



**PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK  
OF  
POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

**2021-2022**

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

School Phone: 618-466-4216 School Fax: 618-466-4575

School website: [www.stambrosegodfrey.org](http://www.stambrosegodfrey.org)

*St. Ambrose Catholic School 822*

*Homer Adams Parkway*

*Godfrey, IL 62035*

*618-466-4216*

*Fax: 618-466-4575*

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to St. Ambrose Catholic School. In choosing our school, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of Catholic education. We at St. Ambrose take that trust you have placed in us very seriously. We will educate your children and care for them in a Christ filled environment that is welcoming to all.

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of St. Ambrose Catholic School for the 2021-2022 school year. Please read this document carefully. You will be asked to acknowledge that you agree to “read and be governed by the 2021-2022 PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK OF POLICIES/PROCEDURES,” which includes the Technology Agreement and Network Acceptable 2021-2022 Reopening Plan, Acknowledgement of Risk consent form, and the Family School Agreement. All of these forms have been posted to our school website and may be completed digitally. You are also welcome to print off the forms, complete them, and send them in to the school office.

Here at St. Ambrose Catholic School, the faculty and staff look forward to working with you to promote spiritual, academic and extra-curricular growth and development for your child(ren).

Sincerely,

Robert Baird

Principal

St. Ambrose Catholic School

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**Please note: The Pastor and/or Principal retain the right to amend this handbook at any time. Parents and guardians will be given prompt notification if changes are necessary.**

## **1 Mission Statements/Philosophy**

### 1.1 Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

Loved and chosen by God, we are the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. Through Baptism, we share responsibility for continuing the mission of Jesus. We are called to be a community whose members enable and support the gifts given to each by the Spirit. We are sent to make Christ visible in our world through worship, proclamation of the Word, and service to all God's people.

### 1.2 St. Ambrose Parish History

Our Catholic faith community of St. Ambrose Parish, Godfrey, Illinois, was established in 1947. As baptized Christians, we strive to be witnesses of faith and of the love of Christ to everyone, thereby welcoming all to the family of God. In the spirit of Vatican Council II, we are dedicated to spiritual growth through life-giving experiences of worship, sharing in the mission of salvation, and openness to the diversity among us. Led by the spirit of the Gospel, we commit our time, talent, and treasure to the continual conversion and sanctification of all life, and the nourishment of Christian family life. (St. Ambrose Parish Pastoral Council, 1993)

### 1.3 St. Ambrose Catholic School History

At the request of Bishop James Griffin, St. Ambrose Catholic School was also established in 1947. The school of 135 founding students was opened in August of that year under the direction and leadership of the late Father Andrew Robinson and three Ursuline Sisters. The enrollment of the school increased steadily making it necessary to build a new school in 1957. Later, four classrooms were added in 1964 and even more classrooms in 1977, when the new church was being built. In 1986, a fire in the original parish plant resulted in the sale of that property and the construction of five additional classrooms.

### St. Ambrose Catholic School Mission Statement

St. Ambrose Catholic School provides a foundation of religious truths and values. Students will leave with the knowledge and skills necessary for life in the modern world.

### 1.4 Educational Philosophy

We believe each child is a unique person created by God to fulfill a special purpose in the world. Thus, it is the responsibility of St. Ambrose Catholic School to help ensure that the Christian potential of each child is reached by developing and strengthening the whole person spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically, and socially.

We believe that the parents are the first and foremost educators of the child in the ways of faith. It is through them that the child first receives an insight into God's love and acquires Christian attitudes and values. The interests of the child can be best served through mutual cooperation and support by parents at home and the teachers and staff at school. By our actions together, we serve as living witnesses of the Good News and sharers of the faith, thus

empowering the child to be developed for the service of others and to take a rightful place in answering God's call.

### 1.5 Accreditation

St. Ambrose Catholic School is fully accredited by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

## **2 Admissions**

St. Ambrose Catholic School is a parish preschool and elementary school. Parishioners are those persons who have registered in the parish, who faithfully participate in the sacramental life of the Church, and who assume responsibility for the ongoing support of the parish through stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.

The parish preschool and elementary school serves parish families who have children of school age as classroom size permits. This does not preclude, however, a recommendation by the Principal or the Pastor that a special needs student enrolls elsewhere. Non-parishioners who qualify for a regular academic program are welcome to apply for admission in the school.

