



St. Vincent de Paul
Catholic School
Family Handbook
2015-2016

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Elkhart, Indiana
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Family Handbook Receipt Acknowledgement

Enrollment at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School is a privilege, not a right. Students agree to be governed by the school policies and procedures contained within this handbook. Parents are expected to support these policies and procedures.

Failure to do so will result in disciplinary actions that may lead to suspension and possible expulsion from St. Vincent School.

By signing below we acknowledge that we have received a copy of the St. Vincent de Paul School Family Handbook. We understand that the handbook contains important information about the school, its administration, and about the educational and disciplinary policies and procedures that the school maintains in the furtherance of its religious mission as part of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne – South Bend.

We agree to follow all rules and guidelines imposed in the school by the school administration and/or diocese. If we have any questions about the content of the handbook, we understand that it is our obligation to ask questions for clarification. However, the failure to read the handbook or to sign or return this acknowledgement shall not relieve us of the obligation to follow all rules and guides that the school and the diocese establish or in any way impede or prevent the school administration from operating the school consistent with those rules and guidelines.

Right to Amend

St. Vincent de Paul School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the Wednesday letter.

Mission Statement

St. Vincent De Paul School's mission is to glorify God through engaged education and development of responsibility with an emphasis on spiritual growth

Belief Statements

At St. Vincent de Paul School, we believe that:

- every student has personal worth and dignity
- Christ-centered values form and permeate every action and decision
- adults in the school community serve as important, positive role models for faith-filled values
- high standards and expectations are essential for all members of the school community
- parents are the first and primary teachers of their children

Vision

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School will provide our students with programs of academic excellence and ongoing faith formation allowing them to grow in a safe and caring environment that is animated by Catholic social values. We value the diversity of our students and will provide all students with a firm spiritual, academic and social foundation upon which they can build their future.

EDUCATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The total education of the student is a mutual effort among student, school and parent. Each party has a role to fulfill. These roles are inter-related if the student is to be helped at optimum level.

Student Responsibilities:

1. Attend school on assigned days and times.
2. Obey the rules of the school. This includes a respectful attitude toward all adults and other students.
3. Put forth effort to learn as much as possible.
4. Meet classroom expectations of individual teachers, this includes homework.
5. Respect school property.

Parent Responsibilities

1. Be familiar with and support regulations as listed in this handbook.
2. Assist the school in teaching of the basic Christian principles.
3. See that the child receives proper rest, diet, medical care and time for study.
4. See that students arrive at school on time and attend regularly.
5. Cooperate with the teachers, keeping in mind what is best for each student.
6. Attend Parent\Teacher Conferences.

Teacher Responsibilities:

1. Prepare to the best of one's ability and time the type of class lessons that will assist each child to learn according to his/her ability.
2. Respect the dignity of the child at all times.
3. Participate in a partnership with the parents for the good of the students.
4. Note the child's behavior, (social, academic and emotional) in order to evaluate with parents the progress of the child.

The Role of the Administration is to:

1. Supervise teachers, students, and curriculum.
2. Incorporate the directives and regulations of the diocese, state and religious community offices of education into the school procedure.
3. Enforce school policies and procedures.
4. Serve as a liaison between school and parents.

PERSONNEL

Pastor

The pastor is the spiritual leader of the school. He is to insure the execution of all the diocesan policies and directives. As spiritual leader the pastor will share with the faculty his vision of religious education. While he will not be involved in the administration details of the school, his ongoing dialogue with the staff will make it possible for his ideals to be reflected in the programs. He will be involved in the Sacramental Program and worship experiences for the students and their parents. He will be present in the school to whatever degree and in whatever way seems most natural and advantageous to all. Finally, he will work to develop, nourish, and strengthen the faith community among the school staff.

Principal

The principal is the Executive Director of the school. He/she administers, supervises and coordinates all educational activities within the school. He/she is responsible for staff development and for hiring new teachers with the approval of the pastor. He/she works in close harmony with the pastor of the parish. His/her responsibility of educational leadership extends to the faculty and the students in creating a harmonious working body. The principal sets the tone, the atmosphere, and the spirit of the school.

Assistant Principal

The assistant principal fulfills regularly assigned administrative duties as determined by the principal. In the absence of the principal, the assistant principal has full authority and responsibility.

Teachers

Our teachers are certified by the State of Indiana and approved by the Ft. Wayne-South Bend Diocesan Superintendent of Schools. Teachers are commissioned by church authorities to be the authentic witnesses to the truths, moral principles, and values of the Roman Catholic faith. This practice testifies to the Church's confidence that Catholic school teachers, with God's help, will have a positive influence on their students' ideals and attitudes. Teachers are responsible for the academic instruction of the students, the evaluation and grading of scholastic achievement, and the maintenance and promotion of discipline. They work directly with the principal.

ADMISSION

Admission to St. Vincent de Paul School is a privilege, not a right. Students who cannot meet our behavior expectations may be placed on an individual contract, which may lead to suspension or expulsion from St. Vincent School.

St. Vincent de Paul School admits students of any race, religion, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students in our school.

St. Vincent de Paul School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and student aid programs, or any other school-administered programs.

St. Vincent de Paul School is not handicapped accessible.

Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend Policy 4010

Students - Enrollment

I. School Admissions Policy

Diocesan schools shall comply with state laws and regulations regarding school enrollment and attendance to the extent possible, as consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church and diocesan policy.

II. Nondiscrimination Policy

Diocesan schools shall follow and promote an open enrollment policy-accepting students without regard to color, race, gender or national origin, and reasonably accommodate the disabled in its educational programs.

III. School Entrance Requirements

A child can be enrolled only by a person having the legal custody of the child. A certified copy of the student's birth certificate, or a baptismal certificate shall be required for original entrance at all grade levels. Proof of legal custody may also be required in cases where a child does not reside with both natural parents.

If these required documents are not provided to the school within thirty (30) days of the student's enrollment or appear to be inaccurate or fraudulent, the school shall notify the Indiana Clearing House for Information on Missing Children (See P4030) and will cooperate with local authorities if the child has been reported missing.

The custodial parent or legal guardian shall provide the name and address of the school the student last attended, if any. The school shall request the records from the last school the student attended, if any. The School shall request the records from the last school the student attended within fourteen (14) days of enrollment.

Written proof that the child meets state and county health requirements (immunization record) for enrollment shall also be required.

Students are required to take a placement test that will help determine the proper grade level for new students entering school.

IV. Kindergarten Age Requirement

Schools shall follow state law in enrollment of Kindergarten students. In order to enroll in Kindergarten, a child must be at least five (5) years of age on August 1.

A school may choose to administer the Gesell Assessment of Development Readiness or other readiness test for determining proper placement in kindergarten.

