



POPE JOHN XXIII  
MIDDLE SCHOOL

# **FACULTY HANDBOOK 2024-2025**

**Pope John XXIII Middle School**

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

## **Purpose and Use of this Handbook**

This handbook exists to foster the efficient operation of Pope John XXIII Middle School. In order to meet this objective, the School Administration is given the flexibility and discretion to take actions other than those stated in this Handbook. The School Administration preserves the right to amend this handbook at any time.

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## **Pope John XXIII Middle School**

### Mission Statement

Pope John XXIII Middle School is a Catholic community that inspires students to become compassionate lifelong learners by nurturing Gospel values, fostering academic excellence, promoting service, and developing global awareness.

### Philosophy

Pope John XXIII Middle School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accordance with the Curriculum Guide for Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Paterson.

- To develop the total Christian personality by instilling in the students respect for life and reverence for Christian living.
- To develop within the school a strong religious education program based on Catholic Theology, Scripture, Liturgical experience, and service so that each child will grow and develop in the Christian way of life.
- To facilitate the intellectual, social, and physical development of each child through a variety of instructional methods such as small and large group instruction, departmental classes, and other tools for basic knowledge and formation.
- To aid students in evaluation of their own capabilities and vocational possibilities.
- It is the consensus of the faculty that every human being has a right to pursue knowledge corresponding with his/her dignity and God-given ability, regardless of background or sex.
- In the early years, education is often of the utmost importance because through education and guidance the children of today become the Catholic citizens of tomorrow.

### History

Pope John XXIII Middle School, part of the Catholic Academy of Sussex County, opened its doors for the first time in the spring of 2016. It is a Catholic middle school with grades 5 through 7 governed by the Diocese of Paterson Catholic School's Office.

The curriculum stresses academic achievement within a Christian community where the child feels that he/she is loved and respected by his/her peers as well as the teachers. Our religion program is aligned with the Vatican II texts so that our theology is in compliance with the bishops of the world. United with each other in meaningful liturgy and prayer, the students can further come to an understanding of the Christian life. At Pope John XXIII Middle School, we are attempting to "teach as Jesus did."

The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, and the State of New Jersey guidelines, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. The curriculum is marked by current content and fresh approaches to methodology. The emphasis is on principles and concepts, rather than facts, and on learning through problem solving and promoting critical thinking skills, rather than by precept. We strive to offer a program that makes use of many sources of reading materials, a wide variety of audio-visual and technology tools, and a multi-text approach to the content areas

#### Accreditation

Pope John XXIII Middle School received Cognia Accreditation in June of 2022.

#### School Colors and Mascot

The school colors are blue and white. Our mascot is a lion cub.

## **Introduction**

Because the faculty substantially determines whether or not our school is successful, you are vitally important to Pope John XXIII Middle School. To ensure that you can live your vocation in faith, a positive spirit of hope should pervade our school. Staff, students, and parents alike should be appreciated, respected, and should feel “at home”.

To enable us to work together, all staff members are responsible for:

- Implementing the Pope John XXIII Middle School philosophy.
- Knowing the material in the parent-student handbook and presenting it to the students.
- Following this faculty handbook.



## **Contractual Responsibilities**

### State Certification

A New Jersey State Provisional or Standard Certificate is required. It is the professional responsibility of each teacher to maintain a current license/certification for the content area that he/she is teaching. If a certificate has not been obtained, the teacher must be in the process of obtaining it and be committed to seeing it through to its finality. This certification must be submitted to the Principal before the first day of the contract year.

### Catechetical Certification

All elementary teachers employed by the Diocese of Paterson are required to maintain Catechetical Certification in accordance with the guidelines established by the Catholic Schools Office.

### Medical Records

Proof of a medical examination is to be filed in the school office. In addition, on a case-by-case basis, the Principal may require medical confirmation that a teacher is in good physical, mental, and emotional health in order to fulfill teaching responsibilities.

### Professional Ethics

Professional ethics requires discrete interactions with all involved in an educational community. On or off campus, faculty members should maintain exemplary conduct.

- **Students:** Academic and personal student issues must be discussed only with the immediate staff on professional terms. A student should be reported for inappropriate behavior in the classroom, in the hallway, or anywhere on school grounds. When a problem arises, the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Counselor must be advised immediately, and the situation resolved.
- **Faculty:** The actions or teaching abilities of faculty members will be discussed only in a professional manner. All faculty members should be considered as equally important members of our team. Interactions with colleagues should be honest and when differences occur, both parties should work toward a mutually satisfactory resolution.
- **Administration:** Mutual respect, loyalty, and support between the administration and the faculty are required for a good working relationship. Communication must be honest and direct. The faculty must support the decisions of the administration and refrain from discussing professional differences with students or parents. Any breach of professional confidence may be cause for dismissal.

When speaking with parents, on or off campus, there should be no criticism of our administrators, faculty members, parents, or students. Discussions with parents must focus only on their child. Discussions regarding the behavior and attitude of every child should be objective and framed in positive language.

Every teacher and student will stand in a respectful manner and remain standing for the daily prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

### Technology Usage

- Each teacher is expected to sign an Acceptable Telecommunications Policy Agreement and enforce this policy with his/her students (see Agreement at the end of this Handbook).
- Use of the computer and the Internet are provided for professional use only. The use of the Internet to send jokes, forwarded email messages, or other communication not related to the professional duties to which you are assigned is strictly prohibited. Transmission of such material may result in loss of computer privileges or termination of employment. This includes, but is not limited to, defamatory statements made on a teacher's blog/social media regarding the administration, other teachers, students, or the Academy.
- Teachers should not "friend" their students on their social networking sites. This is a breach of professional boundaries and cause for dismissal from their position at Pope John XXIII Middle School.

