you need to contact the teacher.

Dismissal Procedure for Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 – 2:45 PM

- Pre-K students must be signed-out by a parent/guardian. (ID may be required)
- Parents should park *in the lot behind the church or in the pick-up line (if additional children are being picked up)* and enter the outside doors to the classrooms.

Dismissal Procedure for Grades K-4 – 3:00 PM

- All families will be given a window tag to display. This tag must be visible to the staff on duty for safe, efficient dismissals.
- Students will be released only to the car displaying their names unless prior arrangements have been made through the office. Staff may ask for driver's license identification as needed.
- Students will remain in their homeroom classes where the teacher will monitor them and dismiss them when their names have been called.
- Any student carpooling with a middle school student will be escorted to the exit at 3:15 PM.
- Staff members will direct students to the vehicles.
- When in the loading areas, all parents must remain in their vehicles to ensure the safety of the students and to expedite the flow of traffic. Please do not leave children unattended in any loading area.
- Remove car tag once children are loaded.
- Students who have not been picked up 15 minutes after their scheduled dismissal time will be sent to the Before and After Care Program. (Please see the BAC section of the handbook.)

Dismissal Procedure for Grades 5-8 – 3:20 PM

- All families will be given a window tag to display. This tag must be visible to teachers on duty for safe, efficient dismissals.
- Students will be released only to the car displaying their names unless prior arrangements have been made through the office. Staff may ask for driver's license identification as needed.
- Students will remain in their homeroom classes where the teacher will monitor them and dismiss them when their names have been called. Elementary siblings will be picked up on the way out of the building.
- When in the loading areas, all parents must remain in their vehicles to ensure the safety of the students and to expedite the flow of traffic. Please do not leave children unattended in any loading area.
- Remove car tag once children are loaded.
- Students who have not been picked up 15 minutes after their scheduled dismissal time will be sent to the Before and After Care Program. (Please see the BAC section of the handbook.)
- In the event of a scheduled appointment, game, etc., you may park behind the church and collect your children on the sidewalk.
- Parents are expected to use the car line on a regular basis.

Parents, please use car line and avoid parking in the school parking lot for pick up. It presents a safety concern. If for whatever reason you are unable to utilize the car line for pick-up, please park in the church parking lot behind the church and walk to the building for pick-up.

Bicycle Riders and Walkers

Bicycle riders and walkers must have written permission from parents on file in the office. These students will be dismissed from their classrooms by their teachers at the normal dismissal time.

COMMUNICATION

Our Communication to the School Community

- FACTS, our main source of communication, is updated regularly with pertinent school information. Parents can also monitor student progress using FACTS.
- A *Weekly Newsletter* is emailed to communicate general announcements and upcoming events. Please read the newsletter weekly.
- The school maintains an official website (www.sjnks-knox.org), Instagram (@sjnksknox), and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/sjnksknox). "SJNCS Class of" pages are **NOT created by SJNCS administration and are not** monitored by SJNCS. The only mode of social media communication SJNCS uses is our official Instagram, Facebook page, and school web site. If you see something questionable on these pages, or that you feel may be in violation of the SJNCS Parent-Student Handbook, please contact sgreiner@sjnks-knox.org.
- Friday Folders containing time-sensitive information will be sent home weekly with each elementary student and should be returned on Monday.
- Parent-Teacher Conference dates are scheduled for late October. Additional conference times may be scheduled with your child's teacher as needed.

Your Communication to Faculty/Staff

- Call the school and leave a message for the person with whom you wish to speak.
- E-mail teachers/staff members regarding any concerns or questions you may have. Faculty and staff email accounts are organized as follows: first initial, last name@sjnks-knox.org (i.e. kmechelke@sjnks-knox.org). Email responses will be sent within twenty-four hours. Faculty and staff are not required to respond to emails on weekends or holidays.
- Send a note with a specific request or concern in a sealed envelope addressed to whom it is to be delivered.

If your address, email, phone number, or personal information changes, please notify the front office immediately.

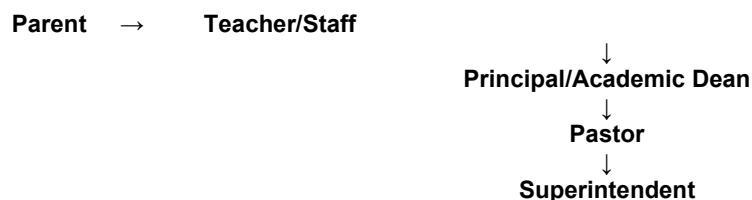
In the event of an emergency, a message from you may be delivered to your child. Every effort will be made to deliver that message in a timely manner without disruption to the classroom.

Communication on Social Media Sites

Our social media sites allow us to share the successes and joys that our school displays on a daily basis. They should not be used as the primary source for official school communication, news, and announcements. Defamatory comments about the school, faculty, staff, school community members, and/or students on a social networking site is a breach of the parent-school partnership and may be grounds for a student being dismissed from the school. Additionally, the use of the school name, teacher name, and/or school logo in establishing such groups is not permitted. Concerns should be addressed following the chain of command found below.

