

# **Parent - Student Handbook**

**2009-2010**

**Saint Columba School  
1110 LaSalle Street  
Ottawa, Illinois 61350**

**Quality Catholic Education in Ottawa Since 1892**

**Approved July 1999  
Revised June 2009  
Saint Columba School Education Commission**

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## **Catholic School Statement of Purpose**

*“From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illumined by the light of faith and having its own unique characteristics, an environment permeated with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom....”*

### **The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, #25**

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Peoria are established to assist the Bishop and Pastors in the transmission of the Faith to the young people of the diocese. We welcome non-Catholic students into our schools who wish to take advantage of the opportunities provided by Catholic education. Every school must have as its main goal to help each student develop a personal and ecclesial relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, who is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life” (John 14:6). The principles, practices, and beliefs of the Catholic Faith must be fully integrated throughout the school’s curricula, service projects, co-curricular activities, and culture.

Students in our Catholic schools are reminded of their dignity as children of God through the study of Catholic doctrine, frequent opportunities for personal and communal prayer, and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church. Together with parents, the primary educators of their children, our Catholic schools pursue academic and spiritual excellence by helping students to develop their intellectual abilities, foster wholesome friendships, practice discipleship, strengthen their daily prayer life, grow in virtue, and become leaders through serving others.

All personnel that work in our Catholic schools must have at heart the promotion of the educational mission of the Church, and live as visible role models of faith within the parish/school community. Catholic doctrinal, moral and social teaching is an integral part of each school. Therefore, all faculty, staff, administrative, and volunteer personnel must support the teachings of the Church, actively practice their faith in daily life, and be loyal to the Church’s Magisterium. Our Catholic school personnel share this educational mission and its various commitments and responsibilities with parents and the local Church communities.

*“It is crucial that the policies and procedures of Catholic schools reflect that primary purpose and that the Catholicity of the school and its faithfulness to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church (Magisterium) are not compromised.”*

**Sister Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, J.D., Ph.D.**

## **Introduction**

### **HISTORY OF SAINT COLUMBA SCHOOL**

Saint Columba Boys’ School was opened in 1892 at the corner of Washington and LaSalle Streets with an enrollment of 210 boys. It was named after Saint Columba, one of the patron saints of Ireland, who lived from 521-597 A.D. The Brothers of the Holy Cross of Notre Dame University were in charge of the school and were soon joined by the Sisters of Mercy. In 1903, the Brothers withdrew and the Sisters of Mercy assumed full responsibility for the school. In 1913, a new school building was completed just north of the older school which four years later became a boys’ high school and a parish school for boys and girls. In 1919, after two years of operation, the high school was discontinued because of the lack of required equipment and available space. The present building was completed in 1963 on the corner of Superior and LaSalle Streets. In September of 1985, an addition to the 1963 building was completed on the site where the original school buildings once stood. The school, which serves pre-school through eighth grade, now houses 11 classrooms, a gymnasium, a library and a cafeteria as well as rooms for a computer lab, science, art, music, academic resource and audio-visuals.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Saint Columba School is the Christ-centered development of the whole person who is value-oriented, competent in communication, problem solving, skillful in creative and critical thinking and knowledgeable of technology. We value our ties to Saint Columba Parish and to the Roman Catholic Church, whose prayers and traditions shape our school’s philosophy and practices. Aware of this spiritual heritage and our history as a coeducational, pre-school through eighth grade elementary school, we dedicate ourselves to academic excellence, life-long learning, holistic growth and Christ-like leadership through service.

## **STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

No student shall be refused admission to Saint Columba School on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin. Students of religious denominations other than Catholic may be admitted when there is space available.

## **PASTOR/SCHOOL'S RIGHT TO AMEND THESE HANDBOOKS**

The Pastor of Saint Columba Parish in consultation with the Saint Columba School Education Commission retains the right to amend these handbooks for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification of any changes that are made.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE/PHONE NUMBERS**

The school office is open each school day from 7:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. All school business should be conducted during these hours. The following are important phone numbers:

School Office (Principal, Secretary, Maintenance): 433-1199 School Fax: 433-1219 Cafeteria: 433-0582

School Web Site: [www.stcolumbaschool.org](http://www.stcolumbaschool.org) School E-mail: [saintcolumbaschool@gmail.com](mailto:saintcolumbaschool@gmail.com)

Rectory (Pastor, Associate Pastor): 433-0700

## **APPEAL AND REVIEW**

Statement of Policy: A review or appeal of any decision concerning policies, procedures or other serious matters made by the competent authority of any of the schools of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria may be requested by any member of the diocese under the following conditions only:

1. The decision violates or is in conflict with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, or
2. The decision violates or is in conflict with an applicable diocesan policy, or
3. The decision violates or is in conflict with a policy or procedure of the parish, the school, or other entity that takes precedence over the decision in question, or
4. The decision violates or is in conflict with an applicable federal, state or local civil law.

It is to be noted that dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient condition for appeal.

Statement of Process: The individual or group desiring the appeal or review must make that request known to the competent authority whose decision they question in the form of a letter. This letter must clearly cover each of the following points:

- a. The decision that is being questioned and which competent authority made it.
- b. The grounds for the appeal or the review with specific reference to one or more of the four (4) conditions listed above; and
- c. The proposed resolution.

The governing Pastor or Board of Pastors having received the request for appeal or review is to respond in writing to those making the request within thirty (30) days of receiving the request. A copy of the response letter is to be forwarded to the local Vicar having jurisdiction over that particular parish, and in the case of a school matter also to the Office of Catholic Schools. However, those who have requested the appeal may further appeal the decision of the governing Pastor or Board of Pastors to the local Vicar within thirty (30) days. The local Vicar has the authority to summarily dismiss the appeal or he may forward the appeal for review to the Vicar General of the Dioceses of Peoria, and in the case of a school matter also to the Office of Catholic Schools. The Vicar General of the Diocese of Peoria shall make a final decision on the appeal in such cases. If the local Vicar decides to dismiss the case, he must as a matter of record, forward a copy of such decision to the Vicar General, and in the case of a school matter also to the Office of Catholic Schools. It is at the sole discretion of the Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Peoria to intervene in any matter at any time and to modify, reverse, or rescind any action taken by the above-referenced officials.