### Professional Dress

- Teachers are to dress as professional role models.
- Men are expected to wear collared shirts and ties.
- No tops/blouses/sweaters that are low-cut or immodest should be worn.
- Slacks are to be fully tailored, without any jean-type styling. Teachers may not wear shorts, jogging suits, sneakers, or flip-flops. Jeans are not appropriate professional attire for the workplace, including diocesan workshops or conferences.
- Teachers should not display visible tattoos or body piercings other than the earholes. On days when we attend Mass, faculty dress should reflect the reverence and respect mass deserves (i.e. male faculty should wear ties).

### Food and Refreshments

- Teachers should not chew gum when interacting with students or parents at school.
- Teachers should not eat or chew mints during class.
- Teachers may drink coffee, water, soda, or tea in a container with a lid during prep or free time. Teachers should not have cans or bottles on their desk.
- Coffee makers for faculty and staff are available for use during free time and are located in designated common areas.

- Under no circumstances are refrigerators, coffee/tea makers, food warmers, etc. allowed to be in classroom areas.

### Cell Phones

- Cell phones need to be silenced with the ringer off during the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and during faculty meetings.
- If a teacher anticipates a call during the school day or during a meeting due to an emergency, he/she should notify the Administration at the beginning of the day.
- Texting during instructional periods is not permitted.

### Smoking

Pope John XXIII Middle School is a smoke-free building; therefore, smoking is prohibited in the building and anywhere on campus.

### Outside Employment

Teachers must not engage in gainful employment that interferes with school duties. The school reserves the right to judge whether outside employment is compatible with schoolwork.

### Hours of Work

Teachers are to report to school no later than 7:15 a.m. and leave no sooner than 3:15 p.m., Monday through Friday. Teachers must “clock in” to Paylocity upon arrival each day and “clock out” as they leave the building at the end of the day. Repeated tardiness may result in time being accrued toward the use of a personal day or docked pay. The Paylocity system is the “official” record of attendance.

Teachers are responsible for being on time for class and for every duty as assigned by the administration, which includes lunch duty, morning duty, and afternoon duty. Teachers are responsible for the morning or afternoon duty to which they have been assigned. Teachers who conduct morning duty need to be present in the building by 7:00 a.m. to greet and supervise students.

Teachers who are responsible for bus duty need to be present at the school until the last bus leaves. Teachers who are responsible for car line duty may leave when the last student is picked up or until 3:05 p.m. Any students remaining at 3:05 p.m. are to be brought back to Pope John Middle School for parent pick up.

Teachers are expected to attend all regularly scheduled faculty meetings, emergency faculty meetings, and curriculum meetings. General faculty meetings will be held on a Monday each month; a tentative schedule is provided at the start of school. Please avoid scheduling appointments on any Mondays. Meetings will end by 4:30 p.m. The administration reserves the right to hold additional meetings as deemed necessary.

Teachers are also expected to attend all liturgical, school assemblies, student activities, and Open Houses as assigned by the Administration. Student activities include, but are not limited to the following: school dances, TREP\$, the Maker Faire, the fall and/or spring drama performances, and at least one sports activity of your choice per sports season.

If a teacher is out due to illness, he/she must call the Principal via cell phone between 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.

The school day consists of multiple periods. These may all be teaching periods or include one or more special assignments. Assignments may vary daily. Regardless of the teaching schedule, full-time employees are to remain in the building for the entire workday unless the Principal grants an exception. In the absence of teachers, other faculty members may be asked to substitute during any non-teaching periods. This practice will be used only when other alternatives have been exhausted.

#### Leaving the Building

Teachers should consult with the Principal before leaving the building for lunch, to run an errand, for an emergency, etc. Teachers should complete an absence form for any time that they are away from the building. Teachers are paid for an eight-hour workday that includes lunch and planning periods. Extended or frequent absences during the day may be considered a portion of a personal day.

#### Co-Curricular Activities

All teachers are expected to accept some non-teaching responsibilities as assigned by the administration. Examples of such activities include: dismissal duty, morning duty, lunch/recess duty, advising a club, moderating various school activities or events that occur on an occasional basis, etc. The administration will try to distribute such duties as evenly as possible.

#### Teacher Planning Meetings

The building Principal, Director of Curriculum, or high school department chairs will preside over periodic content area meetings. Meeting agendas should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Integration of instruction across the curriculum
- Special event plans
- Methods to meet individual student needs (differentiation)
- Reflection on teaching practices and challenges
- Strategies for enhancing/improving academic outcomes/scores
- Collegial support

Supervisors will provide advance notification of the scheduled meetings to the Principal.

#### Professional Development Days

Professional Development Days are used for the purpose of professional meetings or other professional development opportunities. All full-time staff members are expected to be in attendance for these meetings. Absence requires permission from the Principal. Teachers not in attendance for Professional Development Days must use a personal day.

#### Disciplinary Actions

Pope John XXIII Middle School is a Roman Catholic Institution, and the faculty represents this institution. The life choices of faculty and staff members must be consistent with the expectations of a Catholic in good standing in the Catholic Church. Any conduct inconsistent with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church shall be grounds for disciplinary action, as the Principal shall deem appropriate, including the termination of the contract of employment.