Parent Communication Chain of Command

Should a question or concern arise, **the parent should first contact the teacher or staff member involved.** Diocesan Policy #1420 defines the process to be used. The following steps outline the resolution process:



CAFETERIA

Children may not bring soda in lunches brought from home.

St. John Neumann Catholic School offers a hot lunch daily. The cost for a student lunch is \$4.50. Family members and visitors are welcome to eat with the children (at the same rate). You may enjoy lunch with your child at the tables provided in the hallway outside the cafeteria and gym. **Cafeteria menus are posted on FACTS monthly.** All student lunches include milk or orange juice.

SJNCS uses a debit system for the purchase of school lunches. Parents must load money into their family cafeteria account which their children may then use to purchase lunch at school. Please send a check to the school business office designating “lunches” or “cafeteria” in the memo line.

Preschool students may either buy their lunch and/or white milk from the cafeteria (monthly menus will be sent home), or they may bring their lunches from home. Preschool lunch will be held in the classroom. We encourage “healthy” choices and the avoidance of high sugar items.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Communicable Disease

If a teacher is concerned that a student may be feverish or contagious, the child will be sent to the clinic for evaluation. If needed, the clinic will follow up with the parent and ask that they comply with school guidelines to pick up the child to avoid possible contagion of others. Children who have vomited while at school, have a temperature of 100.3 degrees or above, or if symptoms necessitate, need to be picked up as soon as possible.

A child must be out of school and free of contagion (vomiting or diarrhea) and/or fever (100.3 degrees or above) without aid of fever-reducing medications, such as ibuprofen and/or acetaminophen for one full school day before attending school.

When a communicable disease or condition is suspected, the parent will be contacted and asked to pick up their child immediately. Students are required to bring in a note from a physician stating that they have been treated or do not have the disease before returning to class.

When can my child return to school?

Covid-19 (Coronavirus) - 24 hours fever free (without use of fever reducing medicine such as tylenol or ibuprofen) & 1 full day after symptoms improve

Flu - 24 hours fever free (without use of fever reducing medicine such as tylenol or ibuprofen) & 1 full day after symptoms improve

Hand, Foot and Mouth - 24 hours fever free (without use of fever reducing medicine such as tylenol or ibuprofen), no drooling from mouth blisters, no open/oozing blisters, & child feels well enough to participate in classroom activities

Lice - May return once appropriate treatment has begun & free from crawling lice (existence of nits is ok). If a child has head lice, they must be completely lice AND nit free before returning to school. Upon arrival to school, the student and parent must check in at the front office where a member of the office staff will check the child. If any lice or nits are found, the child must return home for complete removal and be checked again upon the next return to school. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the spread of head lice to other students.

Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis) - 24 hours fever free & 12 hours after start of antibiotic (drops)

RSV - 24 hours fever free (without using of fever reducing medicine such as tylenol or ibuprofen) & 1 full day after symptoms improve

Stomach Virus - 24 hours after last episode of vomiting or diarrhea & child feels well enough to participate in classroom activities

Strep - 24 hours fever free (without use of fever reducing medicine such as tylenol or ibuprofen) & 24 hours after start of antibiotics

If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease or condition please notify the school clinic or office as soon as possible. If the school administration is concerned about the spread of a communicable disease or condition, communication regarding the illness will be sent out to parents.

Medication

Prescription and over-the-counter medications that are taken on a regular basis should be administered by a parent or guardian whenever possible. However, there may be times when it is necessary for the school to assist in that process. Medications (with the properly signed authorization forms) will only be administered by designated school personnel.

Diocesan guidelines regarding medication administration are as follows:

- All medications must have the official Medication and Prescription Drug Authorization form completely filled out with specific dosage and frequency instructions and be signed by the parent/guardian AND the prescribing physician for prescription medication. This Diocesan authorization form may be found on RenWeb or picked up in the office.
- The school will not administer any medication for students, oral or topical, unless authorized and provided by the parent. We do not keep ANY type of medication on hand to dispense.
- All medication must be kept in the clinic/office. No student is allowed to have medications on his/her person at any time.
- All medication must be brought to the office/clinic by the parent and can only be picked up from the office/clinic by the parent. No medication will be sent home in student backpacks.
- All medication must be in the original container and clearly labeled. If it is not in the original container, it will NOT be accepted. Expired medication or medication in a container that is labeled expired will not be accepted.
- Parents may come to the school to administer medications to their child if needed.

Food Allergies

It is certain that every school population will include students with significant or life-threatening food allergies.

To ensure the health and safety of affected students please review the following school guidelines:

- No outside food item shall be dispensed to any student without the permission of the teacher or supervising school staff. This includes candy, items sent in to share for birthdays and class celebrations, treat bags for parties, food items used for special activities, crafts, etc.
- Please notify your child's teacher if sending in items known to contain peanuts or any other tree nuts, fish, or shellfish.
- Students are not to share or trade lunch or snack items or utensils in the cafeteria. This is to avoid accidental ingestion of allergen containing foods.
- Please wash your hands thoroughly after coming in contact with items containing peanuts/peanut butter, tree nuts, fish or shellfish, and egg and milk-based items.