When re-enrolling a student or enrolling for the first time, all families with students attending a Catholic School in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois are expected to abide by the "Family School Agreement" in its entirety.

### 2.1 Non-Discrimination Policy

St. Ambrose Catholic School admits students of any sex, race, color, national and ethnic origins, or with physical limitations to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin, or physical limitations in its administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships, and loan programs, and athletic and school-administered programs.

St. Ambrose Catholic 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."

### 2.2 Guidelines for Priority of Admissions

#### Preschool

1. Parishioners with siblings in the school
2. Parishioners
3. Non-parishioners with siblings in the school
4. Catholic non-parishioners
5. Families of other faiths

## Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

1. Students enrolled the previous year
2. Parishioners with siblings in the school
3. Parishioners
4. Non-parishioners with siblings in the school
5. Transfer students from other Catholic schools who are parishioners of other parishes
6. Transfer students from other Catholic schools who are not Catholic
7. Transfer students from public or private schools who are not Catholic

### 2.3 Admission Requirements

At the time of registration, all new students seeking admission to St. Ambrose Catholic School are evaluated on the basis of current academic records including; standardized test scores, report cards, behavior reports, and on observations made by the staff at previously attended school.

Documents required for admission include:

- Verification of active parish affiliation/stewardship
- Health records
- Immunization records
- Birth certificate (original)
- Baptismal certificate
- Report cards
- Standardized test results
- If applicable, record of IEP, ISP, 504 plan, needed accommodations, etc.

Students applying for admissions in Grades 1-8 must present a copy of the above listed documents. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at St. Ambrose Catholic School will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the student, parents, and Principal is part of the admission process. The Principal then recommends admission to the Pastor.

Testing or other types of assessments may be held for new incoming students in Grades 3-8.

All new students will be given a trial period to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any issues, a student may be asked to withdraw from St. Ambrose Catholic School. Conditional admission may be recommended, if appropriate, and conditions may be suggested. For example, students who are not performing at grade level but whose parents request placement with chronological age classmates must provide a full-time aide at the parents' expense.

Moreover, all financial responsibilities to previous parish schools must be satisfied before admission is considered at St. Ambrose Catholic School.

Ordinarily, St. Ambrose Catholic School does not accept transfers into or returning to St. Ambrose during the school year unless the transfer is due to a move into the area by a parish family.

## 2.4 Age Requirements

TO ENTER KINDERGARTEN AT ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC SCHOOL, A CHILD'S AGE MUST COMPLY WITH ILLINOIS STATE REGULATIONS. At this time, the regulation states that the child must be five years old by September 1 of the entry year to begin kindergarten.

Children entering preschool must be three years old by September 1 of the entry year to enter the three-year old program and four years old by September 1 of the entry year to enter the four-year old program.

## 2.5 Birth Certificates

In accordance with Illinois State Law, birth certificates for all students must be on file with the office.

## 2.6 Class Size

The class size of each preschool class is 20 students, per state guidelines. The recommended capacity of each kindergarten-8th grade classroom/homeroom is 25 students. The class size is dependent upon room availability, educational characteristics of the students, and the discretion of school administration. Should enough students register to support additional sections, the Principal will consult with the Pastor, finance council, and school board to determine if additional sections are warranted. If warranted, additional assistance in a classroom will be considered.

The deadline for administrative decisions regarding the "Class Size Policy" will be June 30. After June 30, additional registrations (returning or new) will be accepted for classrooms until reaching the cap of 24 students. After June 30, additional registrations (returning or new) for classrooms that have reached capacity will be placed on a wait list. The wait list does not guarantee acceptance.

## 2.7 School Day

6:30 am	Before school care begins in the gymnasium
7:30 am	Students may enter their classroom, using exterior doors
8:00 am	Morning announcements and prayer on intercom
9:10-9:25	Morning Recess K-3
11:35-11:55	Lunch K-3
11:55-12:20	Recess K-3
11:55-12:20	Lunch 4-8
12:20-12:45	Recess 4-8
2:30	Dismissal PK, K
2:45	Dismissal 1-8

## 2.8 Beginning of the School Year Checklist

**By the first day** of school, the following checklist should be completed;

1. All registration materials should be submitted to the school office.
2. Emergency Form information that has changed should be corrected in the school office.
3. Preschool, kindergarten, and sixth grade physical and dental forms should be up-to-date and submitted. Kindergarten students and any new students who have transferred from out-of-state are required to submit an eye exam.
4. Uniforms should be ready for wear with appropriate adjustments for growth.
5. Supplies should be purchased and brought to school.
6. Financial obligations must be up-to-date.
7. Necessary medications should be delivered with proper medical documentation.
8. Submit Parent-Student Handbook Waivers and other necessary documentation (by the end of the first week).