## **ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

In accordance with federal and state guidelines, Saint Columba School has been inspected for friable and non-friable asbestos. Saint Columba School has a management plan available in the principal's office for your review. In accordance with the guidelines, Saint Columba School will also have six month and three year re-inspections. Saint Columba School will carry out its response action in accordance with federal and state laws and guidelines. Repair, removal or clean up will be taken care of in accordance with these laws and guidelines as funds become available.

## **Parent-Student Handbook**

### **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR THE USE OF COMPUTERS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

Computing, data storage, and information retrieval systems are designed to serve the students, faculty, staff, and volunteers of the school community. Network and internet access is provided to further the legitimate educational goals of this institution. The school provides computing and network resources for the use of students, employees, and other affiliated with the school. Members of the school community are encouraged to use the computers, software packages, electronic mail (E-mail), or outside the school network software for educational or school related activities and to facilitate the efficient exchange of useful information. However, the equipment, software, and network capacities provided through the school computer services are and remain the property of the school. All users are expected to conduct their on-line activities in an ethical and legal fashion. The use of these resources is a privilege, not a right. Misuse of these resources will result in the suspension or loss of these privileges, as well as disciplinary, legal, and/or monetary consequences. Appropriate or acceptable educational uses of these resources include:

1. Accessing the Internet to retrieve information from libraries, databases and World Wide Web sites to enrich and expand curriculum is encouraged.
2. E-mail capabilities may be used to facilitate distance learning projects.
3. Listservers and newsgroups may be used to gain access to current information on local, state, national and world events.

Examples of inappropriate or unacceptable use(s) of these resources include, but are not limited to, those uses that violate the law, the rules of network etiquette, or hamper the integrity or security of any network connected to the Internet. Some unacceptable practices include:

1. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States or state law, including but not limited to: copyrighted material; threatening, harassing, pornographic, or obscene material; or material protected by trade secret is prohibited. The transmission of copyrighted materials without the written permission of the author or creator through school E-mail or other network resources in violation of United States copyright law is prohibited. As with all forms of communication, E-mail or other network resources may not be used in a manner that is disruptive to the work or educational environment. The display or transmission of messages, images, cartoons or the transmission or use of E-mail or other computer messages that are sexually explicit constitute harassment which is prohibited by the school. It is also illegal for anyone to knowingly allow any telecommunications facility under their control to be used for the transmission of illegal material.
2. The use for personal financial or commercial gain, product advertisement, political lobbying or the sending of unsolicited junk mail, or chain letters is prohibited.
3. Vandalism is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, any attempt to harm or destroy the data of another user, the network/Internet, or any networks or sites connected to the network/Internet. Attempts to breach security codes and/or passwords will also be considered a form of vandalism.
4. The creation, propagation and/or use of computer viruses is prohibited.
5. The forgery, reading, deleting, copying or modifying of electronic mail messages of other users is prohibited.
6. Deleting, examining, copying or modifying files and/or data belonging to other users is prohibited.
7. Willful destruction of computer hardware or software, or attempts to exceed or modify the parameters of the system are prohibited. Nothing in this policy shall prohibit the school operator from intercepting and stopping E-mail messages which have the capacity to overload the computer resources. Discipline may be imposed for intentional overloading of the school computer resources.

Access to the school's E-mail and similar electronic communication systems is a privilege and certain responsibilities accompany that privilege. School users are expected to demonstrate the same level of ethical and professional manner as is required in face-to-face or written communications. Anonymous or forged messages will be treated as a violation of this policy.

1. Unauthorized attempts to access another person's E-mail or similar electronic communications or to use another's name, E-mail or computer address or workstation to send E-mail or similar electronic communications is prohibited and may subject the individual to disciplinary action.
2. All users must understand that the school cannot guarantee the privacy or confidentiality of electronic documents and any messages that are confidential as a matter of law should not be communicated over the E-mail.
3. The school reserves the right to access E-mail to retrieve school information and records, to engage in routine computer maintenance and housekeeping, to carry out Internet investigations, or to disclose messages, data or files to law enforcement authorities.
4. Any information contained on a school computer's hard drive or computer disks which were purchased by the school are considered the property of the school.

This agreement applies to stand alone units as well as units connected to the network or the Internet. Any attempt to violate the provisions of this agreement will result in revocation of the user's privileges, regardless of the success or failure of the attempt. In addition, school disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken. The decision of the school regarding inappropriate use of the technology or telecommunication resources is final. Monetary remuneration will be sought for damage necessitating repair or replacement of equipment.

## **ADMISSIONS**

Kindergarten: Children will be admitted to the kindergarten program based on class size and with first preference given to parishioners of Saint Columba Church and the following feeder parishes: Earlville Saint Theresa, Marseilles Saint Joseph, Naplate Saint Mary, Ottawa Saint Francis and Utica Saint Mary. Second preference will be given to siblings of non-Catholic, Saint Columba School students. Children from other parishes and non-Catholics may be admitted if room is available.

First - Seventh Grade: Children will be admitted to the first - seventh grade programs after a meeting with the pastor and/or principal. Admission will be contingent on class size, time of the year, newness to the community and the review of academic and behavior records. First preference will be given to parishioners of Saint Naplate Saint Mary, Ottawa Saint Francis and Utica Saint Mary. Second preference will be given to siblings of non-Catholic, Saint Columba School students. Children from other parishes and non-Catholics may be admitted if room is available.

Eighth Grade: Children will be admitted to the eighth grade programs only in unusual circumstances and after a meeting with the Pastor and principal. Admission will be contingent on class size, time of the year, newness to the community and the review of academic and behavior records. First preference will be given to parishioners of Saint Columba Church and the following feeder parishes: Earlville Saint Theresa, Marseilles Saint Joseph, Naplate Saint Mary, Ottawa Saint Francis and Utica Saint Mary.