Water Bottles

Students may bring water bottles to school. Water bottles may not be disposable (unless packed for lunch only) and must have a spill-proof lid. Twist top lids are not permitted. Water is the only liquid allowed in water bottles. The school has multiple water filling stations students may use throughout the day.

Emergency Forms

Emergency information is maintained in the school clinic for each student. Parents must inform the office of any changes in information during the school year. Classroom teachers are to review their students' "Emergency Forms" to be aware of medical restrictions and/or needs. A copy of each student's emergency information must accompany the driver of a vehicle used for an educational outing.

Immunization Requirements

Documented proof of required immunizations mandated by the Tennessee Department of Health is required before students may be admitted to school. **Documentation of the required immunizations must be on the official Tennessee Department of Health Immunization form, which your physician's office or Health Department can provide.**

A summary of the Tennessee Immunization Requirements for Child Care and School are as follows:

Note that there are two new requirements for children entering 7th grade: Tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis booster ("Tdap") and verification of immunity to varicella (2 doses of the vaccine or documented history of disease).

Immunization Requirement Summary: Tennessee Department of Health Rule 1200-14-1-.29

(New Requirements Underlined, Effective Dates Italicized in Parentheses)

Children enrolling in child care facilities, pre-school, pre-Kindergarten:

Infants entering child care facilities must be up to date at the time of enrollment and are required to provide an updated certificate after completing all of the required vaccines due by 18 months of age.

- Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis (DTaP, or DT if appropriate)
- Poliomyelitis (IPV or OPV)
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (1 dose of each, usually given together as MMR)
- Varicella (1 dose or history of disease)
- *Haemophilus influenzae* type B (Hib): age younger than 5 years only (*this requirement is resumed immediately, following suspension during a national Hib vaccine shortage 2008-2009*)
- Hepatitis B (HBV) (*July 1, 2010*)
- Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV): age younger than 5 years only (*July 1, 2010*)
- Hepatitis A: 1 dose, required by 18 months of age or older (*July 1, 2010*)

Children enrolling in Kindergarten:

- Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis (DTaP, or DT if appropriate)
- Hepatitis B (HBV)
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (2 doses of each, usually given together as MMR)

- Poliomyelitis (IPV or OPV): final dose on or after the 4th birthday now required
- Varicella (2 doses or history of disease): previously only one dose was required (*July 1, 2010*)
- Hepatitis A: total of 2 doses, spaced at least 6 months apart (*July 1, 2011*)

All children entering 7th grade (including currently enrolled students):

- Tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis booster (“Tdap”): not required if a Td booster dose given less than 5 years before 7th grade entry is recorded on the DTaP/Td line (*no later than October 1, 2010*)
- Verification of immunity to varicella: 2 doses or history of disease (*July 1, 2010*)

Children who are new enrollees in a TN school in grades other than Kindergarten or 7th:

- Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis (DTaP, or DT if appropriate)
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (2 doses of each, usually given together as MMR)
- Poliomyelitis (IPV or OPV): final dose on or after the 4th birthday now required
- Varicella (2 doses or history of disease): previously only one dose was required
- Hepatitis B (HBV): previously only for Kindergarten, 7th grade entry

Children with medical or religious exemption to requirements:

- **Medical:** Physician or health department authorized to indicate specific vaccines medically exempted (because of risk of harm) on new form. Other vaccines remain required.
- **Religious:** Requires only a signed statement by the parent/guardian that vaccination conflicts with their religious tenets or practices. If documentation of a health examination is required by the school, it must be noted by the healthcare provider on the immunization certificate. In that case, the provider should check the box that the parent has sought a religious exemption.

MISCELLANEOUS

Inclement Weather

The Diocese of Knoxville Catholic Schools will not necessarily follow the public schools’ early release or closings due to inclement weather but will consider it carefully. Each school will communicate with the other schools in its area and with the diocesan superintendent before posting an announcement. Each school will contact its families via email and/or text alerts and notify local TV stations.

Please determine the safety of your own travel. Contact the school office if you have made the determination that travel is unsafe. This will be considered an excused absence.

Service Hours

Students in grades 5-8 are required to complete service hours. Each semester, the requirements are as follows:
5th grade- 2 hours; 6th grade- 4 hours; 7th grade- 6 hours; 8th grade- 8 hours

Summer hours will count toward first semester only. Service hours should be documented and turned into your child’s religion teacher. Service hours log can be found on FACTS under “Resource Documents”.

Lost and Found

All children’s items should be clearly marked including lunch boxes and backpacks. Misplaced items not having the child’s name will be forwarded to the school’s “Lost and Found,” which is located in the front office. On a monthly basis, the unclaimed items located in “Lost and Found” are reviewed, and unmarked/unclaimed items are recycled through the uniform closet or given to local mission organizations.

Parties

Classroom parties are scheduled by the school. Invitations to private parties may not be distributed at school unless all students (or all students of the same gender) within a homeroom are invited.