### **3 Financial Policies**

#### 3.1 Parents' Financial Responsibilities

All parish schools shall be supported by a financial program consisting of a reasonable balance of tuition, fees, general parish funds, development income, and fundraisers. Registered, active and contributing members of St. Ambrose Parish pay the “parish rate” for tuition, understanding that the parish subsidizes the school through the general revenues of the parish. All parish families support Catholic education and although parents pay tuition, there are other parish expenses and the financial support of everyone is necessary. Non-parishioners pay a higher tuition rate approaching the actual cost of educating a child at St. Ambrose School. In addition to tuition and the parish subsidy, fundraising is essential to support the mission of the school. All school families are expected to participate in these fundraising events. **All families** with children in St. Ambrose School are expected to volunteer a minimum of 16 hours during the school year. Parishioners who transfer from another local Catholic parish must have been contributing members of that parish *for the prior year* in order to benefit from the St. Ambrose parish tuition rate. Families moving to the parish from outside the greater Alton area would be expected to show evidence of being contributing members of the parish from the *beginning* of their move to the Alton area.

#### 3.2 Fees

Registration/Supply Fees are charged for each child's educational materials and for the materials and equipment used during the school day. These fees cover the cost for the use of textbooks, Chromebooks, and supplies and technology,

### **Registration/Supply Fee**

3/4 Year Old Preschool Registration Fee

Three days a week	-	\$60
Five days a week	-	\$100
Grades K-8 Supply Fee	-	\$250
Technology Fee (grades 6-8)	-	\$150
Technology Fee (grades 3-5)	-	\$50

### 3.3 Tuition

In addition to paying fees, each family is responsible for paying tuition for their children who attend St. Ambrose Catholic School.

#### **3/4 Year Old Preschool Active Parishioner**

Three half days a week	-	\$1,115
Five half days a week	-	\$1,925
Three full days a week	-	\$2,310
Five full days a week	-	\$3,850

#### **3/4 Year Old Preschool Inactive and Non Parishioner**

Three half days a week	-	\$1,623
Five half days a week	-	\$2,705
Three full days a week	-	\$3,246
Five full days a week	-	\$5,410

#### **Grades K-8 Active Parishioner**

One Child	-	\$3,850
Two Children	-	\$5,670
Three Children	-	\$6,190
Four or more	-	\$6,710

#### **Grades K-8 Inactive and Non Parishioner**

One Child	-	\$5,410
Two Children	-	\$7,440
Three Children	-	\$8,120
Four or more	-	\$8,800

### 3.4 Tuition Payment Options

- Annual payment due August 1
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 1 payments starting August 1
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 2 payments in August and December
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 4 payments in August, November, February, and May
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 10 payments in August – May
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 12 payments in July - June
- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 20 payments in August – May (15<sup>th</sup> & Last Day)

- FACTS® automatic tuition plan – 24 payments in July – June (15<sup>th</sup> & Last Day)

### 3.5 FACTS® Tuition Management Service Overview

- The administrative fee for enrollment is payable to FACTS® - \$20 for New Students, \$10 for Returning Students. .
- Tuition payments are set up through FACTS®. Payments can be made using ACH withdrawal from checking or credit card. FACTS® charges service fees for those paying by credit card.
- Tuition payments will begin in July or August depending on the option chosen during registration.
- Families are expected to set up payment plans through FACTS unless families are paying tuition in full by August 1<sup>st</sup>. If there are extenuating circumstances that do not allow a family to pay through FACTS, they must contact the Parish Office.

### 3.6 Tuition Assistance Program

Diocesan and School financial aid programs may be available for families who qualify. While the primary responsibility for financing a student's Catholic education rests with the student's family, St. Ambrose Catholic School will make every effort to see that no child is denied access to a Catholic education based solely on lack of funds to pay tuition.