NOTE: A child coming into a diocesan school from an out-of-state kindergarten program or an in-state kindergarten program and who does not meet the Indiana state age-eligibility requirement, should be admitted to a kindergarten program, unless it can be determined that enrollment in such a program was intended to circumvent Indiana law.

V. First Grade Entrance Requirements

A child entering first grade must be six years old on or before August 1.

Students enrolling in a diocesan school after successfully attending kindergarten in another accredited school that has different age requirements shall be allowed to continue in school without interruption because of chronological age.

VI. Children with Exceptional Educational Needs

Children with exceptional educational needs requiring special class placement are accepted if their needs can be reasonably accommodated in the school. Initial enrollment should be on a tentative basis with the understanding that in the event the exceptional needs of the child cannot be reasonably accommodated by the school, the custodial parents or guardians will agree to enroll their child in another school system which can accommodate the special needs of exceptional children.

Ordinarily when a diocesan school cannot reasonably accommodate the exceptional needs of a child, a recommendation for special class placement should be made to the custodial parent or guardian by the principal, after consultation with the child's teacher(s). This recommendation will be either for special class placement within the Catholic school or referral to a public school for evaluation or placement. If the custodial parent or guardian does not accept the school's recommendation, it is expected that he/she will place the decision in writing. In some instances the custodial parent or guardian will be required to withdraw the child if the child's continued presence, in the opinion of school personnel, would pose an undue hardship on the operation of the school, or poses a threat of harm to the student, other students or school personnel.

VII. Students or Prospective Students with Communicable Diseases

Catholic schools shall comply with all applicable state laws and all Board of Health policies regarding school enrollment and attendance in relation to a student or prospective student having a communicable disease.

Prospective students who meet all entrance requirements may not be denied admission solely on the basis of a diagnosis of a communicable disease unless required by applicable state law or board of health policy; similarly, students may not be excluded merely on the basis of a diagnosis of a communicable disease.

However, as with any prospective student who is diagnosed as having or is suspected of having a communicable disease, a child with a communicable disease may be excluded, if after an individualized assessment of the child's condition, in accordance with the school's communicable disease policy/procedure, it is determined that the child's presence in the classroom would expose others to significant health and safety risks.

Upon being informed that a child is diagnosed as having or is suspected of having a communicable disease, a review team consisting of the student; his/her parent/guardian; his/her physician; a physician representing the school, parish or diocese; and school or parish administrators will be established to determine whether the child's admission or continued presence in the school would expose others to significant health and safety risks. In making its determination the review team, will conduct an assessment of the child's individual condition. The review team's inquiry will include findings of fact, based on reasonable medical judgments given the state of medical knowledge about:

- A. the nature of the risk – how the disease is transmitted;
- B. the duration of the risk - how long the carrier is infectious;
- C. the severity of the risk – the potential harm to third parties;
- D. the probabilities the disease will be transmitted and will cause varying degrees of harm, and;

E. whether a reasonable accommodation exists and/or is required.

The review team must also take into consideration the scope of the problem, education-related civil rights, and the student's right to confidentiality.

The recommendation of the review team and the decision of the parish and school administrators shall be considered confidential and will be submitted for review only to the Superintendent of Schools, Vicar of Education, and diocesan attorney.

In the event it is determined that a child is unable to attend regular Catholic day school, the parish, school and diocese will assist the parent/guardian in locating alternative educational services and obtaining religious and catechetical instruction.

ACADEMICS

St. Vincent de Paul School is a certified school accredited by the State of Indiana and North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement (NCA). Our teachers are licensed by the State and approved by the Diocese.

Curriculum

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School follows the State and Diocesan Curriculums.

Religious Curriculum

Faith formation is an important part of St. Vincent de Paul School. Each grade has religion class and prayer experiences as part of the daily and weekly schedule.

-Liturgies

St. Vincent School is a vibrant faith community. School liturgies are an important part of prayer life. The children and their teachers participate in the Eucharist twice a week. Students are directly involved in the preparation of the Liturgy.

Prayer Services are held on monthly. Throughout the school year, the students participate Stations of the Cross, Penance Services and other services both in and out of the church.

-Sacramental Preparation

Preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist occurs in the second grade. Preparation includes classes in instructions for students, parent meetings and family activities. Catholic students in grades 3 thru 6 who have not received the sacrament of Reconciliation and Eucharist should contact the Religious Education Department (293-8071).

-Service Projects

During the years, students will have an opportunity to help further the message of love by taking part in missionary projects such as: Operation Rice Bowl, Christmas and Thanksgiving Food Drives, Nursing Home Visits and other activities. Each class, grades kindergarten through sixth adopt a special service project which they work on throughout the school year. Beginning in kindergarten students are required to perform service hours throughout the school year.

-Parent Service Hours

Part of the success of schools is dependent on the time donated by volunteers for events, committees, etc. Starting this school year, service hours will be required of parents of students at St. Vincent de Paul. Ten hours of service each semester (20 per year) will be required to remain an active member of St. Vincent de Paul School. There will be many opportunities to fulfill this requirement such as breakfast, lunch, HASA, Notre Dame Concession Stand and so on. A list of opportunities will be sent home soon to choose

-God's Gift of Human Sexuality

The Catholic school upholds and supports God's plan for sexual relations by promoting chastity and a respect for human life. Sexual union is intended by God to express the complete gift of self that a man and a woman make to one another in marriage, a mutual gift which opens them to the gift of a child. Therefore all students are expected to live a chaste lifestyle and to abstain from sexual relations.

In conformity with pastoral guidelines from the Holy See on human love and sexuality, the moral and spiritual aspects of human love and sexuality will be presented to students within the school's curriculum. Parents, as the primary educators of their children, are normally expected to address the more intimate details of human love and sexuality at home with their child. However, if parents need assistance in this area, they may delegate this personalized dialogue with their child to a teacher, counselor or some other trustworthy person. The diocesan Office of Family Life, in conjunction with the parishes and schools, will assist parents of elementary students in carrying out this responsibility of family life education.

Communication

Effective communication is essential for a healthy school environment. If concerns arise, talking directly to the persons involved is imperative. Talking *about* a problem to those who are not involved will only make the situation worse. Gossip is a waste of time and creates an environment of distrust and conflict.

-Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice a year. During this time, each parent meets each student's teacher to discuss the academic progress of the child. Parents are encouraged and are welcome to contact a teacher whenever they feel such a conference is necessary. It is highly recommended that these conferences be made by appointment to be sure the teacher can spend all the time you may require. When a problem does occur, parents are to contact the teacher first. The principal and/or pastor should not be contacted until after this initial contact has been made.

Parent/Legal Guardian Concerns Procedure

Policy 2310

To facilitate and promote the orderly and efficient resolution of concerns, parents/legal guardians wishing to address and/or question an academic area or situation regarding a specific teacher or classroom procedure must follow the grievance procedure below:

Step

1. Address the issue with the classroom teacher (or the person with whom he/she has the
2. Address the issue with the Principal.
3. Address the issue with the Pastor.
4. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, then the parent/guardian should place his/her concerns in writing to the person involved and his/her supervisors (e.g. pastor and principal).