#### Additional Curriculum Skills

Teachers must acquire basic computer skills. Within two years of employment, teachers must have taken a hands-on computer workshop or continuing education such as PowerSchool training. Since technology is an on-going and ever-changing discipline, teachers should continue to update their computer skills in order to meet the technological needs of their students. The Academy will provide In-Service opportunities for all staff.

#### Student Behavior

Students must know and understand the rules for classroom behavior as stated in the Parent-Student Handbook. Additional rules established for a classroom must be posted in the classroom and/or stated in course syllabus. Teachers are responsible for issuing an infraction or reporting a student for inappropriate behavior in the classroom, in the hallway, or anywhere on school grounds. Students must understand the consequences for not following school rules. Actions meriting punishment must be explained to the student before issuance of punishment. Detentions should be reserved for serious behavior infractions.

#### Safety

Unsafe building or grounds conditions are to be reported to the Principal or other appropriate person. The Principal must sign off on all maintenance work orders.

#### Student Supervision

Supervision of all students at all times is the legal responsibility of the teacher. **Do not leave students unattended at any time.** Ask another teacher to monitor students or call the office. Require students to remain seated in their desks while the teacher is out of the room. Teachers should not be involved in social conversations during lunch duty or recess supervision.

Teachers who provide services to students after school, must be sure students have been picked up before leaving the building. The office closes at 3:15 p.m. and office staff cannot be responsible for students whose scheduled activity ends at 3:15 p.m. or later. Students should never be left in the building after school without supervision.

#### Homeroom

Teachers who have been assigned homeroom responsibilities are expected to be present in their homeroom no later than 7:15 a.m. and remain with their students until the homeroom period has ended. Students in homerooms are to be supervised at all times.

#### Accidents

Accidents involving students or staff members are to be reported to the Principal immediately and a written, detailed report, using forms in the office, must be submitted by the end of the school day. A copy of the accident report will be sent to the Business Office and an additional copy will be kept on file in the office.

#### Staff Development

Faculty members are encouraged to suggest topics for staff development. Each faculty member is required to keep a copy of in-service hours. Professional development records should be submitted to the Principal.

#### HIV/AIDS

Pope John XXIII Middle School policy is one of nondiscrimination and is aligned with the HIV/AIDS policy for the Diocese.

## Salaries & Benefits

The Diocese of Paterson pay scale is based on state teacher certification rank and years of experience.

**Insurance:** The Diocese offers a cafeteria arrangement of benefits from which to choose.

**Social Security and Workmen's Compensation:** Faculty/staff members are covered by the Social Security program and Workers' Compensation.

**Contract Year:** Contracts with teachers are for one year. At the discretion of the administration, the contract may be renewed. Teachers whose contracts are not renewed will be notified verbally and in writing.

**Pay Period:** Remuneration is made according to a contract based on a 12-month schedule. Pay is issued every two weeks.

**Personnel Records:** Change of name, address, dependents, beneficiaries, etc. should be sent to the Business Office. This information is kept confidential.

**Illnesses and Personal Days:** All full-time faculty members are allowed 8 paid sick days and 2 personal days each year. Planned personal days are to be approved by the Principal and communicated to the Principal **at least two weeks** prior to the date of absence. Please notify the Principal, using the appropriate forms, as soon as the need for absence arises. The faculty member is responsible for finding coverage for his/her classes on planned personal days. Note that absences in excess of days accumulated will result in the loss of one day's salary for each day over paid leave.

If you are out due to illness, you must call the Principal via cell phone between 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.

## **Faculty Evaluation**

The faculty evaluation program at Pope John XXIII Middle School has the following features:

- All faculty members will write and submit a Professional Development Plan. A meeting with the administration will be scheduled to review.
- A minimum of two class visits each year plus walk-through evaluations.
- A pre-visit conference to discuss objectives for the observation will be established.
- A post-visit conference is required to discuss performance review.
- Report on professional activities attended during the school year.
- Annual review of the Professional Development Plan.
- All teachers are expected to complete NWEA Worksheets three times a year. All NWEA worksheets will be reviewed and signed by the teacher and principal at the final appraisal.
- A final appraisal will be held during the last month of the school year.



## Faculty Academic Policies and Procedures

### Testing

- The NWEA MAP Growth testing is given in Grades 5 through 7 three times a year. Testing is administered in September, February, and May. This testing is completely computerized and tests students in Math and Reading only. This vehicle enables the educators to assess the student's academic performance in relation to his/her ability. All students are required to take this standardized assessment.
- Grade 5 will take the ACRE test in February of each year.
- One traditional test per unit is used to assess subject mastery. The purpose of these tests is to provide a measure of progress toward objectives and positive feedback and to allow the teacher to gauge the success of instructional goals. Teachers are required to record assessment dates on the shared Google calendar assigned for this purpose. There should be a maximum of 2 tests administered in the school on any given day. Students are to receive at least one week's notice of test dates.
- A minimum of 2 traditional tests and a minimum of 8 quizzes will be administered per marking period.
- One performance assessment is given per unit. Performance assessments are given to engage students and allow them to apply the material from the unit to real-life scenarios.
- Mid-term and final exams will be given for core content subjects (Math, ELA, S.S., Religion, and Science). Only 2 exams will be given per day.
- In order to meet the needs of all students, teachers must utilize a balance between written and electronic assessments.
- The only approved resources for electronic assessments are Google Forms and any assessments included in your content area's learning platform. For example, BrainPOP, Quizzizz, etc. are not approved.