Tuition Assistance is available to active Parish families attending this school:

- 1) The Parish Finance Council awards tuition assistance to several families based on need. The families requesting assistance must set up a meeting with the Finance Council representatives (through the Director of Operations) where options will be discussed. After the meeting, a recommendation will be made to the Pastor. All assistance will be communicated with families, once approved by the Pastor.
- 2) The Max Heinz Scholarship fund was established in 2021. The fund provides for scholarships of varying amounts to be awarded to St. Ambrose students and families on an annual basis.
- 3) Our school participates in Empower Illinois. The six Catholic dioceses in the state of Illinois have partnered with an SGO called **EmpowerIllinois.org**. Each of the six dioceses will have representatives who sit on the board of the SGO. Board members will be tasked with monitoring the effectiveness of the organization's programs and with their consistency to the mission. Eligible students are members of a household whose federal adjusted gross income the year before he or she initially receives a scholarship under this program, as determined by IDOR, does not exceed 300% of the federal poverty level. Once the child receives a scholarship, the household does not exceed 400% of the federal poverty level.
  - a) The student must be eligible to attend a public elementary school or high school in Illinois in the semester immediately preceding the semester for which he or she first receives a scholarship or is starting school in Illinois for the first time when he or she first receives a scholarship. Students must reside in Illinois while

receiving a scholarship. Students currently enrolled in Catholic schools can qualify.

- b) To participate in the program, the parent/guardian and student:
- 1) Must select a qualified school, apply, and be accepted by the school;
  - 2) Comply with the qualified school's published policies; and
  - 3) Authorize the SGO to access information needed for income eligibility determinations.
  - 4) Families may choose to apply to any private or non-public school that is accredited by the State of Illinois. **All Catholic schools in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois are accredited schools.**

All information regarding applications for Tuition Assistance will be held in the strictest confidence. Parents are also expected to keep confidential the amount of any Tuition Assistance award that is given.

### 3.7 Miscellaneous

Please address all school account questions to the St. Ambrose Director of Operations. Parents who feel that they will have difficulty meeting the tuition are asked to contact the Director of Operations to arrange for a meeting with the Finance Council regarding tuition assistance.

Parents who do not meet their financial obligations to St. Ambrose Parish will not be able to enroll for the next semester until the obligations have been met. If correct registration materials are not completed and returned, it is assumed that families have withdrawn from the school. No further information will be sent to these families by the school. Official records will not be transferred until financial obligations are met.

If a student withdraws, St. Ambrose Catholic School must be notified in writing and all financial obligations met prior to records being transferred. Generally, tuition is refunded when a student transfers to another school if tuition has been paid for days following the transfer. The registration fee is not refunded unless an incoming kindergarten student has not passed the screening in the spring.

### 3.8 Financial Delinquency Policy for St. Ambrose School

All families whose children are attending St. Ambrose Catholic School must be current with respect to tuition, fees, or any other financial obligation to the school. These obligations are outlined in the School's *Tuition Policy*, *Family School Agreement Plan*, and *Payment Agreement* that must be signed by the parent or legal guardian prior to the first student attendance day. If the family is delinquent in meeting any of these financial obligations, the following procedures will be followed:

- If a financial obligation is past due after ten (10) business days, a letter will be sent by the school to the address designated by the family.
- If a financial obligation is past due after twenty (20) business days, a phone call to the number provided by the family will be made by the

school in order to determine whether a payment will be made or a payment settlement plan will be arranged with the Business Office.

- If the financial obligation has not been settled after the aforementioned phone conversation; or if the family is unresponsive, the school will contact the family by phone or – failing a phone connection – by registered letter to inform the family that any child affected by this policy will be suspended immediately from St. Ambrose School. If any child who has been suspended under this policy is dropped off at school during the suspension period, they will be kept in the school office until a parent/legal guardian picks up the child. If the parent/legal guardian is unresponsive to this request, the school will have no option but to contact the appropriate local law enforcement agency and/or DCFS.
- Only when all financial obligations have been met or when a financial obligation settlement plan has been successfully negotiated with the church Business Office will the student(s) affected by this suspension be allowed to re-register for attendance.
- Failure on the part of the family to adhere to any and all components of the settlement plan will result in removal of the affected student(s) from St. Ambrose School.