The principal and pastor will not meet with parents who have not followed the chain of communication properly. Contacting the School Board to discuss concerns will lead back to this procedure. The School Board does not handle complaints; the Board works in an advisory capacity only.

Unsigned letters will not be read, as there is no possible way to respond to the author of the letter.

Daily Schedule

A monitor is on duty from 7:30 to 8:00 a.m. The monitor has the same authority and responsibility as any faculty member for the safety of the children.

7:55 A.M.	First Bell
8:00	Classes Begin
8:15	Mass
11:00	Preschool dismissal/3yr old Tues./Thur.
11:00/3:00	Preschool dismissal/4yr old am/pm
11:40-12:30	Lunch & Recess for Kindergarten
11:45-12:30	Lunch & Recess - Grades 1-2-3
11:45-12:30	Recess & Lunch – Grades 4-5-6
3:00	Bus Dismissal
3:05	Car riders dismissal

Students not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will be sent to Almost Home. **A penalty fee of \$5.00 for every hour late will be charged to parents if children are not picked up on time.**

Field Trips

Field Trips which help to supplement or enrich the curriculum are encouraged. No student may go on a field trip unless the signed permission forms have been returned before the trip. Verbal permission (including phone calls) cannot be accepted. Students who do not participate in a field trip will be counted as absent for the day.

Grading Scale (Grades 2-6)

93%- 100%	= A (Superior)
85%- 92%	= B (Above Average)
73%- 84%	= C (Average)
65%- 72%	= D (Below Average)
Below 65%	= F (Failure)

Homework

Homework assignments will be given as deemed necessary by the individual teacher. Students often begin their assignments under teacher supervision. If a student is absent, it is the student and parent's responsibility to obtain the make-up assignments from the teacher.

The following are a few suggestions to help your children develop profitable study habits:

1. Check with your child to see what she/he must do.
2. Have a definite time provided and a quiet place to study.
*If no homework is assigned, use this time for a school-related activity (reading, etc.).
Turn off the T.V. and the Radio.*
4. Remember that some homework is study, not written. Library reading is encouraged.

Homework Detention Policy

Students are responsible for completing their assignments on time. Students will be allowed one time per month to turn in an assignment late. The first time an assignment is missing (each month) the teacher will issue a "Homework Notification" slip. The parent/guardian must sign and return the slip the following day. If a student misses a second assignment, a detention will be served after school. **Detentions will be on Wednesday from 3:05 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.** Teachers will send a detention slip home with the child notifying the parents/guardians. A parent/guardian must sign and return the slip the following day. If the student does not return the signed slip, he/she will call the parent/guardian from the principal's office. An additional detention period will be served by the student for failure to return the signed detention slip.

At 4:00 p.m., the parent must come into the school and pick up the child from the detention room. If the parent is sending someone else to pick up the child, a note must be sent in to notify the school.

If a child is not picked up at promptly at 4:00 p.m., they will be sent to Almost Home and a penalty fee of \$5 for every hour late will be charged to parents. The adults who are serving as monitors in the detention room have many other obligations and cannot sit and wait for parents to pick up their children.

Students are to turn in finished work to the detention monitor. **If the late work is not turned in by the following day the student will receive a '0' for that assignment, and will not be allowed to make it up.** Please remember that we at St. Vincent School are striving for excellence in education--*your* child's education. It is our hope that this policy will be instrumental in developing successful habits that will be beneficial to our students throughout their entire lives.

ANY STUDENT WHO RECEIVES 3 HOMEWORK DETENTIONS IN ONE GRADING PERIOD WILL BE REQUIRED TO ATTEND A CONFERENCE WITH THE PRINCIPAL, TEACHER AND PARENT.

Honor Roll

To be eligible for the Honor Roll, students must maintain a B average in academic classes. Students do not qualify for the Honor Roll if they receive a D in any subject on the report card.

Students on Modified Programs will receive a Certificate of Achievement rather than Honor Roll.

Progress Reports

-Mid-terms

Mid-term reports are issued to students in grades 4, 5 and 6 mid-way through each grading period.

-Report Cards

Report cards are issued quarterly to students in grades K-6. Report cards are to be signed by the parent and returned to the teacher.

-Special Services

Testing for Speech, Learning Disabilities and Psychological problems in cooperation with Elkhart Community School Corporation.

ATHLETICS

St. Vincent School participates in the Elkhart Community Schools Athletic Program. This extra-curricular athletic program is primarily for students in grades 5 and 6. Occasionally, 4th graders will be invited to participate if more team members are needed. We participate in Football, Basketball, Track, Soccer, Volleyball, Cheerleading and Softball when coaches are available. **IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO BE A TEAM MEMBER. ATTENDANCE AND ATTITUDE ARE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT IN ORDER TO HAVE SUCCESSFUL TEAMS.**

-Eligibility

Any student receiving an F on a mid-term or report card will be ineligible until the grade has been raised (at least 3 days). Students will attend team practices and games, but will not participate. Any student receiving more than one (1) referral during a grading period will be removed from the team. Any student who misses 3 practices will be removed from the team. **Serving detention will be considered missing practice.**

Elkhart Community Schools Elementary Athletic Guidelines

1. Academics
Athletes must maintain passing grades in all subjects. Grade checks will be conducted weekly. Any athlete with a failing grade will be ineligible until the grade is raised above failing.
2. Attendance
Students must be present in school one-half of the school day to be eligible for contests.
3. Behavior
Students who are presently on in-school or out-of-school suspension are ineligible for athletic contests.

NOTES:

- A. It is the responsibility of the coach to maintain accurate and regular grade checks.
- B. These are minimum standards - individual coaches or schools may choose to use a higher standard for their athletics.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is checked each morning at 8:00 A.M.

Absence

Parents are to notify the school office by **8:30 A.M.** each day that their child/ren will not be in attendance at school.

Should the absence not be reported to the office, the parent/guardian will be called to verify the absence.

When the student returns to school, a written excuse from the parent or guardian must be presented, signed by the parent, stating the date of absence and the specific reason for the absence.

Please do not send a sick child to school. If your child is unable to participate fully in school activities (gym), please send a dated note giving the reason. All students will go outside for recess. No child may leave the school grounds during the school day, for any reason, without permission from the principal. The parents should request this permission in advance.