## **ALGEBRA I**

Eighth grade students at St. Columba School may take Algebra I at Marquette High School for high school credit.

Acceptance in this course requires:

- at least a Math Composite Score of 90 percent on the seventh grade Peoria Diocese standardized test.
- an A average in Math during the seventh grade
- above average scores in all classes
- the Junior High School teachers' recommendation
- the Marquette High School Algebra I teacher's approval
- and the St. Columba School Principal's approval.

A fee will be paid to Marquette High School for this course and high school credit.

Honors Algebra I (Marquette's Course Description): A study of the real number system (including both rational and irrational numbers) with emphasis on applications such as the solution of equations and problem situation. Because of the advanced nature of the course, the problems studied will be more difficult and the material will be more challenging, to facilitate the investigation of optional topics not covered in the Algebra I course.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Arrival/Dismissal: A teacher is on duty on the playground each morning at 8:05 a.m. For your child's safety, please do not allow your child to arrive before this time. All doors, except the main entrance off of the parking lot, will be locked at all times. Once your child is dropped off at the school, they must not leave the school property. The doors to the school open at 8:15 a.m. The school day begins at 8:20 A.M. and ends at 2:35 P.M.

Absences: Whenever a child will be absent, parents are to notify the school either by telephone between 8:00 and 8:45 a.m. or by a written notice sent with a sibling. The parents will be contacted in the case of an unverified absence. Please make arrangements to pick-up the assignments for absent students the morning of the absence with the school office. Assignments may be picked up after 2:30 p.m. on the day of the absence. In the event that a student must leave school before regular dismissal time due to illness, the student is to report to the office. Parents will be contacted to make arrangements to pick-up their child. Upon returning to school from an absence, the student is required to make up the work that he/she missed. The student will be given the same number of days to make-up the work he/she missed as the number of days absent with arrangements being made with the teacher. Students must be in school a full day in order to participate in practices or extra-curricular events. The exception to this is for funerals, doctors' appointments,

etc.

Tardiness: Students who are tardy are to report to the office before going to their classroom and bring a note from home the following day explaining the tardiness. Repeated tardiness may result in disciplinary action.

Vacations and Family Trips: Vacations and family trips should be coordinated with the school calendar. The student must make arrangements with each of his/her teachers for assignments that will be due during the absence. When a student is absent from school because of family vacations or trips, the school is relieved of all academic responsibilities.

### **BEFORE-CARE PROGRAM**

The Before-Care Program is available to all students (K-8) Monday through Friday beginning at 7:30 a.m. in the Cafeteria. At 8:05 a.m. all students will report to the playground where a teacher is present until the 8:15 a.m. bell rings. Before-Care arrangements can be made for pre-school students if they have older siblings attending Saint Columba School. After school supervision is not available unless arrangements are made with school personnel.

### **BICYCLES**

Bicycles must be parked at the stand provided for them; and walked on/off the school property and across intersections. Only one rider is permitted on a bicycle and riders are encouraged to wear helmets.

### **BIRTHDAY POLICY**

On a child's birthday, he/she may bring a treat for the class. Parents must contact the teacher prior to sending treats. If a treat is sent that requires plates, cups, napkins or utensils, they must be sent with the treat. If there are questions about what is and is not appropriate to send, the teacher must be consulted. If the child has a summer birthday and would like to bring a treat during the school year, arrangements must be made with the teacher. Invitations to birthday parties can be distributed at school **only if ALL** students in the class are invited. It is the policy of St. Columba School that phone numbers and addresses of students can not be shared with other families.

### **BOOSTER CLUB**

The Booster Club is dedicated to the improvement of the school's extra-curricular programs. The organization offers parents an opportunity to assist the school through the various extra-curricular programs offered by the school.

### **BUILDING USE**

Any use of the building for any reason needs approval from the Principal. For sports practices and the like, this is easily done by signing up on the practice calendar. In addition, for all concerned there is to be no practices or athletic events on Sundays as per the Diocesan Athletic Policy. There can not be any personal family use of the building. This concern lies with liability and security.

### **BUS GUIDELINES**

Bus riders are not allowed to ride a bus other than their assigned bus without permission from their parents either in writing or over the phone to the office. A permission slip from the secretary or principal will be provided. In the event that your child does not arrive home on his assigned bus, please contact the school office immediately. In such a case, it is important to know your child's friends, where they live and their telephone numbers.

All students will be assigned a seat on the bus. Students are to be in their assigned seats at all times. Gum, candy and balloons are not allowed on the bus at any time. If balloons are brought to students at school, other arrangements for their transportation home must be made.

Conduct that endangers the safety of the bus or its passengers and conduct that is discourteous or annoying to others is prohibited. Bus drivers must report any student who disregards the rules while riding the bus or waiting at the bus stop. The penalties for bus infractions are:

First Offense: Warning

Second Offense: 5-10 days suspension of bus privileges

Third Offense: Suspension from bus privileges for remainder of school year. This action will be taken only after the Principal and parents review the bus tape.

## **CAFETERIA**

All students are required to participate in the school lunch program. Homemade sack lunches may be brought, however fast food is not allowed so as not to cause distractions or disruptions among the students. Lunch includes one white milk or chocolate milk. Extra drinks are available for 25 cents each. Treats are available on Fridays and range from 25 to 50 cents. There are no treats sold during Lent. Free lunches are not available.

Lunchroom Behavior: Students are required to stay in their seats during their lunch period and are responsible for cleaning their eating area before leaving the cafeteria. Children are required to sit with their own grade but will not be assigned a seat unless there is a problem with discipline. The staff will determine bathroom privileges. The same manners and respect required at home are required in the cafeteria. No gum, candy, pop or snacks are allowed at lunch without prior permission from the cafeteria manager.

Special Dietary Needs: If there is a medical need for a special diet, the parents should consult with the cafeteria manager. As the cafeteria personnel are busy during lunch times, it is not appropriate to ask to have personal items micro-waved.