#### **4 Academic Policies**

##### 4.1 Curriculum Objectives

St. Ambrose Catholic School provides a comprehensive program of religious formation in keeping with Vatican II precepts. The academic curriculum follows the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois guidelines as well as Illinois State curriculum guidelines for the teaching of all academic curriculums. The primary curriculum includes religion, language arts, social studies, science, and mathematics. Students also have the opportunity to take “special classes” each day, including Music/Fine Arts, PE/Fitness, and Typing/Computers.

As a Catholic school, the task of St. Ambrose Catholic School is to help the children develop a personal relationship with God as well as a faith commitment in their daily lives, to pass on to our children the basic tenets of the faith, and to engender habits of active participation in the Mass and the sacraments, daily prayers, and spiritual growth.

The objectives related to our religious education program and the overall spirit within our Catholic elementary school are as follows:

1. To assist students in developing a personal relationship with God;
2. To help students to appreciate the dignity of each individual and to behave responsibly and with genuine kindness and respect for one another;
3. To teach students how to witness to the gospel message in their daily lives;
4. To deepen the prayer life of students through participation in the liturgies and by practice in daily group prayer, private reflection, and meditation;
5. To provide opportunities for the reception of the sacraments so that those experiences will grow into habits continuing throughout life;
6. To assist students to be able to practice stewardship of God’s gifts;

7. To foster within students, the habit of self-control, by emphasizing personal responsibility and the awareness of the consequences of one's actions;
8. To enrich students' religious formation by encouraging parental participation at all levels of the sacramental life of their children;
9. To encourage parents to continue to participate in the religious education of their children during the school years;
10. To guide students in modeling the Catholic spirit as a means of influencing the faith development of others;
11. To relate appropriate topics to the lectionary readings so as to make the lectionary a main focus of the religious education program.

The general subject-related objectives are:

1. To emphasize, through well-structured curriculum, the mastery of basic skills in reading, mathematics, science, and language;
2. To stress the beauty and power of language and the importance of learning to use it correctly and effectively;
3. To develop curiosity about the natural world and an understanding of how science works;
4. To teach physical world geography and human history - our place in the world and our responsibility for the future;
5. To teach the importance of a library in building reading skills, in doing research, and in to help foster a love of reading;
6. To develop aesthetic awareness through exposure to music and art;
7. To promote fine and gross motor development, physical fitness, cooperation, and good sportsmanship through daily recreation and weekly class work;
8. To provide opportunities for enrichment in the basic academic areas;
9. To make adjustments for the various learning styles of students in keeping with the available resources;
10. To encourage self-expression in writing, in public speaking, and in class projects;
11. To foster the habit of questioning so that education becomes not just a means of acquiring skills and information, but also a tool in approaching new situations and solving new problems;
12. To help develop 21st century skills that students need in order to succeed in the information age, skills such as: critical thinking, creative thinking, collaborating, communicating, flexibility, initiative, social skills, productivity and leadership are emphasized.

#### 4.2 Academic Honesty

Students are expected to be honest about all classroom work. Students may not obtain or accept answers to tests or other assessments, use inappropriate information or material, or any action intended to obtain credit for work not one's own (plagiarism). Students who use the work of others on assignments or tests will receive no credit for that assignment or test. Students who prevent others

from working on assignments or tests by talking or other distractions will not receive credit for their work.

Cheating or academic dishonesty of any type will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. A student athlete who is involved in cheating will also be unable to participate in sports. The Principal & Dean of Students will determine the length of suspension.

#### 4.3 Academic Probation

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Academic probation impacts a student's ability to participate in extra-curricular activities to include school-sponsored athletics.

#### 4.4 Sports Eligibility

Grades will be averaged and submitted each Monday by 2:00 pm. Any student athlete having a grade percentage of 59% (F) or lower in one or more academic or non-academic subjects will not be allowed to participate in sports for that week (Tuesday to Monday). When an ineligibility occurs, the Athletic Director will be notified who will, in turn, notify the coach. The entire week of ineligibility will be served. This applies to practice as well as games. The following week, every effort will be made to provide sufficient opportunity to improve the grade. Any athlete participating in a sport while ineligible will serve an immediate in-school suspension. Prior quarter grades will be averaged with the first two weeks of the following quarter to determine eligibility. This applies only to those students who have passing grades in the prior quarter and who may have initial difficulty in the next.