Tardiness

A child is tardy if he/she is not in the classroom by 8:00 a.m or when any class is scheduled to begin. Teachers do not admit tardy students to the classroom until they have reported to the school office. Students who are consistently tardy (more than 4 times per grading period) are issued a partial recess detention/walking recess. They make up missed time from classes at this detention time. **Lunches are ordered at 8:30**, if your child arrives after this time, a lunch cannot be ordered for that day. Please call ahead to order if you know you will be late. **Parents whose children are tardy 4 times will be required to meet with the principal.**

Vacations

Absence for travel is a parental decision. The teacher is not required to send work for the student to do during the absence. It is the responsibility of the student and parents to see that all missed work is completed in a timely manner.

Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend Policy 4040

Students -Attendance

The diocesan schools consider the development of good attendance habits as a vital and desirable undertaking for two essential reasons. First, it is difficult for young people to learn if they are not in class: the teaching-learning process builds upon itself. Secondly, research shows that educational achievement is directly related to attendance. A student who misses a day of school misses a day of education that cannot be retrieved in its entirety.

I. Parent/Legal Guardian Responsibility

Parent/legal guardians are responsible for having their children in school. Indiana law prescribes that parents must have their children in public or private school from the age of (7) until the date on which the child:

- A. Graduates;
- B. Reaches at least sixteen (16) years of age or less than eighteen (18) years of age and:
 - 1. The student and the student's parent or guardian and the principal agree to the withdrawal; and
 - 2. At the exit interview the student provides written acknowledgment of the withdrawal and the student's parent or guardian and the school principal each provide written consent of the student to withdraw from school; and
 - 3. Reaches the age of eighteen (18) years.

II. Absences from School

Absences from school shall fall into one of the three following categories:

- A. Absences which are counted as present
 - 1. Serving as a page in the Indiana General Assembly;
 - 2. For students in grades 7 through 12, serving on a precinct election board or as a helper to a political candidate or political party on election day with prior approval of the principal;
 - 3. Court appearances pursuant to a subpoena
 - 4. Active duty with the Indiana National Guard for not more than ten (10) days in a school year;
 - 5. Placement in a short term inpatient treatment program which provides an instructional program;
 - 6. Homebound instruction;
 - 7. Religious observances; and/or
 - 8. For high school students, serving on the state standards tasks force. The student must provide a written verification from the chairman of the task force indicating the date and

times the student was to be in attendance at the meeting and verifying the student's attendance.

B. Excused Absences

1. Illness of the student (with written statement by parent/guardian or doctor)
2. Funerals
 - a. for death in the immediate family
 - b. for persons outside of the immediate family with parental permission
3. Medical and legal-Such appointments should be scheduled after school hours when possible.
4. Out-of-school suspension
5. Family vacations-It is strongly recommended that families take their vacations during the regularly scheduled school breaks. If a student misses school due to a family vacation, the days will be excused if:
 - a. the student is accompanied by his/her parent/guardian while on vacation, and
 - b. notification in writing is made at least ten schools days in advance;
6. School/college visits (2)-parents/guardians need to check with the individual school's policy for arranging such visits;
7. Prearranged activity approved by the principal.

C. Unexcused Absences

1. No parent/guardian contact with the school giving an explanation for the absence on the day of the absence.
2. No physician's note to excuse an absence once more than 5 days of absence have occurred (see Frequent or Prolonged Illness below).
3. Absences other than those defined as excused or absences counted as present.

III. Truancy

A student is truant when she/he is absent from school or class without the permission of his/her parent/guardian and the school. Students who are habitually truant shall be reported to the juvenile authorities in accordance with applicable state law and following diocesan procedures.

Habitual Truancy may be evidenced by the following:

- A. Refusal to attend school in defiance of parental authority.
- B. Accumulating a number of absences from school without justification over a period of time, such as a grading period. Habitual truancy is not evidenced by a single isolated incident of unexcused absence.
- C. Three (3) or more judicial findings of truancy.

IV. Reporting an Absence

A parent/guardian shall contact the school to report a student's absence. Each school has established procedures for reporting absences. Absences will not be excused and the student may be considered truant if the procedure for reporting an absence is not followed.

A written explanation for any absence and signed by a parents/guardian is required upon the return of the student to school. The school is not required to provide credit for makeup of assigned work missed because the student's absence is unexcused or the student is truant.

V. Frequent or Prolonged Illness

If a student is absent for five consecutive days due to illness, or has contracted a contagious disease, a physician's statement may be required in order for the student to return to school.

VI. Response to Irregular Attendance

If an irregular attendance pattern begins to develop, the school may use the following procedure to encourage the student's return to a pattern of regular school attendance.

- A. Call daily from school (secretary, principal, or attendance clerk), to the parent/guardian to verify absence and to determine reason.

- B. After a student is absent 6 days per school year, a school administrator, attendance clerk, or counselor will make contact with the student's parent/guardian. The date and content of this contact shall be documented.
- C. After a student is absent over 12 days per school year, a conference shall be held with the parent/guardian and the student. An attendance contract may be established at this time and documentation shall be kept.
- D. After a student is absent over 15 days per school year, a referral shall be made to the principal. If the principal is unable to successfully resolve the attendance problem, a referral may be made to the intake officer of the local Juvenile Probation Department.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are responsible if they lose books, break or damage, furniture, equipment or other school property. Parents will be expected to compensate and hopefully the student will work off the amount with the parents.

GUM is not permitted in the school building.

The St. Vincent School Pledge

*I believe that Jesus is present
in each of my classmates,
in my teachers and in me.*

*Therefore, all my actions will show
my respect for Jesus.*



DISCIPLINE

“The teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church are the guiding principles of behavior for all students while enrolled in a diocesan school.” (From **Policy 4410 Diocese of Ft. Wayne-South Bend**)

Students are responsible for their own behavior. Students will conduct themselves in accordance with the rules both while on school premises and while off school premises concerning school-sponsored activities.

Enrollment at St. Vincent de Paul School is a privilege, not a right. Students who are admitted to St. Vincent School agree to be governed by the school policies and procedures contained in this handbook. Parents are expected to support these policies and procedures. **Failure to do so will result in disciplinary actions that may lead to suspension and possible expulsion from St. Vincent dePaul School.**

There are 3 All School Rules:

1. Be respectful
2. Be responsible
3. Be safe

Each classroom has a discipline cycle. Students are aware of the behavior expected and the consequences if the rules are not followed.

Three anti-social behaviors are identified as the “Big Three.”

1. Physical/psychological danger
2. Abuse in tone, gesture or word
3. Out of control behavior

If a student violates one of the “Big Three” the student will be sent to the principal’s office immediately and the following four step Discipline Cycle will be set in motion.

FIRST STEP: PRE-Verbal Action Plan

Adults will:

- a) Interview the student one by one, apart from the class if possible.
- b) Remind the student of the rule has been broken.
- c) Ask students to think about the ability of self-discipline that can help has to follow the rules at that time.
- d) Ask students if they think there will be a change in behavior.
- e) Think about 1 to 2 strategies that can help students meet their class rules.