Any child in grades K-8 celebrating a birthday may bring a small treat to share with classmates. Food treats are given out during lunch period. Our school nutritional guidelines recommend healthy snacks be sent in. Parents bringing special snacks to school should bring them to the cafeteria after reporting to the office to sign in. **Please speak to the teacher about any food allergies students in the homeroom may have.**

Parents of Pre-K students should contact the teacher to schedule a day to bring in special birthday treats. These treats will be given out during afternoon snack.

Volunteers and Visitors

All parents, volunteers, and visitors are required to enter through the main school entrance and report directly to the school office (Diocesan Policy #1650). Visitors will be given a visitor’s badge to wear and asked to sign a volunteer/visitor log. Due to safety and security concerns, parents and other adults are not permitted on the playground during school hours when students are present. All SJNCS volunteers must be CMG trained.

Smoking

In accordance with Tennessee law, St. John Neumann Catholic School observes a smoke-free environment.

INSTRUCTION

Religion

Religion is taught for a minimum of 30 minutes each day.

School Masses are Tuesday (grades 5-8), Thursday (grades K-4), and Friday (all school). Students are expected to actively and reverently participate in Mass. Parents are welcome to join us for Mass; however, students are required to sit with their teachers and classmates.

Pre-K/Kindergarten Progress Report

Kindergarten issues a quarterly report on the achievement of each child. This skills-based report indicates whether the child exceeds the standards, meets the standards, is approaching the standards, or is making little or no progress. Preschool students are assessed on an ongoing basis and meetings are held with parents bi-annually to report progress.

Grades 1-8 Report Cards

Report cards are posted quarterly (approximately every nine weeks). Grades are based on daily work, class participation, homework assignments, projects, tests, performances, conduct, and effort. Grades are posted on FACTS and can be accessed by parents/guardians.

Grading Scale for Grades 1 and 2

G	95-100	S-	75-79
G-	90-94	N	70-74
S+	85-89	U	below 70
S	80-84		

Grading Scale for Grades 3 and Up

A+	99 – 100	B	88 – 90	C-	77 – 78	F	Below 70
A	95 – 98	B-	86 – 87	D+	75 – 76		

A-	93 – 94	C+	84 – 85	D	72 – 74
B+	91 – 92	C	79 – 83	D-	70 – 71

Academic Alert (Grades 5-8)

Each Friday, middle school students' grades are reviewed by administration. Students who have below 70% in two or more subjects due to incomplete or missing assignments will be placed on Academic Alert and will miss breaks, recess (including fun Friday), and study hall until missing or incomplete assignments are turned in. Parents will be notified by email if their child has been placed on Academic Alert. Grades are reassessed each week.

Homework

Homework is an opportunity for parents to gain insight into what students are working on at school and encourage students to understand the value of studying and reviewing assignments in the learning process. The amount of time it takes a student to perform any task will vary from child to child. If a child consistently exceeds the amount of recommended time (Kindergarten: 10 minutes, 1st Grade: 15 minutes, 2nd Grade: 20 minutes, 3rd Grade: 30 minutes, 4th Grade: 40 minutes, 5th Grade: 50 minutes, 6th – 8th Grades: 60 minutes) doing homework, please contact the teacher.

Homework assignments may include the following: completion of assignments begun during the school day, practice of newly learned material, preparation for class, study time, reading, research, and project completion. Time management is crucial when long-term projects are assigned and will affect the time spent on daily homework. The chart below provides a general guideline for homework completion (excluding time spent on outside reading and work on long-term projects).

All MS students may use a daily planner to write down homework. Homework for middle school students will be posted on Google Classroom by subject area.

Missing/Late Work

Student homework/assignments are expected to be completed and turned in on the due date. Students' grades will be penalized for turning in work after the due date.

Students may be required to complete missing or late work during break, lunch recess, and/or study hall. No additional time will be allowed for missing projects or long-term assignments.

Missed Work Due to Absence

Regular attendance enhances student learning. In the case of absences, it is the responsibility of the student to make up assignments missed (Diocesan Policy #1360). Upon returning to school, the student is to meet with the teacher(s) concerning any missed work.

For excused absences, students have the number of days missed plus one to make up and turn in missed work. Please work with the teacher and check Google Classroom for assignments that have been missed.

Teachers are unable to provide a comprehensive list of projected class and homework assignments in advance of actual classroom instruction (i.e. requested work for upcoming travel or preplanned absences).

Standardized Tests

All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Knoxville administer a series of standardized tests as a means of assessing each child's progress and abilities.

The following standardized tests are administered at SJNCS:

- DIAL-4 – Incoming Kindergarten students- spring before entering kindergarten
- Iowa Assessments – Grades 3-8- spring
- Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) – Grades K, 2, 4, 6 - spring

- ARK (assessment of religious knowledge) – Grades 2-8- winter/spring
- STAR Reading and STAR Math – Grades K-8- once a quarter

Honor Roll for Grades 5-8

The following awards are presented at the end of each quarter:

- *Principal's Award* - the top five students in grades 5-8 with the highest grade point average
- *High Honors* - students in grades 5-8 who earn all A's for the quarter
- *Honors* - students in grades 5-8 who earn all A's and B's for the quarter

Enrichment

Students in grades 1-8 qualify for our enrichment program based on the following criteria: standardized test scores, STAR scores, teacher recommendation, and report card grades.