#### 4.5 Grading – Grades 1-8

Students receive grades on their report cards based upon the following percentages:

100 - 90	A
89 - 80	B
79 - 70	C
69 - 60	D
59 & below	F

#### 4.6 High Honor Roll / Honor Roll Criteria

Students will be on the High Honor Roll list for those that receive all A's in their coursework. It must be all A's, not an A average.

Students will be on the Honor Roll if they receive all A's and B's (no C's).

#### 4.7 Homework

Based upon recent research, a reasonable amount of homework is provided for students at each grade level (K-8). Our faculty will be diligent to keep to the "10-minute rule" regarding assigning homework. K and 1st grade: up to 10 minutes; 2nd grade: up to 20 minutes; 3rd grade: up to 30 minutes; 4th grade: up to 40 minutes; 5th grade: up to 50 minutes; 6th grade: up to 60 minutes; 7th grade: up to 70 minutes; 8th grade: up to 80 minutes.

Homework is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement and enrich class work, and to prepare for certain lessons through various experiences.

## How Parents Can Help with Homework

1. Arrange a regular time to study and provide a quiet place to study.
2. Check to see that all work is completed and that all books and materials are brought to school each day.
3. Encourage children to continue interest developed in classroom subjects through hobbies, collections, pleasure reading, etc.
4. Contact the teacher if there are questions or concerns.

### 4.8 Incomplete Work

Students are expected to complete all assignments. Incomplete assignments will result in lower grades. In grades K – 5, the amount of reduction is decided by each teacher. In the middle school grades, the policy is: 30% off the first day late, 50% off the second day and then a grade of zero.

### 4.9 Progression from Grade to Grade

It is the hope of the staff that all students will experience success. It is the aim of the staff to meet the individual needs of the students. Although St. Ambrose Catholic School does not provide a special education program, the school will assist in finding appropriate resources.

Kindergarten may be a one or a two-year program depending on the academic and social needs of each child. Discussion of the possibility of a two-year program usually begins early in the school year, but a decision is not made until spring. Parents, teachers, and administration participate in this decision. The Principal makes the final decision after consultation with parents.

Ordinarily the remaining grades are one-year programs. Should there be a question regarding the wisdom of promotion, a dialogue between teachers and parents will occur. The school makes the final decision regarding retention. Should the school recommend a second year in a grade for a child, but the parents insist that the child should proceed to the next grade; the teacher will indicate a “transfer” rather than a “promotion” to the next grade on the permanent record. If this should occur following the eighth grade year, a certificate of attendance will be issued in place of a diploma.

Many factors must be considered when retention is discussed. When a student in a primary or intermediate grade is involved, the teacher, parents, and administrator will review the child’s progress during the year. When a student in grades 5-8 is involved, retention may be recommended if the child has an unsatisfactory average (below 70%) in three or more academic subjects, shows a lack of effort and responsibility, and/or has a significant amount of incomplete or missing assignments.

If the parents/guardians refuse retention, they must sign a form letter indicating that they refused the retention against the recommendations of the school. This letter will be placed in the student’s permanent file. Students may be transferred to the next grade. A student who is transferred will not be allowed to stay at St. Ambrose Catholic School unless there is a specific Accommodation Plan on file that can be reasonably implemented by the school. Parents will only be allowed to exercise the “transfer” to the next grade option once.

### 4.10 Report Cards

At the end of each quarter report cards are made available for students in grades K-8. Grade changes will only be considered for up to two weeks after the report cards are distributed for each quarter.

#### 4.11 Student Referrals for Testing

St. Ambrose Catholic School assists parents in placing children where their needs are best served. The school does not have personnel to handle certain special needs cases. At times, this means that students will be asked to seek placement in a school other than St. Ambrose for these special needs to be addressed. Ordinarily, this decision follows educational testing requested by the parents or by St. Ambrose school staff and consultation between parents/guardians, teachers, and the Principal.

#### 4.12 Testing Program

Grades 3 – 8	MAP Testing
Grades 5, 8	ACRE Religion Testing
Grade 7	U.S. Constitution and Illinois Constitution Tests (students must pass these before they are eligible to graduate from St. Ambrose School)

#### 4.13 Tutoring

St. Ambrose teachers may tutor children privately if they wish to do so. Financial arrangements are made between the tutor and parents.