Note: If the student can not self-control using the established procedure, STEP TWO discipline cycle begins. The cycle of discipline established by the teachers in their classrooms can be used. If neither of these suggestions help the student correct their behavior then proceed to STEP TWO.

STEP TWO: The Action Plan in Writing

a) Student meets with principal.

*A comprehensive action plan will be developed with the student and principal/teacher and consequences may be assigned at this time.

b) A copy of the Action Plan will go to the teacher, counselor, sent to the parent, and is on file in the school office.

c) The Administrative Staff of the Office may speak briefly with parents after the children finish their conversation to do three things:

- Inform parents (in front of the child) we are satisfied that the child is willing to take the initiative to solve the problem of common interest (that shows a high level of self-discipline).
- Establish time to do this work and remind them that at the end of this plan will be sent home to be signed.
- Briefly review the next course of action in the cycle.

STEP THREE:

If the student is sent to the principal for a third time in a period of two months or in extreme cases the principal will determine the seriousness of the actions since the beginning of the Steps.

- a) The student will meet with administration.
- b) This step involves disciplinary action (may or may not include suspension). If given a suspension, length, type (in school or out of school) will be at the discretion of the administration.
- c) Before the student returns to class, a conference must be carried out with parents, teachers, students and the principal to write an action plan.
- d) A recommendation can be suggested that the family go to a counselor or other specialist.
- e) All school work missed by suspended time must be completed before the student returns to class.
- f) A period of probation will be monitored and progress will be reviewed and put in process when the student returns to class completely.

Note:

The third step can be repeated as long as the student can demonstrate that there is progress, and who is willing to contribute to a positive learning environment. When you see little or no change and staff have exhausted all means of effective exchange rate, then the Fourth Step cycle will be implemented.

STEP FOUR:

The Administrator recommends an alternative school.

- a) The decision to end the student's tenure at SVS rests with the principal and the pastor.
- b) If termination is the decision, will be notified in writing to the parents, the reason for the termination will be given and the right to request a hearing will be explained.
- c) Termination may be reviewed by the principal and the pastor when a hearing in writing know requested by parents.

Serious offenses such as possession of drugs, weapons, or severe physical or moral conduct may result in immediate move to Step Four Cycle.

Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend Policy 4520

Grounds For Suspension or Expulsion of Students

- I. The grounds for suspension or expulsion below apply to student conduct which occurs:
 - A. On school grounds;
 - B. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
 - C. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
 - D. At any other time when the principal determines that the student's conduct either causes harm or could potentially cause harm to the other students, school employees or property, or the reputation of the School or the Diocese.

- II. The following types of student conduct constitute grounds for suspension or expulsion subject to the school's provisions for disciplinary review contained in P4530. This listing is not intended to be exhaustive of all types of conduct:
Any conduct which, in the opinion of school officials, is contrary to the principles and teaching of the Catholic Church.

- III. Using violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or other comparable conduct constituting an interference with school purposes, or urging other students to engage in such conduct.
 - A. Causing or attempting to cause damage to property belonging to any other person, student, school employee or the school, stealing or attempting to steal property belonging to any other person, student, school employee, or school.
Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury or intentionally behaving in such a way that, in the opinion of school officials, could cause physical injury to any person.
 - B. Threatening or intimidating any individual for whatever purpose.

- C. Possessing, handling or transmitting a knife or any other object, which under the circumstances and in the sole opinion of school officials could be, considered a weapon. A student who must use a knife as part of an organized activity held by an organization that has been approved by school officials is exempt from this rule so long as the knife is used as a part of or in accordance with the approved organization.
- D. Possessing, using, transmitting, or being under the influence of any controlled substance or intoxicant of any kind. The prescribed use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a physician is not a violation of this rule.
- E. Engaging in the unlawful selling of a controlled substance or engaging in a criminal law violation that constitutes a danger to other students or constitutes an interference with school purposes and/or educational function.
- F. Failing in a substantial number of instances to comply with directions of teachers or other school personnel during any period of time when the student is properly under their supervision.
- G. Engaging in any activity forbidden by the laws of the State of Indiana that interferes with school purposes or education function.
- H. Violating or repeatedly violating any rules that is, in the opinion of the school officials, necessary in carrying out school purposes and/or educational function.
- I. Possessing or using on school grounds during school hours an electronic paging device or a hand-held portable telephone in a situation not related to a school purpose or educational function.
- J. Engaging in any unlawful activity on or off school grounds if the unlawful activity is considered by school officials to be an interference with school purposes or an educational function.

Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend Policy P4530

Disciplinary Review for Students (Suspension or Expulsion)

Any student accused of wrongdoing in violation of school or diocesan policy that could result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the school will be given:

1. An explanation of what the student is accused of doing that is wrong; and
2. An opportunity for the student, in the presence of the student's parents, to respond to the accusations before either the principal or an impartial tribunal established by the school's administration for the purpose of making a recommendation on the matter to the principal.

The principal (in consultation with the pastor in the case of an elementary school) shall be responsible to make a final decision on all such matters. The principal's decision shall be final and binding on all parties.

The St. Vincent Way

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is incorporated into our Discipline With Purpose program. Together, these two programs make up The St. Vincent Way. Students are taught about bullying behaviors and are provided with skills to prevent bullying. Students are taught that "a person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself".

Students are taught the following four rules of the St. Vincent Way:

1. We will not bully others.
2. We will try to help others who are being bullied.
3. We will try to include students who are left out.
4. If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home and expect them to do something about it.

DRESS CODE

Regulations

Any clothes item not mentioned in the uniform policy is not permitted.

Shorts may only be worn in the summer and spring. The dates for wearing these items will be determined by the weather, and announced in the weekly newsletter.

Pants, shorts, skirts, shifts and jumpers may be of cotton, (including corduroy), wool, rayon, linen or polyester, but may not be of denim.

Pants must be full length, but may not “bag-up” or be folded up more than 1 1/2 inches. Pants must be worn at the natural waist, be neat and clean and may not have holes. **A belt must be worn by students in grades 2-6.** The entire belt must be kept around the waist. Cargo pants and cargo shorts are not permitted.

Shorts must be above the knee and not shorter than 6 inches above the knee when kneeling.

Shoes are to compliment the uniform rather than detract from it. Plain leather dress shoes or athletic shoes or Crocs are acceptable. Footwear must be the proper size and have a heel/sole **less than one inch**. Bright gaudy or distracting colors for shoe laces are to be avoided. Shoes must have a closed heel and toe. Boots are not allowed. Shoes must be kept tied, buckled or fastened. Shoes with laces must be tied tight with the bow showing on the upper tongue area of the shoe. Laces may not drag on the floor. Sandals and clogs may be worn (with socks), but must have a back strap.

Socks or tights must be worn at all times. Socks must be visible above the top of the shoe. Leggings Students who are in violation of any dress code will receive a dress code violation. When a 4th violation is reached, an after school detention will be issued and a parent conference required. This situation will need to be resolved.
are not acceptable.