## **CALENDAR**

Although we have tried to include as many events in the calendar as possible, changes occur as the school year progresses. Please refer to the periodic updates from the main office and the schedules given to the athletes by their coaches for any additions, deletions or changes which may occur.

## **CLASS SIZE**

Class sizes will be limited to the following maximum number of students at each given grade level based on recommendations from Diocesan Policy E-151:

Kindergarten: 20 students per room

First - Fifth Grades: 28 students per room

Sixth - Eighth Grades: 30 students per room

Teacher's Aides will be provided as necessary per requests from the classroom teachers and the recommendation of the principal. Once a class reaches its maximum number of students, prospective students will be placed on a waiting list until such time that the Pastor and principal make arrangements to add more students to that class or hire a second teacher at that grade level and split the class. All prospective students who pre-register after July 1 will be placed on a waiting list until an opening occurs at their grade level.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Although we try to make decisions in the best interest of our students, conflicts arise occasionally. If a parent has a question about their situation, every effort should be made to resolve the problem at the lowest level possible within five working days. If an informal resolution cannot be met, the principal will meet with the parents to discuss the situation and make a decision. If the parents are not satisfied with the principal's decision, they may use the Appeal and Review process.

## **COUNSELING**

Counseling will be handled by the Principal and teaching staff. If the administration or staff feel that there is a need for further counseling, the school can provide names and organizations which provide this service.

## **CRISIS PLAN/DISASTER DRILLS**

The Emergency Preparedness Plan is on file in the school office. In accordance with State law, fire drills are conducted periodically. When the alarm goes off, everyone must leave the building in an orderly fashion, without hat, coat or other personal possessions. The children line up outside in a pre-determined order. Severe weather drills are also held at regular intervals to furnish protection in the event that a real emergency should arise. In drills of this type, the children line up in the safest part of the building, again at pre-determined positions. The time required for an entire school to clear the building in a fire drill or to go to their stations in an emergency drill is normally less than 1 1/4 minutes.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Saint Columba Schools expects every student to act in a Christian manner with administration, staff and fellow students. As a Catholic school, Saint Columba challenges all students to live up to the moral ideals given to us by Jesus Christ and expressed in the Commandments, especially the commandment to love one another. A student's good behavior is a way to express the faith we profess as Paul tells us: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

(Romans 12:21)”

Our primary efforts will be directed toward minimizing inappropriate behavior, thus maintaining a proper learning environment for those who want to learn. School discipline is part of the process of education and formation and begins in each classroom and activity. It is incumbent upon each teacher or supervisor to clearly articulate the rules and regulations for students’ behavior and the rationale underlying them. Discipline within the classroom is the responsibility of the teacher, using discussion, persuasion, notes home, calls to parents, conferences, detentions, demerits, etc. The principal is available to assist teachers and students in clarifying matters, with the understanding that good discipline requires reasonableness, fairness and consistency of approach from all.

Serious and repeated violations of discipline will be considered a serious violation of Christian Conduct. In extreme cases of misbehavior, students may be dismissed from the classroom for the good of the class. All such dismissals are for a minimum of one class period, unless other arrangements have been made with the principal.

When a student is sent to the principal’s office because of a serious violation, these are the steps that will be followed and documented:

First Offense: Phone call home to the parents from the principal. This may also include detentions.

Second Offense: Meeting with the student, parents, principal, teacher and/or supervisor. This may also include an in-school suspension.

Third Offense: Out-of-school suspension

Fourth Offense: Recommendation to the Pastor for possible dismissal

Please note: In cases of extreme violations, the principal has the option to use any combination of the above four consequences.

#### Types of Disciplinary Actions:

**DETENTION:** As a means of handling disciplinary problems, students may be given an after-school detention of up to a one hour in length to be served after parental notification.

**SUSPENSION:** Although not as severe as dismissal, the suspension of a student can lead to eventual dismissal if the situation so demands. In-school suspension, where the student is in school but not allowed to attend class, is more common than out-of-school suspension, where the student is not allowed to come to school. Students will be expected to complete all assignments but will be given no credit. Students in suspension are not allowed to participate in or attend extra-curricular activities on the day of the suspension. Suspension is a warning to students and parents that the behavior exhibited is not in keeping with the philosophy of Saint Columba School and, if continued, may lead to dismissal.

**ACTION PLAN/BEHAVIORAL CONTRACTS:** In some cases, the principal may deem it necessary for a student to agree to an Action Plan/Behavioral Contract as a condition to continue enrollment at the school. Signatures of both the student and parent/guardian on the plan/contract imply agreement with the conditions and consequences that are listed.

**DISMISSAL:** Saint Columba School reserves the right to dismiss any student, at any time whatsoever, for reason of deficiency in scholarship, unsatisfactory conduct or for any other just cause.

Any student who engages in conduct, whether inside or outside of school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school and/or inconsistent with the mission, philosophy, or teachings of the Catholic Church may be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion.

**Bullying:** All elementary and secondary schools of the Diocese shall actively seek to provide a supportive and caring environment that is safe from all forms of intimidation including bullying. Bullying is repeated behavior involving a deliberate, conscious intent to hurt, threaten, frighten, or humiliate someone. It may include physical and/or verbal intimidation or assault; extortion or taking belongings; oral or written threats; outrageous teasing, mocking, taunting, putdowns, or name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; suggestive comments; false accusations, and/or social isolation. Bullying behavior shall not be tolerated in any form at school or school-sponsored programs and activities. The Diocesan Administrative Regulation is on file in the school office.

**Weapons:** Catholic schools in the Diocese of Peoria teach and uphold the sanctity of human life. Virtues such as respect for others, peacemaking, and self-discipline are foundations of Catholic education. Furthermore, a safe academic and social environment is essential for learning and Christian formation. The possession or use of weapons

not only disrupts the school's learning environment, it fundamentally violates the sanctity of human life by threatening the very health and safety of teachers and students. Therefore, Diocesan schools have zero tolerance towards weapons.