### **5 Daily Procedures**

#### 5.1 Absences

If it is necessary for a child to be absent, parents must notify the school office no later than **8:00 a.m.** to inform the school that the child will not attend that day. A voice mail message is adequate if no one is available to answer the school phone. If a parent has not called the school office, a phone call will be made to a parent at home, cell, or work to verify a child's absence. A written or emailed (preferably emailed) excuse from the parent must accompany the child when the child returns to school. These are kept on file at school. Students who have been out of school more than 3 hours and 30 minutes on a school day are considered absent for the entire day. A student who is absent more than 1 hour and 30 minutes, but less than 3 hours and 30 minutes is considered absent for one half day. This includes appointments that take longer than 1 hour and 30 minutes of class time. Virtual learning absences will be treated the same as those for in-person. Attendance and participation is expected at all times for both virtual learners and in-person learners. **Please note, if the absence is due to illness, the Reopening Plan policy must be followed;**

#### Symptom exclusion from school

Any student exhibiting a fever (100.4°F or higher), has a new onset of moderate to severe headache, shortness of breath, new cough, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of sense of taste or smell, fatigue from unknown cause, muscle or body aches cannot attend school.

If a student develops any of the listed symptoms while at school, the child and their siblings will be sent home.

Any student or staff member showing any one of COVID-like symptoms, must remain home for the prescribed period (per the Madison County Health Department) from the day of the first symptoms,

unless they can provide a healthcare provider's note documenting an alternative diagnosis or a current negative COVID test. Students and staff must also be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, and other symptoms must have improved before returning to school.

A doctor's note or a release from a healthcare provider must be provided in order for the child and their siblings to return to school prior to the end of the prescribed period of self-isolation or quarantine.

***NO RESULTS FROM A HOME COVID-19 TEST WILL BE ACCEPTED.***

### Truancy

Truancy is defined as the absence of a student without the parent's/guardian's consent. Examples of truancy are: the missing of class or school without an excused reason, whether the absence is student or parent initiated; absence for which advance notice is necessary (e.g. family trip) and which notice was not given before the absence. Truancy is not condoned and will result in disciplinary consequences. Missed work cannot be made up.

Single class truancy:

1. One offense results in the student calling the parent/guardian. The student will also serve a one-day in-school suspension.
2. Any subsequent offenses result in a three-day in-school suspension.

Truancy from school

1. One offense results in a three-day in-school suspension.
2. A second offense results in a five-day in-school suspension.
3. Any subsequent offenses will result in expulsion.

A student who has been absent for five consecutive days in a given quarter may be asked to provide a doctor's explanation for the absences. If there are persistent unexplained absences, the services of the State may be enlisted.

### Extended Absences:

The school discourages extended absences for vacations, sports trips, etc. Teachers may, but are not required, to provide assignments ahead of time for such absences or in the case of illness. Middle school students who have extended absences for vacations will make up work when they return. Students who are absent due to illness should rest at home and complete work as they are able. In both situations, assignments may be gathered upon returning to school and they will be due based on the number of days absent. The student is allowed two days make-up time for each day missed with a maximum of seven days (including the weekend) for all make-up work to be completed (i.e. Student is absent Monday, returns Tuesday, and submits missing work by Thursday).

In the case of serious/extended illness, exceptions to these limitations may be made at the discretion of the teacher and the Principal.

Students who have been absent for one day should plan to submit long-range assignments or take scheduled tests/quizzes on the day of their return to school. Being absent because an assignment is

due, or in order to avoid a test or quiz, is not good educational practice. Teachers are encouraged to provide alternative tests of equal difficulty for students who have missed a scheduled test.

### 5.2 Appointments

Whenever possible, to provide the child with maximum time for learning, parents are encouraged to make medical, dental, and other necessary appointments for the child after school or on Saturdays. If such an appointment is necessary during school hours, the following procedures should be followed:

1. An email or note (preferably email) is sent to the classroom teacher regarding the appointment, including the name of the person who will come for the child.
2. The parent/caregiver comes to the lobby to meet the child.
3. The office staff sends for the child.
4. For the safety of each child, the parent/caregiver **must sign the child out** of school.
5. For the safety of each child, the parent/caregiver **must come back into the lobby** with the child **and sign the child** back in to school.
6. The office staff sees that the child returns to class.