Shirts must be tucked in at all times. In cold weather a long sleeve shirt may be worn under a short sleeve shirt only if they are the same color.

Hair must be neat and clean at all times. Student’s hair may not touch the eyebrows. In addition, boy’s hair may not touch the ears, or collar. Extreme styles, fads (including dangling beads or other ornamental items), unnatural colors, tails, or designs shaved into the hair are not permitted at school. Barrettes, bows, headbands and scrunchies should complement the uniform rather than detract from it.

Girls may wear post or stud earrings in the earlobe only. Hoop or dangling earrings may not be worn. Boys may not wear earrings.

Makeup is not allowed; this includes fake nails and cologne. Only clear or light pink fingernail polish is permitted. Nails must be kept short, neat and clean.

Jewelry is limited to one ring, a bracelet and/or watch. A necklace is permitted if it is worn under the shirt.

The school reserves the right to determine appropriateness of clothing and grooming.

St. Vincent School Uniforms

DRESS

PANTS/SHORTS/JUMPER/ SHIFT

Khaki (see attached swatch)

Cargo pants and cargo shorts are NOT appropriate for school.

Pants must be full-length (no Capri pants).

Pants may not "bag-up" or be folded up more than 1 ½ inches.

Shorts must be above the knee, but not shorter than 6 inches above the knee when kneeling.

SKIRTS

(For girls in 5th and 6th grade only)

Khaki only

SHIRTS Long or short sleeve
(Boys and Girls)
Hunter green school logo shirt

Undershirt
Hunter green

SWEATER/FLEECE
Hunter green

SWEATSHIRT (No hoods)
Hunter green sVs sweatshirt

SOCKS/TIGHTS:
Solid White

BELTS:
Black, Brown, Navy Blue (Solid)

**** Remember that starting in the 2014-2015 school year, the only uniform colors will be the hunter green shirt with logo and khaki pants.***

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

No electronic devices (other than a calculator) are allowed at school. These items will be confiscated for one month. Cell Phones: If a student needs a cell phone after school due to walking home from school, entering a house where no one is home, or attending sport practices or games, he/she should bring the cell phone to the office upon arrival in the morning to park the cell phone in the off position for the day. The cell phone may be picked up by the student at dismissal. At no time during the day should a cell phone be in a student's possession.

LUNCH

Children may either bring lunch from home or purchase lunch through the Federal Satellite Lunch Program, prepared each day by Elkhart Community Schools. Order forms are sent home twice a month with the Wednesday Letter. Orders are to be returned on Thursday or Friday with money for the next two weeks. Monthly menus are sent home as they become available to St. Vincent de Paul School. Parent volunteers heat and serve the lunches. Students are not permitted carbonated drinks in their lunches. Lunchtime is 10:50 for Kindergarten, 11:00 A.M. for Grades 1-2-3 and 11:25 A.M. for Grades 4-5-6.

Children will be permitted to charge lunch for **one day** if they forget to bring their lunch. No calls will be made. Charges must be paid the following day. Milk is included in the price of the lunch, and can also be bought separately.

Free and reduced lunches are available for those families who complete the applications and are approved by Elkhart Community Schools. Information pertinent to the application and the names and number of children receiving free or reduced lunches is kept confidential, to avoid discrimination or special treatment. These forms are available in the office.

Children are never permitted to leave the school premises during lunch time unless they leave with parents. The school office must be made aware of plans that differ from the normal routine.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

A public health nurse visits the school periodically for vision, hearing, scoliosis screening, and for emergency calls.

State law prohibits the school from administering medication, including aspirin, to any pupil without written parental permission and specific directions. Medication must be in the original prescription container and is kept in the school office.

First aid may be given. See Parent Authorization Forms for Medication (Over the Counter and Prescription). In the event of an emergency, the parent is notified immediately. The school should be notified if a child suffers from epilepsy, asthma, allergies, etc., that might cause fainting or other emergencies, so that proper procedure may be followed with the least possible trauma for the child and others. Please notify the school of any health issue that may affect your child in order that the child's needs may be best served.

Indiana law requires that each child must be immunized against smallpox, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis, hepatitis-B, and mumps before entering school for the first time.

Emergency Information Card

Each student is to have an Emergency Card on file in the office. These cards are filled out by the parents in August. If there is any change in the information throughout the year, please notify the school office. Any medical alert information should be put on the back of the card. It is critical that we are able to get in touch with you.

Other conditions which may affect your child's classroom performance (hearing problem, change in family situation etc.) should be called to the teacher's attention as soon as possible.

Fever/vomiting

Students will be sent home if they have a temperature of 100° or higher and/or are vomiting. Students will not be permitted to return to school on the same day that they are sent home due to illness.

STUDENTS MUST BE FEVER-FREE FOR 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL.

Insurance

Student Accident Insurance is mandatory for all students. All students must carry this insurance even if covered under other insurance. If you have any questions concerning this insurance, please call the school at 293-8451. Insurance fees are included with book and tuition fees.

Lice

Any child found with lice or nits will not be permitted to stay at school. After treatment, students may return when no lice or nits are present. A parent or guardian must accompany the student to school office and wait while the head check takes place. Students will not be permitted back into the classroom until all evidence of the lice is gone. A child is never sent home if a parent is not there.

Prescription Medication

Prescribed medication must be accompanied by written instructions signed by the physician of the student who is to receive the medication. The pharmacy label can serve as the written order of a practitioner. The medications prescribed must be kept in the original container/package with the pharmacy label and the student's name affixed. A note should accompany the medication stating the purpose of the medication, side effects, dosage and time it is to be administered. All medications are kept in a locked cabinet in the school office.

The parent/guardian is responsible at the end of the treatment regime for removing from the school any unused medication that was prescribed for his/her child. If the parent does not pick-up the medication by the end of the school year, the school will dispose of the medication in an appropriate manner and document that the medication was discarded.

IF YOUR CHILD USES AN INHALER, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE FOR SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS.

PLAYGROUND RULES

1. Food (drinks, candy, fruit) is not permitted on the playground.
2. Once outside, any child wanting to enter the building must get permission from the playground monitor. If a child is injured, he/she is brought to the school office.
3. If a ball goes off the playground area, one child is to ask for permission to get it.
4. Balls on the roof should be reported to the classroom teacher after recess.
5. Snowballs are never to be thrown. Snow should not be picked up or kicked about.
6. Only students wearing boots and snow pants will be allowed to play on the snow hills.
7. Skateboards, Frisbees, hard balls, yo-yos are not permitted on the playground.
8. Students must obey the playground monitor. Failure to do so will lead to in-door recess detention.