### Reporting of Academic Progress

The school year is divided into four quarters. Progress is available throughout the grading period via PowerSchool access. Formal grades for each quarter appear on the printed student report card provided to parents at the end of each quarter.

Other methods of reporting include:

- Informal call or email parent
- Parent/teacher conference
- Results of standardized tests and exams

### Posting of Assignments and Grades

- Summative assessments such as tests and performance assessments require 5 days prior notice to students. Dates should be posted at the beginning of each week.

- While notification of quizzes and formative assessments are not required, quizzes that are substantial in length require at least 2 days notification to students.
- Homework must be posted by 3:00 p.m. the same school day.
- All worksheets, classwork, homework, or any other materials handed to students must also be posted as a PDF in Google Classroom.
- Changes to the original dates should be made verbally in the class but must also be posted electronically for students and parents to see on teacher's Google Classrooms.
- Test and quiz grades should be updated in the PowerSchool grade book 48-72 hours after the test/quiz is given.
- Homework grades should be posted for each individual assignment and updated in PowerSchool weekly. A total grade should not be posted at the end of a marking period.
- Teachers should also use the codes in PowerSchool (i.e.- Missing Assignment, Late, Incomplete, etc.) so parents can view grades more accurately.
- Failure to do so will result in a notice put in the teacher's file.

**\*Note: All graded tests, quizzes, and homework must be returned to students within 48 hours. All graded performance assessments and projects must be returned to students within 96 hours.**

#### Grading Scale

<i>A+ = 97 – 100</i>	<i>VG = Very Good</i>
<i>A = 93 – 96</i>	<i>G = Good</i>
<i>B+ = 89 – 92</i>	<i>S = Satisfactory</i>
<i>B = 85 – 88</i>	<i>I = Improvement Needed</i>
<i>C+ = 80 – 84</i>	<i>U = Unsatisfactory</i>
<i>C = 75 – 79</i>	
<i>D = 70 – 74</i>	
<i>F = Below 70</i>	

#### Honor Roll Criteria

**High Honors:** A's or A+'s in all academic areas; VG in all special areas

**Honors:** A's or B's in all academic areas; VG or G in all special areas

Additionally, the honor student exemplifies the spirit of the mission of Pope John XXIII Middle School:

- Spirit of reverence
- Academic effort
- Appropriate conduct
- Academic achievement (A's and B's)

- Respect for others
- Integrity
- Evidence of service (willingness to help)
- Exhibits leadership
- Goes above and beyond the norm

All communication on student work should be academically focused, ensuring that the student's dignity remains intact.

Teachers must post comments for all grades given on a student's report card and must include one positive attribute of the student regardless of grade.

#### Communication with Parents/Guardians

Contact should be frequent. Use of phone, email, written notes, bi-weekly progress reports, and/or newsletters are encouraged. All parent emails must be answered within a 24-hour period.

Take a positive approach in communication with parents. Achievement and improvement, in addition to negative behavior and failing grades, are good reasons for contact with parents. Grades of "D" or "F" must be reported to parents prior to a formal report card grade. Keep administration informed as well so that students can be helped.

Student progress should be monitored and communicated to parents midway through the marking period.

Teachers must contact parents of students who drop an entire letter grade prior to a formal report card being sent home.

All letters or emails sent to an entire class must be submitted to the office prior to sending home. A copy of all such communication will be retained in the office. This eliminates problems that a teacher may encounter and provides for another set of eyes to review the content.

Teachers should keep a log of telephone calls to parents in their records.

The school administration should be blind copied on emails sent to parents in a classroom that may require administrative action at a later date.

Do not conduct conferences in hallways during the designated school hours. If a parent would like to meet with a teacher, the teacher is required to set up an appointment with the parent

within 24 hours. This does not mean the appointment has to take place in 24 hours. This means contact to the parent must take place within 24 hours.

\*Do not answer parent emails that discuss confidential student issues or concerns unless the Principal has been copied on the email discussion. Before responding to the parent, discuss the issue with the Principal and how to respond. Then, reply to the parent with the Principal copied on the email.

### Permanent Records

All information must be complete and recorded on individual student permanent records by the terminating date of teacher contracts. Records may not be taken out of the main school office. Unofficial Cumulative Record Folders are not used at Pope John XXIII Middle School.

### Student Records

Pope John XXIII Middle School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) regarding access to student records.

### Academic Resources

All academic resources, including but not limited to books, magazines, web-based subscriptions, apps, etc. are to be approved by the Principal prior to student use.

### Lesson and Unit Plans

Teachers are required to write daily lesson plans. These plans should be kept accessible on the teacher's desk for the administration to view during classroom visits.

Unit Plans for all subjects must include the following items:

- Unit Plan
- Traditional Test
- Performance Assessment
- One (1) Lesson Plan
- Evidence of Technology
- Essential Questions for units posted in the classroom
- Portfolio of evidence

Teachers should submit unit plans to administration prior to the beginning of each unit. Teachers should submit unit plans, lesson plans, projects, and assessments on time as required by the administration.