Library

The library is a valuable source of information, offering a variety of resources to our students.

Lost books and books that are damaged beyond repair must be paid for. Students are responsible for the books they check out and should not loan them to other people to read. Students are responsible for any damage to library materials checked out to them including, but not limited to, water/liquid damage, marking or drawing on the pages, torn and torn out pages, teeth marks, broken covers/spines, and damage caused by an animal. The librarian will assess any damage and determine if the book(s) can be repaired or must be replaced.

Please report lost or damaged material(s) as soon as possible. Due to price increases set by publishers, we must charge the replacement cost of the book(s). If lost books are found and returned within the school year, a refund will be issued. ***The librarian must purchase the replacement copies. Books are purchased at special library warehouses and book companies that use library bindings and the books are processed for our library catalog.***

Books checked out through the school library should be renewed/returned weekly.

Technology

Technology is embedded in student learning using cross-curricular instruction. Student learning is enhanced by the use of interactive boards, PCs, laptops, iPads, and other technology tools that support the curriculum. Electronic versions of some student texts are available for student use at home. Annually, students and parents are required to sign and adhere to an Acceptable Use Policy regarding technology. Students must also abide by the Social Media Policy established by the Diocese of Knoxville (located at the back of the handbook).

Every middle school student is issued a Chromebook for the school year. These devices are to be used at school to assist in learning and are not allowed to be taken home. If your child needs a device to complete assignments at home, please contact the administration.

Educational Trips

Educational trips serve as an important aspect of our school curriculum. Students who meet academic and behavioral expectations have the privilege of attending these trips.

Students in grades 3-8 must have a cumulative total of 70% in conduct to earn the privilege of attending an off-campus trip (80% for overnight trips). Any student who has served ISS or OSS has not earned the privilege of attending an overnight trip. A committee comprised of the student's teacher(s) and administrators will meet to evaluate and determine the eligibility of any student who does not meet the above criteria.

“Diocese of Knoxville, Policies and Procedures #1180-#1185 Educational Trips/Outings Risk Management Forms containing information specific to the trip must be obtained before a student will be allowed to go on a trip. A parent/guardian signature must be on the appropriate form. No student may go on a field trip without a permission slip. Verbal or faxed permission slips are not acceptable.”

Due to safety and supervision concerns, only parents that are chaperoning may attend field trips. **No younger siblings may attend.** Any parent serving as a chaperone for a school-related activity must have a signed Liability Waiver. Additionally, the parent must complete CMG training, a background check, and a Diocesan Sexual Policy statement. These forms will remain on file in the school office (Diocesan Policy #1180).

Human Animal Bond in Tennessee (H.A.B.I.T.)

SJNCS is partnered with the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine’s H.A.B.I.T. program in offering animal therapy to our students. St. John Neumann is proud to have H.A.B.I.T. dogs join our faculty and staff to support our school children in the areas of reading, responsibility, and respecting God’s creations. The dogs also supply plenty of affection, emotional support, and reassurance to reluctant readers and/or students affected by anxiety or other emotional stress. **If your child’s class participates in the H.A.B.I.T. program, we will send a permission slip home for parents to sign.**

CONDUCT

St. John Neumann Catholic School faculty and staff believe the purpose of discipline is to foster and maintain Gospel values. Students are expected to use words and actions that reflect the mission of SJNCS. They should strive to respond to Jesus’ call to discipleship by choosing respectful and responsible behavior. Our goal is for each child to grow in good judgment and self-discipline with the hope of creating a faith-filled environment of learning, respect, trust, and cooperation. Examples of expected behaviors include using good manners, greeting others in the hall, working cooperatively in group activities, talking in turn, etc.

We have a school-wide positive behavioral interventions and support (PBIS) model called L.E.A.D which stands for:

- L - Live Responsibly
- E - Exhibit Safety
- A - Act Respectfully
- D - Display Kindness

Recognizing students for excellence, inside and outside the classroom, is important. Saint Benedict and Saint Scholastica displayed the teachings of Jesus through kindness, helpfulness, compassion, humility, respect, patience, obedience, prayerfulness, and charity. Every student at SJNCS can look to these Saints as models of Christian virtue who can help them along their path to Heaven.

Students in K-8 can achieve the St. Benedict (for boys) or the St. Scholastica (for girls) Award. These awards are ways to celebrate students specifically for their positive conduct and character.

The L.E.A.D. model is discussed yearly with students in the first week of school. Consistent language and modeling permeate throughout the building so that all students are well-aware of their expectations. In the event a student is not meeting expectations, the following consequences below may take place: discussion with teachers, loss of privileges, student behavior plan/ parent contact, intervention, and/or office support. This list is not exhaustive.