It is strictly forbidden for any student to possess, use, attempt to use, manufacture, distribute, purchase, trade or sell (or seek the sale or trade of) any weapon on school premises or at any school-related activity or function, including but not limited to travel to and from school and/or school-related functions. Possession means having a weapon on one's person or in an area subject to the student's control such as desks, lockers, backpacks, and vehicles. Any student possessing, using, attempting to use, manufacturing, distributing, purchasing, trading or selling (or seeking the sale or trade of) weapons at school or at any school-related function shall, at the discretion of the pastor and principal, be subject to immediate expulsion.

Weapons are defined as any object, device, or instrument that has been designed, created, adapted, or used for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, and/or inflicting physical injury (including but not limited to anything which resembles such items). Weapons include:

1. Any firearm or ammunition (pistols, rifles, shotguns)
2. Airguns, pellet guns, BB guns, blowguns, slingshots, etc.
3. Look alikes, stun guns, toy guns or other toy weapons, and replicas of weapons
4. Any knife or blade including switch blades, pocket knives, stiletos, swords, dagger, box cutters, razor blades, etc.
5. Any club or club like object including billies, bats, backjacks, and other bludgeons
6. Metal knuckles, fused rings, or objects designed to produce similar effects
7. Martial arts devices including nunchakus, klackers, kung fu sticks, batons, chains, etc.
8. Projectiles including shurikens and similar pointed starlike objects, arrows, darts, etc.
9. Mace, tear gas, pepper spray or other propellants
10. Explosive devices including fireworks, firecrackers, poppers, cap devices, etc.
11. Poisons
12. Armbands, bracelets, etc. that have spikes, points, or studs
13. Objects which have been modified to act as or resemble a weapon
14. Any article (laser pointers, belts, combs, pencils, scissors, etc.) used to intimidate, threaten, and /or inflict bodily injury

Any student found to be in possession of a weapon shall be immediately suspended from school. The weapon will be confiscated and police officials contacted. Upon notification of the student's parents and administrative review, the student shall be expelled from school. In cases where there are substantial mitigating circumstances, the pastor may impose a suspension rather than an expulsion after consultation with the Superintendent of Schools (especially with students in grades K-3).

In the event that a student finds a weapon at school or a school-related function, the student shall immediately notify a teacher, coach, or administrator about the weapon's location. In such cases, the student shall not be regarded as possessing a weapon. Teachers and students who require a facsimile of a weapon for a legitimate school/class project must first obtain approval from the principal prior to bringing the item into the school.

The Diocesan Administrative Regulation is on file in the school office.

### **DRESS CODE**

Saint Columba students will have a dress code determined by the pastor on the recommendation of the Education Commission and the Principal. The following dress code will be adhered to by students in first - eighth grades:

**Boys:** White knit polo shirt (short sleeve or long sleeve), White dress shirt with collar or White knit turtleneck shirt. Navy, gray or white sweatshirts, plain or with the SCS logo, may be worn over one of the above shirts or Navy sweaters may be worn over one of the above shirts (No hooded sweatshirts may be worn during school hours.) Navy - No baggy or cargo pants (junior high students are to wear light khaki or tan pants only)

**Girls:** White knit polo shirt (short sleeve or long sleeve), White dress shirt or blouse with collar, or White turtleneck shirt. Navy, gray or white sweatshirts, plain or with the SCS logo, may be worn over one of the above shirts or Navy sweaters may be worn over one of the above shirts (No hooded sweatshirts may be worn during school hours.) Navy skirts, skorts or jumpers - these must measure no more than 2 inches above the top of the knee. Navy slacks - No baggy, Capri or cargo pants (junior high students are to wear light khaki or tan pants only)

Leggings and bibs may not be worn at any time. All students are to wear belts for pants with loops, socks and shoes (No backless shoes may be worn at any time.) Heelys are always prohibited. Shirts must be tucked in at all times. Clothing which meets the requirements of the dress code is available from local vendors. Students' hair should be properly groomed and trimmed. Specifically, boys' hair should be neatly trimmed at neckline. Questions regarding the dress code may be directed to the school. The principal reserves the right to interpret and enforce this dress code policy as he sees fit. A student may be sent home to change clothes if his/her dress is not in accord with the dress code.

Warm Weather Dress Code: The warm weather dress code is in effect from the first day of school until October 30 and from May 1 until the last day of school. The warm weather uniform permits walking shorts or Capri pants in the same colors as pants and sandals with backs. The shorts must measure no more than 2 inches above the knee. The principal may extend the period of the warm weather dress code at his discretion.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

When an emergency situation, such as a sudden snowstorm, arises before or during the school day, students and parents should listen to radio station WCMY/WRKX (AM 1430/FM 95.3) for announcements. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL FOR CONFIRMATION OF THE SCHOOL'S CLOSING. St. Columba uses a telephone broadcast system that notifies all households and parents by phone within minutes of an emergency or unplanned event that causes early dismissal, school cancellation or late start.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

The following extra-curricular activities are offered: Scholastic Bowl Team (Grades 7&8), Girls' Cheerleading (Grades 7&8), Girls' Volleyball (Grades 6-8), Boys' Soccer (Grades 5-8), Boys'/Girls' Basketball (Grades 5-8) and an intramural basketball program for 3rd/4th grade boys and girls.

Academic Eligibility: If at any time a student's academic average is 67% or below (F) in one subject area or 75% or below (D) in two subject areas, he/she is ineligible to participate in extra-curricular activities. The cumulative average of a student will be computed starting with the end of the third week of each new grading period and will continue until the end of the quarter. The first week of ineligibility of each grading period will be the fourth week of the quarter. Notification of academic ineligibility will be reported to the student, their parents and the Athletic Director by the Monday of the week following the unsatisfactory report. (For those students participating in IESA events, the academic eligibility is processed throughout the complete grading period.) The suspension from participation will be one week in length, from Monday to Sunday, inclusive, of the week following the unsatisfactory report.

Conduct Eligibility: Exemplary character is required both on and off the playing field. Students may become ineligible by exhibiting poor behavior within the school setting. Any student who is suspended, either in-school or out-of-school, will be suspended from participating in events held on the day of the suspension. Any student involved in the use of alcohol, smoking or drugs will automatically become ineligible for all sports for that school year. THERE ARE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE. Coaches are the primary source for ensuring that proper conduct is exhibited by the players during practices and games. Coaches may, with the approval of the Athletic Director and Principal, suspend any student from play to maintain team discipline.