3 recess detentions in one grading period will lead to a referral slip.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS ENVELOPE

The information flow between home and school is very important. In order to expedite this two-way process, communication envelopes are used. Each child will be given a school envelope on the first day of school. This envelope is to be sent home EVERY Wednesday. Parents are to sign the envelope; students are to return the envelope the following day. **The replacement fee for a lost or destroyed school envelope is \$5.00.**

SCHOOL DELAYS AND CLOSINGS

In case of severe weather St. Vincent School will close when Elkhart Community Schools close. Occasionally, we may be closed due to lack of electricity or heat. Listen to the major local radio and television stations for notification of schools closings. Parents have ultimate right to choose if the weather conditions are too bad to send children to school.

Never drive away until you see your child enter the school building.

SECURITY

The doors to the school are locked at all times. Please come to the front door to enter. There are two doorbells. The bell for school hours will activate a camera and monitor so that the secretary can “buzz” you in. The after school bell rings throughout the building, and should not be used during school hours. **Please never ask a child to open the door to let you in.**

All visitors to the school during school hours must first report to the office, even if they are parents bringing forgotten items. This is strictly for the safety of your children. Students from other schools are not permitted to visit classes without permission from the principal. **Parents** are welcome and encouraged to visit classes any time during the year with the prior approval of the teacher and principal. Parents MUST check in at the office when entering the building.

Because we are concerned with the safety and well-being of our students, our school and the diocese have prepared a Safe and Secure School Plan, which addresses events that may threaten our students. During the school year, we will conduct drills for fire and severe weather as well as lockdown drills. In addition, the plan provides for responding to crisis situations, such as identifying evacuation sites and providing support for students, parents and staff, including counseling services provided through school counselors on the staff at Catholic Charities.

TRANSPORTATION

Car-pools, Elkhart Community Schools busing, and individual drivers typically transport children to and from St. Vincent de Paul School. Through the courtesy and cooperation of Elkhart Community, St. Vincent School children who live on regular bus routes that come to our school may ride on those buses if space is available. St. Vincent School children are subject to the Elkhart Community School bus rules and regulations. Any child will be denied the privilege of bus service if he/she does not conform to these rules and regulations.

NOTE: The bus WILL NOT stop if the student is not visible when the bus reaches the appointed stop.

General Bus Conduct Rules:	Do not eat or drink while on the bus.
Stay in seat while bus is in motion.	Do not open windows. Only driver may do so.
Keep hands, feet and head inside the bus.	Do not throw objects in or out of the bus.
Do not shout or use profane language.	Do not deface the bus. Vandalism or damage must be paid for by the parents before student is permitted to return to school.
No fighting or horseplay.	

The driver will keep parents and school informed of each violation.

Procedure for parents who drive children to school:

Drivers are asked by the Elkhart Police Department to drop off and pick up children in the parking lot behind the building, not on Main Street.

Drivers must enter the school grounds via Stocker Court and exit via Melcher Court.

Morning Drop off

Students are to be dropped off at the back door of the school. Please do not back up, or pull around other cars. In good weather students will go to the playground. In case of inclement weather students will report to the gym. An adult supervisor is on duty each morning from 7:30 to 7:55 a.m. The supervisor has the same authority as any faculty member for the safety of the children

After School Pick up

Cars are to stay outside of the traffic cones. Cars are never permitted to drive up to the building, even in bad weather. Students will be ushered directly to your car by the staff on duty. Please do not get out of your car. Please do not back up, or pull around other cars. The driveway between the school and the rectory should never be used. Car riders must be picked up between 3:05 and 3:15 p.m. Any student not picked up by 3:15 will be sent to Almost Home and a fee of \$5.00 for every hour late will be charged to parents after 3:15 p.m.

A crossing guard is provided by the Police Department at Main if needed.

Bicycles used for transportation must have a lock and be placed in the bike rack in the front of the building. The school cannot be responsible for any damage done to bicycles. Anyone who rides a bicycle to school must get off the bicycle as soon as he/she enters the school area, to prevent any accidents. We also need a written note from parents if a child is riding their bicycle to school. Students riding bikes to school must wear a protective bike helmet.

NOTICE - unless we hear otherwise, children will always go home their regular way (bus, ride, walk). If there is to be a change, we must have a note or a phone call (293-8451) before 1:30. Please do not call after 2:30 p.m., as the message may not be able to be delivered in time.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The School Board establishes tuition and fees. Book Rental and fees are non-refundable.

Book Rental

Book fees cover the rental of hardcover books and the workbooks used in the classroom. It also covers art supplies, audiovisual aids and other equipment.

Fees

Fees help to cover the cost of technology needs, restocking classroom Science kits and providing Professional Development for the teaching staff.

Tuition is charged in our school. The current fee schedule may be obtained from the office. St. Vincent dePaul School has created a partnership with the FACTS Management Company to offer the Monthly Payment Option to our families. Tuition may be paid in full to the school or in monthly payments through FACTS. Failure to pay tuition on time may result in exclusion from school, unless other arrangements have been made.

Tuition assistance is available for those who qualify. Families must apply and qualify for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program in order to receive tuition assistance. FACTS Grant Management Company applications may be obtained from the School Office, or may be completed on-line. Families need to be current in their tuition payments before applications for the next year's aid will be accepted. A copy of your previous year's Income Tax Form is required.

Tuition refunds will be granted when a family leaves St. Vincent dePaul School during the school year. If a student leaves during a grading period the family will pay for the entire grading period.

INTERNET USER AGREEMENT

Internet access is now available to students and teachers in St. Vincent dePaul Catholic School. We are very pleased to bring this access to our school and believe that the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. Our goal in providing this service to students and teachers is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resources for sharing, innovation, and communication.

The use of the Internet and related technologies must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the Catholic schools. Use of other organizations' networks or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for these networks.

As a user of the St. Vincent dePaul Catholic School computer network, students agree to comply with the stated rules, terms, and conditions, honoring all relevant laws and restrictions.

Students understand that the use of the Internet connection in the school is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges. The school administration determines appropriate use and their decision is final. Further disciplinary action may follow as indicated in the school handbook.

Students understand that they are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) the following:

Network Etiquette

1. Be polite. Do not get abusive in your messages to others.
2. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
3. Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
4. Keep your personal address and phone number private and do not reveal the phone numbers of students or colleagues.
5. Note that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. People who operate the system do have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.

6. Use the network in such a way that will not disrupt the use of the network by other users.
7. Note that all communications and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property.
8. Inform the technology teacher of any security problem immediately.

Students understand that the following are not permitted:

1. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures.
2. Using violent or obscene language.
3. Sending harassing, insulting, or threatening messages.
4. Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks or to harm or destroy data of another user.
5. Violating copyright law.
6. Unauthorized use of another's password.
7. Trespassing in others' folders, work, or files.
8. Intentionally wasting resources.
9. Employing the network for commercial purposes.
10. Transmission of any material in violation of any US, state or local law.
11. Obtaining software or data fraudulently or illegally.
12. Revealing one's own or another's personal address or phone number.