It is the right of every student at SJNCS to be in a safe environment that allows learning and development to take place. No child has the right to disrupt this environment. A disruptive child will be removed from the class, and the parent will be called. Repeated or severe disruptions may result in the child being sent home and may warrant immediate suspension or dismissal from SJNCS.

More serious offenses that warrant immediate office referrals include (but are not limited to):

- dishonesty including stealing, lying, cheating, plagiarism, or forgery,
- harassment/bullying,
- fighting/hitting/punching, biting,
- leaving school grounds without permission,
- possession of weapons,
- throwing furniture,
- threatening to do injury to a person or property,
- sexual behaviors, language, material,
- vandalism,
- possessing prescription or over-the-counter medications, possessing, receiving, buying, transmitting, selling, or being under the influence of any illegal drug, alcoholic beverage, controlled substance, illegal substance, mind-altering substance, inhalant, or intoxicant of any kind, or any counterfeit controlled substance (A counterfeit controlled substance is any substance that is made to look like a controlled substance or that a student believes to be a controlled substance.)

The parent(s) and the student must meet with the principal/dean the day following the out-of-school suspension, prior to returning to class.

Diocesan Policies Regarding Suspension

*Diocesan Policy #3105 – Students in Catholic schools shall be models of mature, responsible, Christian behavior. Conduct unbecoming a Christian student, whether inside or outside of school, may be reason for suspension or dismissal from school.

*Diocesan Policy #3105 – Any THREAT or misrepresentation by words or actions which may be construed as a “threat” to another person (or group of persons) or may be perceived to be cause for harm to anyone in the educational setting shall be reason for suspension from school.

*Diocesan Policy #3110 – No student shall possess, handle, or transmit any object(s) that can be considered a weapon or other dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student at school.

- On the school grounds during or immediately before or after school hours
- On the school grounds at any time when the school is being used by a school or non-school group
- Off the school grounds at a school-related function, activity, or event
- On vehicles when students are being transported to or from a school-related function or activity

Harassment and Bullying

St. John Neumann Catholic School prohibits acts of harassment and bullying. A safe and respectful environment in school is necessary for students to learn, achieve, and grow. Harassment or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, interferes with a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate students. It is contradictory to the mission and vision of the school and will not be tolerated.

Harassment: Unwanted, unwelcome, and uninvited behavior that demeans, threatens, or offends a student or results in a hostile environment. It may include, but is not limited to epithets, derogatory comments, slurs, assaults, impeding or blocking movement, and visual insults such as cartoons or drawings.

Bullying: Repeated intimidation of others by real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse through attacks on the person or property of others. Bullying may include, but is not limited to verbal taunts, name-calling, code words, gestures, putdowns, implied or stated threats, and exclusion from peer groups.

Harassment and bullying may include gestures, writing (including electronic media), and verbal, physical, or psychological acts of harm. Harassment and bullying on or off school grounds is unacceptable.

Consequences

Several factors will be considered in determining the appropriate response to acts of harassment or bullying: the developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved, the circumstances of the event(s), the nature of the behavior(s), past incidences or a continued pattern of behavior, and the relationship(s) between the parties involved.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of harassment or bullying may range from behavioral intervention to suspension or dismissal. The action taken will be in line with federal and state statutes, as well as school policy.

Complaints alleging harassment and bullying should be reported to an SJNCS faculty member. All school employees are required to address and document allegations of abuse.

Consequences for a student found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment or bullying range from behavioral intervention to suspension or dismissal.

HONOR CODE

Students in grades 5-8 will be asked to follow the SJNCS Honor Code by signing an agreement that will be kept on file. In addition, students will recite an integrity statement before taking tests something similar to: "On my honor, I understand the importance of my integrity, and I will do my personal best."

Cell Phones/Devices

Student cell phones must be turned OFF and always kept in backpacks or lockers. Smart watches and/or watches with communication capabilities may not be worn during the school day. If a student is caught using their watch and/or cell phone without permission, the school has the right to confiscate the device and apply necessary consequences. Cell phone/device use will only be permitted prior to arriving on campus and after 3:35 PM (with permission).

The following disciplinary measures will be applied to violations of the cell phone policy or inappropriate use of a cell phone/watch:

First offense:

- Parent will be notified.
- Cell phone will be confiscated and must be checked in and out of the office (before and after school) for 5 school days.
- All cell phone/watch memory will be reviewed.

Second offense:

- Parent will be notified.
- Cell phone will be confiscated and must be checked in and out of the office (before and after school) for 10 school days.
- 1-day ISS for grades 5-8; lunch detention for grades K-4.
- All cell phone/watch memory will be reviewed.

Any inappropriate content found on a cell phone may result in additional disciplinary action.

GRADES 5-8 DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Conduct grades will be posted on FACTS weekly.

Students begin each week with a conduct grade of 100%. Demerits are earned Friday to Thursday when students fail to follow the guidelines for behavior. These earned deductions will result in the loss of 1, 3, or 10 points as outlined below. This is not an exhaustive list. Behavior (not specifically stated below) may occur that requires disciplinary action by the school.