### Tutoring

Tutoring/remediation during the regular school year is an extension of regular instruction; no

compensation should be accepted. Teachers who are interested in tutoring Pope John XXIII Middle School students during the summer should submit their name to the Principal. A list of potential tutors will be given to parents who inquire. Teachers who tutor students at school must receive permission from the Principal to provide this service at school. A universal fee for tutoring will be set. Teachers will follow guidelines regarding the tutoring process. All expenses for tutoring are the responsibility of the tutor. Teachers who tutor at Pope John XXIII Middle School are a reflection of the professionalism of its teachers.

### Extra Help

Teachers are required to schedule 2 extra help sessions for students weekly. One session should be scheduled for morning prior to homeroom and another after the school day ends. The days and times for these sessions should be posted on Google Classroom.

### Rules of Conduct

As stated in the Parent-Student Handbook, rules of conduct are expected to be enforced by faculty and staff and include the following:

- Students are expected to show respect for peers, faculty, guests, and volunteers through words and actions.
- Students are to be in proper school uniform as detailed in the handbook.
- Students are to conduct themselves in an orderly manner during class time.
- All property, personal and school, must be given proper care. Textbooks should be covered at all times. Chromebooks should be in their cases at all times.
- Classrooms should have a quiet atmosphere beginning at 8:00 a.m.
- Students may not run inside the building.
- Good manners are to be displayed by all students and should be modeled by everyone on the staff.
- Chewing gum at school is not permitted in the school buildings or on school property during the school day. Teachers should refrain from distributing gum to students.
- Teachers must ensure that all students' cell phones are turned off and are in their locker throughout the entire school day.

### Presiding Duties

- Teachers are responsible and have authority wherever they are.
- Teachers assigned to recess duty are expected to participate and supervise student activities. Teachers should not use recess time as an opportunity to visit with one another or as a means to exercise themselves.
- At no time is a class of students to be left unattended without supervision and direction.
- Teachers should be in control of a group when going from one location to another.
- Teachers and staff should have high expectations for appropriate student behavior and should correct inappropriate behavior of any student when witnessed.

- Non-homeroom teachers should assist homeroom teachers with supervision of students during Mass and all other assemblies.

### Attendance Report

Each homeroom teacher must complete accurate daily attendance for his/her homeroom and submit it to the office by 8:00 a.m. All written statements regarding absences should be sent to the office. Every teacher should also take attendance each period of the day and submit it to the office at the beginning of the period. An Attendance Roster should be with the teacher at all fire and emergency drills. Accurate attendance should be taken whenever and wherever teachers are supervising students.

### Daily Schedule:

7:00 AM Teacher on morning duty in building to receive students  
7:15 AM All teachers report to work and are in homerooms  
7:45 AM Students arriving after this time are marked late  
7:50 AM Announcements  
8:00 AM First period  
10:44 AM First Lunch  
11:14 AM Second Lunch  
2:26 PM Homeroom  
3:15 PM Dismissal

### Student Medication

Under State Health Department rules, a teacher cannot provide or administer medication of any kind to a student. All medication is sent to the nurse in the original container with a note from the doctor.

### Student Phone Use

A student may be permitted to use the office phone with a note from the teacher. Students may not use the phone in a teacher's classroom.

### Homework

Although the amount of home study will vary within grades and on different days, a reasonable guideline is listed below. Teachers should consider the ability of the group and the assignments of other teachers when requiring home study. In general teachers should assign no more than 20 minutes of homework per subject.

Assignments on weekends should be kept to a minimum. There should be no assignments given over Thanksgiving break, Christmas break, Easter break, or during midterm week.

If possible, tests should not be given to students during the first week of school.

### Teacher Absence

If a teacher needs to be out due to illness or illness of a child/family member a phone call must be placed to the Principal between 5:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. Please be aware that teachers may be asked to cover classes for one another when teachers are out throughout the year.

A formal Substitute Teacher Folder should be submitted to the Principal in September.

### Classroom Conduct

Within the classroom, all ordinary discipline matters are the responsibility of the teacher. The following procedures help set an atmosphere necessary for learning:

- At the beginning of the school year, outline expectations for student conduct and academic work.
- Set classroom rules, post them, and insist that they be followed from the first day.
- Well-planned lessons that keep students on task decrease the time available for misconduct.
- Be firm, fair, and consistent.
- Begin each class with a prayer.

Practices which are not conducive to good discipline include:

- Repeated loud voice usage by a teacher; yelling is professionally inappropriate.
- Threats of unrealistic punishments.
- Repeated warnings with no follow-up; do what you said you were going to do.
- Inconsistent adherence to rules.

If misconduct occurs, any or all of the following may be helpful. (Punishment should be for behavior, not for lack of scholastic performance.)

- Talk with the student.
- Withhold privileges.
- Require writing punishments where students explain:
  - What they did wrong?
  - Why did they do it?
  - How will they handle/correct those situations in the future?

*These should be reasonable in length and should be corrected for grammar and spelling. Refrain from punishments that require writing something numerous times.*

Do not place students in the hall for time out. Students should be sent to the office for disciplinary matters only after the teacher has exhausted all possible means of dealing with the

situation. Teachers may need to set up a conference with the parents to alert them and discuss possible ways of improvement.

Avoid punishments that involve the entire class. Rather, target individual student misbehavior.

### Birthday Observances

Students celebrating a birthday will be acknowledged during morning announcements.

Due to severe food allergies that exist in many students, bringing in birthday treats is not permitted. We require all teachers to relay this information to parents and cooperate with this endeavor as we are trying to avoid potential/accidental exposures to deadly food allergies.