Violation of the terms, conditions, and regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should a student commit any violation, access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action taken.

LOCAL WELLNESS POLICY

In accordance with The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 Public Law 108-265 Section 204, standards have been set to address all foods and beverages sold or served to students, including those available outside of the school meal program. **Refreshments served at parties (including birthday treats) need to be low in fat, sodium and sugar. Students will be limited to one serving per food item.**

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers who are in contact with our students **MUST** complete the diocesan application and background screening process. This diocesan safe environment program was designed for the protection of all the youth who participate in diocesan school and parish programs.

School Board

The purpose of the school board is to provide an appropriate representative body for identifying and articulating the educational needs and aspirations of the school community.

The board's primary responsibility is to define the policies that govern the operation of the school. All other duties are subsidiary functions.

In the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, the local board for an elementary school **is advisory** to the pastor and the principal. The board does not have authority to formulate local educational policy, monitor the implementation of the policy, or evaluate educational programs and policy objectives.

Board members have no power or authority as individuals. The authority is vested in the school board acting as a board to make recommendations.

It is the mission of our board to:

1. Be instrumental in aiding and assisting the St. Vincent School pastor, principal, teachers and staff to provide a quality education rooted in the Catholic faith for all students.
2. Understand our advisory role to the pastor and principal and assist them in developing meaningful school policy.
3. Be a sounding board for the pastor and principal in school matters.
4. Facilitate the involvement and accountability of parents to their children's education.
5. Be the conduit for proactive communications between the church community and the board in promoting the school.
6. Set the example and promote respect and love for the teachings of Christ.

The School Board meets at 6:00pm on the first Thursday of each month in the school library.

Parents/guardians wishing to address and/or question an area or situation regarding a specific teacher or classroom must follow the concerns procedure established by the School Administration. See Diocesan Policy 2310 on page 9.

Home And School Association (H.A.S.A.)

The Home and School Association is an integral part of St. Vincent dePaul School. HASA has five major purposes:

1. To promote communication among parents, teachers and administration.
2. To provide parents and teachers with the information to aid in all aspects of education and the student's growth and development.
3. To promote good will and cooperation between and among parents, faculty, administration, school board and the parish.
4. To direct and coordinate parental support to the school through specific assistance activities, social functions and fund raisers.
5. To organize political action of the parents as advocates regarding local, state and federal legislation that affects Catholic schools as well as the lives of the students and parents.

The HASA Board meets at 6:30 on the first Tuesday of every month in the school library.

DIOCESAN POLICIES

Failure or Refusal of Parents/Guardians/Custodians to Participate in a Disciplinary Proceeding (Policy 4420 Ft. Wayne-South Bend Diocese)

"The failure or refusal of parents/guardians/custodians to participate in diocesan or school discipline proceedings concerning their students' improper behavior may be considered educational neglect and the child may be considered a "child in need of services" in accordance with I.C.31-6-4-3- (a)(7), and, in that case, the matter shall be referred to the Child Protective Services Division of the Department of Public Welfare."

Student Accused of a Non-School Related Criminal Act (Policy 4550)

"When a student is accused of a non-school related criminal act, the school shall follow diocesan policy."

Gun-free Schools (Policy 4560)

"Students are prohibited from bringing firearms to school or school functions. Further, students are prohibited from possessing firearms on route to or from school or school activities or on school property. A violation of this policy carries an automatic expulsion from school of not less than one calendar year. This penalty supersedes any penalty which may be attributed by a local school discipline policy."

Substance Abuse (Policy 4570)

"This school shall assist students experiencing substance abuse problems in accordance with diocesan policy."

Sexual/Racial Harassment (Policy 4580)

"Sexual or racial harassment shall not be tolerated in the Catholic Schools."

Student Locker and Vehicle Inspection (Policy 4590) "All students who enroll in a diocesan school must consent to the search of their person and personal belongings, lockers, school desks, vehicles, etc. at any time and for any reason consistent with diocesan policy."

Acceptable Use Policy (Internet) (Policy 4620)

“The school shall follow the Diocesan Internet Policy.” A copy of the policy is available in the school office during business hours.

Environmental Tobacco Smoke (Policy 5430)

All facilities (buildings which are enclosed) where kindergarten, elementary, and/or secondary education or library services are being provided to children shall be smoke free. No one, whether an administrator, an employee, a student, or a visitor is allowed to smoke in these buildings.

ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF PARENTAL ACCESS RIGHTS TO STUDENT'S RECORDS

Any natural parent, guardian, individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or a guardian of a student of a diocesan school, or a student who has reached eighteen (18) years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education has the following right, (unless the school has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, State statute, or legally-binding document relating to such matters as divorce, separation, or custody that specifically revokes these rights):

- a. Inspect and review the student's education records;
- b. Request the amendment of the student's educational records to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights;
- c. Consent to disclosure personally-identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act and the regulations authorize disclosure without consent;
- d. File with the U.S. Department of Education in complaint under 34 C.F.R. 99.66 concerning alleged failures by the agency to institution to comply with the requirements of the Act and this part; and
- e. Obtain a copy of the diocesan policy (PA230 Access to Official Student Records) and

SPECIAL NOTE

School Records will not be transferred to another school until all financial obligations to the school have been met.

Seclusion and Restraint Statement

St. Vincent De Paul Catholic School/Fort Wayne South Bend Diocese believes a safe and healthy environment should be provided in which all children can learn, develop, and participate in instructional programs that promote high levels of academic achievement. As an Indiana accredited non-public school, state law requires that our school have a Seclusion and Restraint Plan. The purpose of the plan is to insure that all students and staff are safe in school, and that students who may have behavior crises are free from inappropriate use of seclusion or restraint.

Behavioral interventions for children must ensure all children are treated with dignity and respect. This environment should allow all children to be free from physical or mental abuse, aversive behavioral interventions that compromise health and safety, and any physical seclusion or restraint imposed solely for purposes of discipline or convenience.

Seclusion or restraint shall not be used as routine school safety measures; that is, they shall not be implemented except in situations where a child's behavior or action poses imminent danger of physical harm to self or others and not as a routine strategy implemented to address instructional problems or inappropriate

behavior (e.g., disrespect, noncompliance, insubordination, out of seat), as a means of coercion or retaliation, or as a convenience. Any use of either seclusion or restraint shall be supervised, short in duration and used only for the purposes of de-escalating the behavior.

Parents can access a full copy of our school's plan by request in the school office or by visiting our school's website www.syselkhart.org.



Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*Holy Spirit I need your help in a special way.
Give me the courage to do my best for your sake
and not to worry about making mistakes.*

*May I take joy in using the gifts that you have given me
and always to give you thanks. Amen*