Level One -- 1 point deduction for each infraction and appropriate consequences

- A Disrupting class
- B Failure to follow instructions/not prepared for class
- C Late for class without permission
- D Uniform infraction or inappropriate dress

Level Two --3 point deduction for each infraction and appropriate consequences

- E Rudeness to another
- F Disruption during Mass or prayer
- G Failure to keep hands and feet to self/rough housing
- H Unauthorized or inappropriate use of any electronic device (see additional section on cell phone policy)
- I Throwing objects or food

Level Three -- 10 point deduction for each infraction and appropriate consequences

- J Inappropriate language, gestures, material
- K Aggressive physical contact
- L Disrespect for teachers or staff
- M Destruction of property
- N Dishonesty (lying, stealing, cheating)
- O Verbal or written abuse or bullying of peers (includes electronic media)
- P Being in an undesignated area

Any student falling below 70% for the week will be placed on Conduct Alert.

- **First** – Five days of lunch detention. No in-school special activities, such as out-of-uniform and pep rallies for five school days.
- **Second** – All consequences remain the same as the first alert; however, it is for a ten-day period.
- **Third** – One day in-school suspension. Parents will need to meet with the administration and possibly other staff to formulate a plan of action.
- **Fourth** – Pastor and Superintendent will be consulted. Dismissal may be warranted.

DRESS CODE

PRESCHOOL:

Preschool students may wear any solid navy or gray shirt and khaki bottoms (shorts, skirts, pants). Shirts do not need to have the SJN logo. These can be purchased at any retailer. Any style sneakers may be worn with white, grey, black, or navy socks. White, grey, black, or navy tights or leggings are allowed. Privacy shorts must be worn with skirts or jumpers.

K- 8 Uniform Guidelines

SJNCS approved uniform vendors: Lands' End, My APlus Uniforms, Tommy Hilfiger, or SJNCS Spirit Wear Shops (if they are available through these vendors, they are approved)

All uniform polo shirts must be purchased through MyAplus Uniforms (formerly Educational Outfitters), Lands' End (school ID #900126608), or Tommy Hilfiger.

Uniform bottoms may be purchased through our preferred vendors, or you may purchase the khaki and navy bottoms from the Uniform Line at any retail store. Plaid jumpers, skirts, and skorts are available through MyAplus Uniforms and Tommy Hilfiger ONLY.

- ❖ *A solid white undershirt may be worn underneath uniform shirts but should not extend past the sleeves or length of the shirt.*
- ❖ **All shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee when the child is standing upright.**
- ❖ **Girls should wear privacy shorts (any color) under their jumpers, skorts, or skirts every day.**

- ❖ SJNCS sports' team shirts/jerseys/jackets are not part of the regular school uniform and should only be worn on game days. Teams will designate one shirt to wear on game days.
- ❖ Wednesdays are SJNCS Spirit Days. Students may wear SJNCS Spirit Shirts (including sweatshirts/hoodies) with their uniform pants, shorts, skirts/skortts, or jumpers.

SPECIAL MASS DAY UNIFORMS FOR EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS:

- ❖ *Boys: white button-down shirt (short or long sleeve), khaki pants, tie (available at MyAplus Uniforms)*
- ❖ *Girls: white button-down shirt (short, ¾ length, or long sleeve), plaid skirt or khaki pants*

Personal Care/Accessories Dress Code Grades K-8

- Hair must be neat, clean, combed, and should not hang below the eyebrows.
- Boys' hair must be off the collar and off the ears.
- Hair must be a natural color.
- Girls' hair bands, bows, and ribbons should not detract from the learning environment. All hair accessories should be an SJNCS school uniform color (white, green, gold, navy blue, grey, yellow, black).

Standard, conservative haircuts are appropriate in the school environment. The school reserves the right to determine what constitutes an appropriate style.

Jewelry:

- Girls may wear one set of stud/post earrings.
- Boys may not wear earrings.
- One modest necklace is permitted. Religious necklaces are encouraged.
- Two bracelets may be worn. Hairbands count as bracelets. One watch may be worn- Smart Watches are not allowed to be worn during the school day. Smart Watches must be kept in backpacks.
- Students may wear two rings total.

***** Jewelry that becomes a distraction must be removed.**

Makeup:

- Girls may wear a natural skin-toned solid nail polish (no stickers, no patterns, etc.)
- No acrylic nails.
- No press on (fake) nails.
- Eighth grade girls may wear light make up including foundation, blush, and lip gloss only

Out-of-Uniform Dress Code Pre-K-8

Students are expected to dress appropriately for school on non-uniform days, maintaining the same level of modesty and neatness required on uniform days. Uniform guidelines for hair and jewelry must be followed.