### Gifts

Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students. Invitations for birthday parties should be sent to the homes of students via the U.S. mail unless an invitation is being given to every student in the entire grade.

Students are not permitted to receive flowers, balloons, or other gifts during the school day.

Teachers are required to relay this information to their classroom parents.

### Peanut and Nut-Free School and Classrooms

In recent years, we have become more aware of various food allergies and the potential consequences for those individuals who suffer from them. A food allergy involves an interaction between food and the immune system and must be taken seriously.

Many students have been diagnosed with tree nut/peanut allergies. Accidental ingestion or touching of even a tiny trace of nut can cause an immediate and potentially fatal reaction. Many cookies, cakes, and other snacks contain these ingredients, which can be passed on by contact with hands and toys if another child brings these foods into the classroom.

Therefore, Pope John XXIII Middle School has initiated a peanut/tree nut free policy in all of our classes to protect the health and safety of our students. We ask that you, as the teacher and leader of the classroom, take great care to ensure that no child brings any food items into the classroom for snack time and/or lunch that contain tree nuts or peanuts. We require that all parents cooperate with this endeavor to avoid potential/accidental exposures in the classrooms at all times. As the teacher, continuously remind them of this policy.

It will therefore be the responsibility of all parents to read labels on all food items being sent into the classroom to ensure they are nut-free. As the teacher, please also read the labels to ensure our children's safety. Be cognizant that many foods are processed on the same equipment or in the same facility as peanut products. Besides nut-free items, encourage parents to bring in "healthy snacks" such as fruits and vegetables that the students can manage easily. Any questions regarding the safety of a product can be addressed to our nurse.



### Field Trips

The purpose of a field trip is to enrich and foster knowledge of the community or curriculum, and to develop and refine student behavior appropriate to a variety of social situations.

Field trips are encouraged if they are an integral part of the development of the subject studied. They should be well planned, and students should view them as class outside the classroom, not as a day of play. Homeroom teachers or the teachers who prepare the students usually accompany their class on a field trip. Teachers, at their discretion, may invite parents (usually homeroom parents) to accompany the class on the trip. Siblings of children are not allowed to accompany a class on a field trip even if the parent is a chaperone. Only "official" chaperones should be in attendance for a field trip.

All plans for field trips must begin with submitting a field trip approval form to the Principal. This form should be submitted at least 6 to 8 weeks in advance, in order to be placed on the monthly calendar for parents.

To be allowed to go on a field trip, students must turn in a signed permission form. Teachers should submit this form to the Principal for approval before making copies of the form. Signed slips should be returned to the teacher at least one week prior to the trip.

NOTE: No student is permitted to call home for permission to go on a field trip. Emails or a phone call are not sufficient. Field trip permission slips must be retained in the school office for one year.

Field trips are a privilege, not a right. Students not attending the field trip are required to report to school.

### Speakers

Guest speakers for the various areas of the curriculum are encouraged. All arrangements should be discussed and approved by the Principal ahead of time. This includes virtual speakers and/or events. Arrangements for speakers should be made a month in advance in order to be noted on the monthly calendar.

### Visitors

When inviting groups of parents to view special programs or projects, be sure to notify the administration and the building secretary of the time, program, and number expected. Visitors should be reminded to obtain a VISITOR badge from the office.

Be conscious of any unknown persons in the building. Make sure that a teacher escorts all unidentified persons to the office.

#### Children of Faculty and Staff

The presence of children of faculty members, who are not students of Pope John XXIII Middle School, on regular school days or professional development days will be determined at the discretion of the Principal.

Children of faculty and staff attending PJMS should assemble with their classmates upon arrival every morning. They should not remain in the office before or after school or during faculty meetings. Faculty and staff may utilize the after care program, free of charge, for faculty meetings or to facilitate school sponsored activities. There will be a charge for after care during periods that faculty and staff are providing paid services such as tutoring.

#### Campus Facilities

You must obtain approval from the building Principal prior to reserving campus facilities for school events.

#### Schedule Changes

Before schedule changes occur, they should be discussed with the Principal. Schedule changes are noted in advance. When considering a change in an individual student's assigned groups, be sure to consult the Principal.

#### Faculty Notifications

Faculty notifications for upcoming activities or other items of importance are ordinarily disseminated via email. These notifications are intended only for faculty members and should not be posted where students can read them.

#### Dismissal

At the end of the last class of the day, the teacher is responsible for the physical condition of their room. Students must remove all trash from desks and the floor.

## **Safety and Security**

### Drills

Refer to the safety and security manual.

### Child Abuse Laws

Pope John XXIII Middle School abides by the Child Abuse Prevention, Adoption, and Family Services Act. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to the Department of Children and Families (formerly the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS)).

### Title IX

Pope John XXIII Middle School adheres to the tenets of Title IX: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

### Family Education Rights and Privacy Act – The Buckley Amendment

Pope John XXIII Middle School adheres to the Buckley Amendment regarding access to student records and academic confidentiality.

- Students may not grade the work of other students.
- Children of teachers may not grade the work of students enrolled at Pope John XXIII Middle School.
- Graded student work may not be displayed in the halls.
- A student should never be asked to state his/her grade aloud.
- Parent volunteers may not grade student work.
- Parent volunteers should not tutor or work in a remedial capacity with any students.