Attendance: Students must be in school a full day in order to participate in practices or events. The exception to this is for funerals and doctors appointments and the like.

Conflict in Dual Extracurricular Activities: Whenever possible, attempts will be made to limit conflicts for an athlete who might be simultaneously participating in more than one sport/activity. All games or contests will take precedence over practices. Any conflict between games will be resolved by the principal. All Saint Columba games/practices take precedence over non-school/non-parish functions. Parents must consider this when deciding which activities their child/ren will participate in.

Team (Squad) Selection/Player-Team Placement: There is a "no cut" policy to be adhered to at all levels. Students signing up for a particular sport/activity will be placed on the squad that corresponds to their year in school and students will not normally be moved up (i.e. 6th graders play on the 6th grade team, etc.) In some years a team may have an insufficient number of athletes to practice and compete in games. With this mind, it may be necessary to augment a higher grade team with lower grade athletes. The fact that they dress, however, does not guarantee participation.

Playing time will be at the sole discretion of the individual coach(es). Consideration will also be given to the total amount of time an individual plays in two contests. Athletes at grade level must play if athletes from a lower grade level play in the game. The policy that no lower grade athlete may be moved up does not apply to the Diocesan Tournament. A decision to move up an athlete for the tournament is at the discretion of the upper grade coach and the student's parents. An athlete may only be moved up one grade level to participate in the tournament.

It is well understood that there are time restrictions on the students-athletes for game nights and especially for away contests. Although we realize that academics can never be jeopardized, the coaches do need the chance to develop a roster for the game. Accordingly, the athletes or their parents should notify the coach at the earliest opportunity if they will not be able to stay for a specific upper level game.

Practices: Each particular sport has its own practice times and schedules which vary according to the sport, the coach's rules and time permitted. All athletes are expected to attend unless ill or with an excused absence. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the coach as early as possible if an athlete will be absent. It is disruptive to all involved when there are unexcused absences. The playing time of an athlete who does not attend the scheduled practices is at the sole discretion of the team coach. This includes missed practices due to participation in non-Saint Columba activities.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are privileges afforded to students and no student has an absolute right to a field trip. Students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic and/or conduct requirements. A student who wishes to participate in a field trip must submit a permission form signed by the parents before the field trip is to occur. If a student does not submit the proper form, he/she will not be allowed to participate in the field trip. Telephone calls from parents will not be accepted in lieu of the proper form. Parents also have the right to refuse to allow their child to participate in a field trip.

### **FINANCE**

Tuition (Kindergarten - Eighth Grade): Tuition will be recommended to the Pastor by the Education Commission and Parish Finance Council on an annual basis. All parents are expected to pay full tuition unless arrangements are made with the Pastor. The tuition rate will be based on a student's parish status. Members of Saint Columba Church and the following parishes will be given the Catholic rate: Earlville Saint Theresa, Marseilles Saint Joseph, Naplate Saint Mary, Ottawa Saint Francis and Utica Saint Mary. All other students will be responsible for the non-Catholic rate. A five (5) % discount will be given to parents who pay tuition in full at registration. Parents may apply for tuition aid through the FACTS, Grant and Aid Assessment, on an annual basis. If a student leaves the school before completing the year, the cost of tuition will be pro-rated based on the number of days the student has attended classes.

Book Fees (Kindergarten - Eighth Grade): Book Fees will be recommended to the Pastor by the Education Commission and Parish Finance Council on an annual basis. All parents are expected to pay book fees. If a student leaves the school before completing the year, there will be no refund of these fees.

Cafeteria Fees (Kindergarten - Eighth Grade): Cafeteria Fees will be recommended to the Pastor by the Education Commission and Parish Finance Council on an annual basis. All parents are expected to pay the Cafeteria Fee. If a student leaves the school before completing the year, the Cafeteria Fee will be pro-rated based on the number of days lunch has been served to the students.

Full payment (5% Discount)	Tuition	Cafeteria Fee	Fee	Total
1 Child	\$ 2,183.10	\$ 330.00	\$ 270.00	\$ 2,783.10
2 Children	\$ 3,930.15	\$ 660.00	\$ 520.00	\$ 5,110.15
3 Children	\$ 5,186.05	\$ 990.00	\$ 770.00	\$ 6,946.05
4 Children	\$ 5,186.05	\$1,320.00	\$1,020.00	\$ 7,526.05
5 Children	\$ 5,186.05	\$1,650.00	\$1,270.00	\$ 8,106.05
1 Child (Non-Catholic)	\$ 3,781.00	\$ 330.00	\$ 270.00	\$ 4,381.00
2 Children (Non-Catholic)	\$ 7,546.80	\$ 660.00	\$ 520.00	\$ 8,726.80
3 Children (Non-Catholic)	\$11,295.50	\$ 990.00	\$ 770.00	\$13,055.50

10 Monthly Payments	Tuition	Cafeteria Fee	Fee	Total	Monthly Payment
1 Child	\$ 2,298.00	\$ 330.00	\$ 270.00	\$ 2,898.00	\$ 289.80
2 Children	\$ 4,137.00	\$ 660.00	\$ 520.00	\$ 5,317.00	\$ 531.70
3 Children	\$ 5,459.00	\$ 990.00	\$ 770.00	\$ 7,219.00	\$ 721.90
4 Children	\$ 5,459.00	\$1,320.00	\$1,020.00	\$ 7,799.00	\$ 779.90
5 Children	\$ 5,459.00	\$1,650.00	\$1,270.00	\$ 8,379.00	\$ 837.90
1 Child (Non-Catholic)	\$ 3,980.00	\$ 330.00	\$ 270.00	\$ 4,580.00	\$ 458.00
2 Children (Non-Catholic)	\$ 7,944.00	\$ 660.00	\$ 520.00	\$ 9,124.00	\$ 912.40
3 Children (Non-Catholic)	\$11,890.00	\$ 990.00	\$ 770.00	\$13,650.00	\$1,365.00

Fees included above are Book Fees as well as Booster Club and Parent's Club dues. The pre-registration non-refundable fee of \$100.00/child will be deducted from the first payment. You may pay in full with a 5% discount at registration or 10 monthly payments with the first payment due at registration. If you choose to pay monthly, you may pay the school directly or you may have the money electronically debited from your bank account.