The following restrictions apply:

- No oversized clothing
- No tight-fitting or revealing shirts or blouses
- No biker shorts
- No visible undergarments
- No shirts that have spaghetti straps, show midriff, or display inappropriate or controversial subject matter

- No tank tops in middle school
- No shorts/skirts/skorts shorter than 3" above the kneecap
- No cut-off shirts or shorts
- No inappropriate shoes for school (i.e. house slippers, flip flops) – All shoes must have a closed back or strap.
- No pajamas
- No costumes

***Students arriving at school wearing questionable attire will be required to call a parent to bring their uniform or different clothing for the student to wear.
Students who violate the Out-of-Uniform Dress Code may be prohibited from participating in future out-of-uniform days.
Students who are on Conduct Alert on an out-of-uniform day must wear their school uniform.***

K- 8 UNIFORM DRESS CODE

Boys K-4	GIRLS K-4	BOYS 5-8	GIRLS 5-8
Pants: Navy blue uniform pants	Pants: Navy blue uniform pants	Pants: Khaki uniform pants	Pants (Long or Capri length): Khaki uniform pants
Shorts: Navy blue uniform walking shorts	Shorts/Skorts: Navy blue uniform walking shorts or skorts Jumper: Green plaid jumper	Shorts: Khaki uniform walking shorts	Shorts: Khaki uniform walking shorts Skirt: Green plaid or khaki skirt
Knit shirt: Grey or hunter green with SJNCS logo, long or short sleeves.	Knit shirt: Grey or hunter green with SJNCS logo, long or short sleeves. Blouse: White short or long sleeve button-down	Knit shirt: Grey or hunter green with SJNCS logo, long or short sleeves. Shirt: White button-down long or short sleeves	Knit shirt: Grey or hunter green with SJNCS logo, long or short sleeves. Shirt: White button-down long or short sleeves; or ¾ sleeve oxford shirt worn un-tucked
Outerwear: sweater/sweatshirt/fleece jacket/fleece vest/three-quarter zip navy, hunter green, or grey	Outerwear: sweater/sweatshirt/fleece jacket/fleece vest/three-quarter zip navy, hunter green, or grey	Outerwear: sweater/sweatshirt/fleece jacket/fleece vest/three-quarter zip navy, hunter green, or grey	Outerwear: sweater/sweatshirt/fleece jacket/fleece vest/three-quarter zip navy, hunter green, or grey
Socks: Solid white, grey, navy or black, must be visible. Small logo allowed.	Socks: Solid white, grey, navy, or black and visible; small logo allowed; white or navy knee-hi or tights Leggings/tights: White, grey, or navy full-length leggings worn under jumpers or skirts	Socks: Solid white, grey, navy, or black, must be visible. Small logo allowed.	Socks: Solid white, grey, navy, or black, and visible; small logo allowed; white or navy knee-hi or tights Leggings/tights: White, grey, or navy full-length leggings worn under skirts
Shoes: Tennis shoes or white, black, brown or navy leather dress shoes with non-marking soles, must have backs	Shoes: Tennis shoes or white, black, brown or navy leather dress shoes with non-marking soles, must have backs	Shoes: Tennis shoes or white, black, brown or navy leather dress shoes with non-marking soles must, have backs	Shoes: Tennis shoes or white, black, brown or navy leather dress shoes with non-marking soles, must have backs
Belt: Solid black, brown, or navy (Required in grades 3-8)	Belt: Solid black, brown, or navy (Required in grades 3-8)	Belt: Solid black, brown, or navy (Required in grades 3-8)	Belt: Solid black, brown, or navy (Required in grades 3-8)

Dear Parents:

A copy of the 2024-2025 St. John Neumann Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook has been sent via email and is also available on FACTS under Resource Documents. You and your child(ren) should read the handbook thoroughly for a complete understanding of our policies and procedures.

Please complete the form below and have your child return it to the front office no later than Monday, August 12.

Sincerely,
Kelly Mechelke, PhD
Principal

(Cut along dotted line and return the bottom portion to the school.)

Read and sign below:

We have read the 2024-2025 St. John Neumann Catholic School Parent/Student Handbook and agree to abide by all policies and procedures described therein.

Print family name: _____

Parent signature: _____

Student signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student signature: _____ Grade: _____

Student signature: _____ Grade: _____



Photo Release Form

On occasion, **St. John Neumann Catholic School** uses photos of students in school and parish publications to share information about the school. Such publications include, but are not limited to: website, press releases, yearbook, social media pages (including but not limited to Facebook and Instagram), advertisements, annual reports, posters, banners, newsletters, parish bulletins, and other public relations materials. In addition, local news organizations may hear of our activities or events, and our school may invite or allow them to photograph and/or record our events. In all cases, **St. John Neumann Catholic School** will take appropriate steps to protect the identities and privacy of all students and families.

This form will remain in effect until the parent/guardian listed here requests a change in writing. **NOTE: Your agreement to allow St. John Neumann Catholic School to use your student's/students' photo in the examples noted above will be assumed unless the school office receives this signed form by August 12, 2024.**

Please check one of the options below and sign:

My student's photo may be published in any format including group or individual photos in any of the examples noted on this form.

My student's photo may **not** be published in any format including group or individual photos in any of the examples noted on this form.

Name of Student _____	Grade _____
Name of Student _____	Grade _____
Name of Student _____	Grade _____
Name of Student _____	Grade _____
Name of Student _____	Grade _____

Name of Parent/Guardian _____

_____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Sign and return to school office. A copy of this form will be sent home in your child's Friday Folder for your records