## **Maintenance of Class Space, Equipment, and Materials**

### Valuables and Money in Classroom

Students should not bring valuables to school. If teachers collect money, it should be sent to the school secretary in a marked envelope. The teacher is responsible for any money collected and left in the room during the day or overnight.

### Classrooms

Each teacher takes personal responsibility for the physical condition and appearance of the classroom. This includes the prevention of markings on desktops, sitting with chairs against walls or in a tilted position, putting feet on the desks or walls, chewing gum, or scratching floors by dragging furniture. Stickers should not be adhered to desks. Repair requests should be submitted to the Principal via email.

- No stickers, name tags, or tape should be placed on painted or wooden surfaces.
- No tape on hallway or classroom walls or doors.
- Classrooms should remain free of clutter.
- No boxes or stacks of materials in classrooms.
- Consider the learning styles of all students.
- Students with ADD cannot function in a disorderly room.
- Windows of classroom doors must remain clear and visible at all times, unless during a safety drill.
- Teachers are not permitted to have printers in their classrooms.
- Teachers are not permitted to have coffee makers, tea brewing units, or refrigerators in their classrooms.
- The school will furnish classrooms. Teachers are not to bring in furnishings from home without approval from the Principal.

### Lockers

Lockers should be kept orderly and cleaned periodically. Locker doors should be kept closed at all times. Locker areas should be neat at all times. Students are permitted from using locks from home.

### Halls

Halls should be free of tables, chairs, trash, backpacks, or any other objects that would interfere with emergency procedures. Pope John XXIII Middle School adheres to all safety standards. Hall displays should showcase students' work, achievements, and learning. They also serve as an important vehicle of public relations for our school.

### Inventory

Teachers will prepare a Master Inventory of the permanent items in their classrooms. The list should include the following: desks, chairs, tables, work tables, rugs, sacramental, etc.

### A-V Equipment

Most A-V equipment is permanently installed in each classroom. Several document cameras are available for hookup to computers. If one is needed, a request should be submitted by email to the Principal.

### Faculty Lounge/Copy Room

Keep the faculty room neat and clean. Make sure to clean up after oneself.  
No students should be in the faculty room or copy room at any time, for any reason.

### Copy Machine

No copyrighted material will be duplicated or copied. Please limit the number of copies. Students should learn to work neatly on paper rather than rely on duplicated sheets already designed and spaced. When using new paper, use both sides if possible. Make sure that reproduced work has real teaching value; avoid busy work. Teachers are responsible to help maintain the copier in good working condition and inform the office when paper and toner supplies are low. Do not send students to retrieve copies from the printer at any time.

### Mail Folders

Check mail folders in the office at the beginning of the day, during lunch, and at the end of the school day. Phone messages will be put in the teacher folders. Emergency messages will be delivered immediately. Students should never be sent to take materials from a teacher's folder. Folders are not storage areas. They should be emptied each day.

### Display Strips

Change student work on display strips periodically.

### Purchase Procedures

The Principal must approve all items purchased for use in the school. Only items approved in writing by the administration will be ordered. See the main office for procedures on ordering supplies.

## **Professional Development Opportunities**

### In-Service/Professional Development Opportunities

Teachers who wish to attend a professional development day funded by Pope John XXIII Middle School may be required to share the experiences of their in-service with the faculty. The number of teachers who will be allowed to attend in-services on the same day will be limited due to the difficulty of obtaining substitute teachers. Teachers who attend one-day in-services are expected to attend the entire day. Professional Development funds do not cover parking, room service, or alcoholic beverages.

Attendance at national conventions will be determined on a rotating basis based on departments. Teachers who attend conferences are expected to return from the conference and share with the teachers at the next Faculty Meeting insights gained from the conference.

\*Itemized receipts should be submitted along with a check request to the secretary for reimbursement within ten days of returning from a conference.

### Travel

The Principal will make all reservations for teachers who attend in-services that require air travel.

## **Technology Concerns**

### Blogs

Engagement in online blogs with students such as, but not limited to, Twitter®, Instagram®, Facebook®, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the teacher's blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students, parents, or The Catholic Academy of Sussex County. Teachers must not use social networks and be "friends" with their students. Teacher should not post pictures of students on their social media sites.

### E-mail

A teacher's email on his/her school email account should not be considered private and may be read at any time by School Administration.

### Sexting

Teachers involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices face termination.

### Texting

Teachers are required to refrain from texting students.

### Computers

Teachers who are issued a school-owned computer are required to take care of its maintenance and report any operating issues to the Principal and Director of Technology at Pope John XXIII Middle School immediately. Upon resignation or termination of a teaching position, the teacher is required to return the school-issued device and charger.

## **COVID-19**

Re-admittance procedures for students and faculty to school after recovering from COVID-19, or being identified as a close contact to someone with COVID-19, will be established in conjunction with the school nurse under guidance from CDC, State of New Jersey, and the NJ Department of Health and its local agencies.



## **Right to Amend**

Pope John XXIII Middle School reserves the right to amend this Handbook.  
Notice of Amendments will be placed in teacher folders or via email.

# Appendix

## Appendix A

### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF THE DIOCESE OF PATERSON

#### Faculty/Staff Systems Use Policy

The Internet and email are extremely valuable research and communication tools, which offer a rich tapestry of information and research material to School employees from their computer and/or School operated devices. This policy applies to all faculty and staff working in any School operated by the Diocese of Paterson (“School”).