### **GRADING**

Grades are assigned by teachers via written work, observation and testing.

Written Work: Written work will consist of daily assignments, test, quizzes, themes, etc. The following grading scale will be used: A - 94-100 B - 86-93 C - 76-85 D - 68-75 F - 67 & Below

Verbal Abstract: Other factors to be considered by teachers in determining a report card grade are meaningful class participation, innovation or ingenuity shown by a student, etc. These factors can elevate a student's report card grade as much as a letter grade when combined with the written average. However, the verbal abstract can only be utilized in a positive manner. This means if a student demonstrates proficiency in this area, it will help his/her grade. Conversely, if this proficiency is not demonstrated, the student will not be penalized but rather the report card will reflect only his/her written work.

### **GUM**

The chewing of gum within the school is prohibited both for sanitary and housekeeping reasons.

### **HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment of students is prohibited. Sexual harassment is defined as follows:

1. An employee's or Saint Columba School agent's unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, that denies or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services or treatment; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student's academic status.
2. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature by anyone, including students, imposed on the basis of sex, that has the purpose or effect of (a) substantially interfering with a student's educational environment; (b) creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment; (c) depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services or treatment; or (d) making submission to or rejection of such unwelcome conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student.

Students who believe they are victims of sexual harassment are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Pastor, Assistant Pastor or Principal. An allegation that one student was sexually harassed by another student shall be referred to the Pastor, Assistant Pastor or Principal for appropriate action. The Diocesan Policy/Administrative Regulation is on file in the school office.

### **HEALTH EXAMINATIONS, IMMUNIZATIONS, PARENTAL MEDICAL RELEASE AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE WAIVER**

In accordance with the Illinois Department of Public Health, a student shall show appropriate evidence of immunization and a health examination prior to being admitted into kindergarten and sixth grade. Forms are available at the doctor's office or at the school office. This information must be on file in the school office before October 15 of any given year or the student will be excluded from school until the requirement is met. Students enrolling after

October 15 must present their completed immunization record and their health examination upon entering the school. Parents are to sign a medical release form and an accident insurance waiver, both supplied by the school. State law does require dental exams for kindergarten, second, and sixth grades. Vision, hearing and spinal screenings are given annually by the Public Health Nurse. Vision screening required for kindergarten by an eye doctor. Your child is not required to undergo this vision screening if an optometrist or ophthalmologist has completed and signed a report form indicating that an examination has been administered within the previous 12 months. Vision and hearing screening is mandated in the State of Illinois.

### **H.I.V. AND A.I.D.S.**

1. Saint Columba School's approach to H.I.V. (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) and A.I.D.S. (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) and to persons with this disease will be in harmony with the moral and social teachings of Jesus Christ as interpreted and taught by the Roman Catholic Church and with current scientific information and accepted medical practice.
2. Persons identified as being H.I.V. infected, applying or seeking admission to Saint Columba School will not be discriminated against on the basis of H.I.V. infection diagnosis.
3. Precaution will be taken to protect the confidentiality of records, files and other information about the H.I.V. status of students, applicants and employees of Saint Columba School. Persons deemed to have a direct need to know will be provided with the appropriate information. These persons, however will not further disclose such information.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework is material assigned by the teacher to be done outside the class which is due on a specific date. When homework is assigned, its purpose is to:

1. Reinforce classroom learning by providing necessary practice and application
2. Enrich the child's experiences through related home activities
3. Stimulate the child's initiative, independence, responsibility, and self-direction

As such, homework is considered an important adjunct to daily class work. Homework that is well-planned and understood by the child will add to his/her total education. The teacher will make every attempt to help the students understand the assignment so that he/she may work independently. The quantity and nature of the homework is determined by the teachers according to the child's needs, his ability and grade level. Students will be held responsible for completing and submitting homework assignments at the time they are due, unless excused absence or another valid reason prevents the student from submitting the work. When there is no valid excuse, a student will receive a zero for homework that is not submitted on time. It is hoped that parents will endeavor to provide a quiet place for study away from distractions such as family conversation, TV or radio. Parents have an opportunity of sharing the educational process through the supervision of the student's homework. Since the true value of homework is lost when the parent participates in the student's actual work, it is recommended that the parent insure that the student does the work himself. Work done for the student by friends or members of the family defeats the real purpose of work done at home.

### **HONOR ROLL - Academic**

To qualify for the Academic Honor Roll for any quarter, a student in grades 5 through 8 must attain a 3.0 or higher Grade Point Average (GPA) in their class work for that quarter. Inclusion on the Academic Honor Roll will be based on that quarter's GPA and not on the student's cumulative GPA. The Saint Columba Parish bulletin and the Daily Times will list those students who have made the Honor Roll. The following scale shall be utilized in determining a student's GPA: A - 4.0 B - 3.0 C - 2.0 D - 1.0 F - 0

### **GOOD CONDUCT RECOGNITION AWARD**

A Good Conduct Recognition Award is established to recognize and encourage behaviors of self-management, Christian values, and leadership, which contribute to the development of the whole person and set a positive example for others. These characteristics include but are not limited to: organizational skills, time management, respect for peers and adults, behavior reflective of Christian values, or respect for procedures and regulations. To determine, assess, and recognize the achievement and success of each individual the following criteria will be used:

- The student consistently follows procedures and regulations, practices Christian values, meets deadlines, and organizes school work -- A

- The student follows procedures and regulations, practices Christian values, meets deadlines, and organizes school work but is inconsistent at times -- B
- The student needs improvement in following procedures and regulations, practicing Christian values, meeting deadlines, or organizing schoolwork -- C
- The student needs much improvement in following procedures and regulations, practicing Christian values, meeting deadlines, or organizing schoolwork -- D
- The student rarely follows procedures and regulations, practices Christian values, meets deadlines, or organizes school work -- F

Students are made aware of these expectations and standards through classroom discussions and publications. Each student's progress is monitored through conferences with the student and/or parents, notes, and demerits. In reviewing a student's record, teachers determine a grade for each student. Those students in grades 5 through 8 receiving an A or B in Conduct will be recognized with the Good Conduct Recognition Award.