We may provide you access to devices, digital files, voice mail, e-mail, Internet, and other systems or technology to assist you in performing your job duties quickly and efficiently. Our systems, including all data files, applications, documents and e-mail messages, are the property of the School. Any information and materials created, transmitted or stored on our computers, servers, or any other-digital media maintained by the School (including e-mail and voice mail and other storage media), are the property of the School and are subject to access, alteration or purge by authorized School or Diocesan personnel at any time, with or without notice. **No one using these systems should expect privacy regarding materials and information on our systems.**

Our systems and services are primarily for School business use. Limited, occasional, or incidental use of electronic media (sending or receiving) for personal, non-School business purposes is understandable and acceptable. However, you are expected to demonstrate a sense of responsibility and not abuse this privilege.

School digital resources are the property of, or licensed to, the School and are provided to you as either a limited privilege or a direct responsibility. Your use is not a right. As proprietors, we reserve the right to extend, limit, restrict or remove digital resource privileges and/or responsibilities. If you fail to respect this policy you may be subject to loss of access and use of computing resources, disciplinary action by the school, and civil and/or criminal prosecution by the state and federal government.

Consistent with existing Diocesan and local school personnel policies outlining proper standards of employee conduct, the following guidelines regarding the responsible use of the Internet, email or other systems are established:

- All system passwords and usernames are the property of the School. You are not allowed to share individually assigned passwords and usernames with others without the specific permission of your Principal or supervisor;
- All faculty and staff have been provided with Diocesan and/or School email accounts. Digital communications with parents and, when appropriate and prudent, students are to be accomplished using only the Diocesan or School accounts. **Personal accounts are never to be used for such communications.**
- The School reserves the right to monitor the content of materials transported over the

School's network or information posted/stored on school-owned devices and networks;

- Faculty and staff are expected to be prudent and cautious in their use of social media, apps, texts, or any various forms of digital messaging, keeping in mind the public nature of the Internet and the need to present themselves in an appropriate and professional manner;
- You are also subject to the Diocesan or School's discipline policy for any social media post that we determine is detrimental to the interests of the Diocese or School, whether current, planned or being discussed. Accordingly, unless specifically instructed, you are not authorized to speak on behalf of the Diocese or School and, therefore, must not do so;
- The nature of any post will be a factor in determining what (or whether) discipline will be imposed, but you may be subject to discipline up to and including immediate termination;
- This policy applies to other forms of social media or technology on the Internet, including wiki postings, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, SMS or other postings. **Refer to 4075 Social Media Commenting Policy;**
- It is not the nature of the communication device or technology that is at issue, but the School's right to protect itself from unauthorized disclosure of information. You may not use digital media in any way that may be disruptive or offensive to others, violates other School or Diocesan policies, or puts the School or Diocese at unnecessary risk.

You may not use Diocesan or School systems in any way that may be disruptive or offensive to others, violates other Diocesan or School policies, or puts the Diocese or School at unnecessary risk. Some examples of inappropriate use include:

- Engaging in illegal, fraudulent or malicious activities;
- Sending, viewing or storing offensive, obscene or defamatory material or material that violates any School or Diocesan policy;
- Annoying or harassing other individuals;
- Using another individual's account or identity without explicit authorization from your Principal or supervisor;
- Attempting to test, circumvent or defeat security or auditing systems, without prior authorization;
- Downloading or adding any software, apps, digital media, hardware or other computer program or device to a School computer without the approval of the School Administration and/or School Technologist;
- Permitting any unauthorized individual to access the School or Diocese's computer system;
- Distributing or storing chain letters;

- Discussing pending or anticipated litigation or regulatory action with any party other than Diocesan counsel or outside attorneys or Diocesan executives designated by the legal department.

Faculty is expected to exercise professional judgment and discretion in integrating the Internet and technology into classroom instruction. At all times, access to the Internet or other technology should be planned and carefully monitored. All materials and information should be previewed before they are used in the classroom setting for its age appropriateness and suitability to be a part of the instructional program. If there is any doubt about a particular Internet site, the administration should be consulted. In instances that could be construed to be of a controversial nature, administrator's permission is required, and parent consent should be sought. Internet filtering software will be installed on student-used computers to preclude student access to inappropriate sites.

Violations of this policy will result in appropriate disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

This policy is in effect for the duration of a Faculty/Staff employee contract, or period of employment, and may be updated to include changes in technology when needed. Updates to this policy shall be distributed and re-endorsed as needed.

**SCHOOL NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYEE NAME (PLEASE PRINT):** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRINCIPAL SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Forms

**Form A**



**CONSENT TO VIDEO AND AUDIO RECORDING OF LESSONS**

Under federal policy it is permissible under FERPA for teachers to record instruction and share with students who are unable to attend the class. The teacher must not disclose a student’s “personally identifiable information” (PII) when recording. When video recording, the recording should only be shared through a system that is accessible to the class members. For example, the recording could be saved through Google Classroom to a specific class. The recording shall not be made public.

I understand that recording direct instructional segments of a lesson is an integral part of teaching in this pandemic. Therefore, I agree to record my instructional lessons according to the above guidelines and for the specific use of students who are unable to attend class. I understand that the recording is the property of Pope John XXIII Middle School and may not be used for any other purposes with written permission from Pope John XXIII Middle School.

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Teacher Name

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Date

Form B

***Faculty Signature Page***

I have read the 2024-2025 Pope John XXIII Middle School Faculty Handbook and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.

Teacher Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*Signed form due to Mrs. Santore by September 10, 2024