### **KEYS**

Keys are distributed to those who need them for their volunteer work for SCS. Those keys can not be lent to someone else or allow students to be alone in the building to "shoot Hoops" for example. Parents should never open classrooms without school personnel present.

### **KINDERGARTEN**

A full-day kindergarten program is offered for those students who have reached the age of five on or before September 1 of the school year. There are no exceptions to this guideline. Kindergarten students do not have to wear blue and white.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

All books, purses, clothing and equipment should be plainly marked with name tape, ink or laundry pen for children in all grades. This is especially important for school sweatshirts which are easily confused with other student's sweatshirts. Students should inquire at the school office when things have been lost. Unclaimed clothing will be given to charity after the first and second semester.

### **MAILBOXES**

Messages to faculty/staff members can be given to the school secretary, who will put the messages in the mailboxes.

### **MASCOTS**

Saint Columba School teams will not have school mascots.

### **MASS**

An all-school Mass is held each Friday and on Holy Days of Obligation. Parents and family are welcome and encouraged to attend.

### **MEDICATION**

All children's medicine should be administered by a parent at home. Under exceptional circumstances, medication may be administered by school personnel under the appropriate administrative guidelines. If a doctor determines that a child must take medication during school hours and the parents wish to come to school to administer the medication, they may do so. If, however, they wish the school personnel to supervise the child's taking any medicine, the following rules must be followed:

- a. Written instructions, signed by a doctor, showing the child's name, the name of medication, the purpose of medication, the time to be administered and the dosage. Forms are available in the office.
- b. The medication must be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the druggist or pharmacy.
- c. Only enough medication shall be sent to school for a given week. The container is to be taken home on Friday or the last day of school for that week.

The school will provide safe storage for the prescribed medicines and will keep a basic record of any drug administration. The school does not supply students with aspirin or Tylenol.

## **MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS**

The school is NOT to be expected to relay messages from home or place of work to individual students. This includes flowers, treats and balloons. ONLY IN EMERGENCIES should parents feel free to call and all written messages should be delivered to the school office.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Conferences are scheduled for the end of the first quarter for all parents and at the end of third quarter as needed. If a parent desires a conference at other times, please call and make an appointment.

## **PARENTS' CLUB**

The Parents' Club is dedicated to the improvement of student, teacher and parent relationships. The organization offers parents an opportunity to assist the school in a variety of ways. Parents are urged to participate, especially with the Turkey Dinner on the first Sunday of November.

## **PRE-SCHOOL**

Saint Columba School offers pre-school for both three and four year olds. Pre-school begins at 8:20 a.m. for the morning sessions. Dismissal for will be at 11:00 a.m. for the morning sessions. Information on both programs is contained in the Pre-School handbook.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Report Cards: Parents with a child in grades 2-8 will be notified of their student's progress on a quarterly basis. Grade 1 will not utilize a report card until the second semester of the school term.

Mid-Term Reports: Mid-Term reports are issued midway through each grading period to all students in grades 3-8. The intent of the mid-term report is to inform both the students and parents of the progress made thus far during the quarter. Teachers of students in grades 1-2 will contact parents about a student's progress as needed.

## **RECORDS**

The 1975 Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment) gives parents and students the right of access to records. If a parent or student wishes to view the student's personal records, then he/she must make a written request to the principal at least 24 hours in advance. Saint Columba School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that no information be given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. A copy of the child's report card and other school-related information will be sent to the non-custodial parent only upon written request by the non-custodial parent, provided that no court order to the contrary has been issued and received by the school. If a student transfers, records will be sent within ten (10) days after the records release is received. If the student is not in good standing only the medical records and a copy of the unofficial grades will be sent as required by law.

## **SCHEDULES**

Schedules of practices and contests are posted in the school lobby. Each team's coach is responsible for informing his/her players of the times and commitments to be made. It is then the responsibility of each player to relay that information to their parents.

## **SEXUAL ABUSE POLICY**

This policy and its accompanying administrative regulation set forth procedural guidelines which apply to priests, deacons, lay employees, or volunteers employed by or in the Diocese against whom sexual abuse is suspected or reported. It is intended to clarify the roles and responsibilities of Diocesan or parish personnel who have administrative responsibility involving the Diocese, a parish, a parish institution, school or organization in situations involving possible sexual abuse. It sets forth the Diocesan response to victims. It is intended to inform parties who may wish to report such misconduct. The Diocesan Administrative Regulation is on file in the school office.

**SNOWBALLS AND HARD BASEBALLS AND SOFTBALLS** are not permitted during recess for safety concerns.

**SPORTSMANSHIP**

The rules of good sportsmanship should be observed at all times. This is especially important at sporting events where rivalry between schools and students should stay on friendly terms. Please show respect for players, officials, spectators and cheerleaders.

**STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Students in grades 2 through 8 are administered the Diocesan standardized test (ITBS) in the fall. The parents will receive the results of these tests at the first Parent-Teacher Conference. Students in grades 3, 6 and 8 will be given the Diocesan Catechetical Assessment during the winter and students in grades 3 through 8 will take the Diocesan writing assessment (MetriTech) in the spring.

**TELEPHONE**

The school telephone is for school business only. Students will not be called from classes to answer the telephone unless an emergency exists. Messages of importance will be delivered to students. Students are not allowed to use the phone without the permission of the principal or school secretary.

**VISITORS**

All visitors must report to the office upon their arrival at the school. Parents may visit the school but must first report to the school office before going to the classroom even to deliver a message or item to a student.