**A student is considered absent from school during the time away for an appointment.** It is the responsibility of the student to complete work missed. The student should notify the teacher the day before a missed test or quiz in order to make arrangements to take the test or quiz at a different time **on the day of the scheduled test.**

### 5.3 Arrival/Dismissal

Students in Pre-School, Kindergarten 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades are to be dropped off at the entrance of the rear upper parking lot near the dumpster. Cones and visuals will show the path as we have created a drop off lane. School staff will direct the process. Students will exit the vehicle and will enter through the pre-school / Kindergarten entrance. Students in grades 3-8 are to be dropped off in the lower parking lot at the base of the stairs. Students will then proceed up the stairs and enter through the outer door to their classroom. If a parent has a PreK /K, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade student as well as an older student(s), the older student(s) may be dropped off at the upper entrance. If there is bad weather, students in grades 3-8 will enter through the gym. Social distancing will be maintained at all times.

**To provide for the safety of the child, parents/guardians are asked to indicate transportation arrangements on the emergency form. On that form, parents/guardians should identify those individuals who are permitted to pick up their student(s) from school.**

The dismissal process will be completed entirely in the lower large parking lot. PreK and Kindergarten will be dismissed at 2:30. We will allow all PreK / K vehicles to dismiss at 2:40. At 2:45 all vehicle movement will be stopped and grades 1-8 will dismiss. Students are to proceed immediately to vehicles. Parents are to park in single rows (so backing up is not necessary). For the safety of all, students are to go to their vehicles immediately. Any student who does not have a ride will remain on the sidewalk with teachers/staff. If they do not have a ride after pick up is completed, they will be taken to after care. After we have halted movement, we will direct dismissal of the vehicles. Staff will supervise the process with 8<sup>th</sup> grade patrols assisting. This may seem like a difficult process and may take a few days to make efficient. Please understand that if it seems things are moving slow, our goal is to keep everyone safe and ensure that we never have a close call or accident in our parking lot. Please remember that maintaining social distancing will slightly delay the process.

If there is a change in pick up, parents must notify the school office so the staff can ensure that each child is going home with the appropriate and approved individuals.

If a student is to be allowed to walk home, the Principal must be notified so that appropriate procedures can be implemented.

#### 5.4 Asbestos

In accordance with federal regulations, St. Ambrose School has an Asbestos Management Plan that is on file in the Office Manager's Office and is available during normal business hours.

#### 5.5 Bicycles / Skateboards / Rollerblades

Students may ride bicycles to school. Those who do are asked to walk the bicycles from the road to the bicycle racks. Bicycles should be kept locked at all times. Students who ride bicycles should proceed to the exterior door of their classroom. St. Ambrose Catholic School accepts no responsibility for bicycles brought to school. Skateboards, rollerblades, and shoes containing rollers are not allowed at school.

#### 5.6 Books & School Materials

Care must be taken to keep school textbooks and school materials in good condition so that they may be used for a number of years. Books must be covered at all times. No tape, contact paper, or other self-adhesive materials may be used on any book. All books should be kept in a book bag when being transported to and from school. Lost or damaged books must be paid for by the student based on the date of purchase of the book (before final report card or records will be released).

#### 5.7 Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

Students may have a cell phone and other electronic devices, during school hours under the following conditions:

1. All electronic devices and cell phones (other than Chromebooks) must be kept in the off position during the school hours (7:30-2:45).
2. No cell phones may be used for picture taking.
3. No harassment or threatening of persons via the cell phone is permitted.
4. Cell phones may not be used for game playing, texting, Internet or e-mail access, social media access, gambling, or making purchases of any kind.
5. Those who violate any of the rules regarding cell phones may forfeit their privileges of bringing them to school.
6. Cell phones/electronic devices that are misused on school premises will be confiscated and kept in the school office to be picked up by only a parent/ guardian before 3:30 pm on a school day.
7. If there are special circumstances, the Principal will give permission for phone usage.

If these items are lost or stolen, St. Ambrose Catholic School assumes no responsibility for replacement.

#### 5.8 Chaperones

Anyone wishing to chaperone or participate in an activity involving children must have completed the Protecting God's Children program provided through the Diocese of Springfield.

Chaperones of school-sponsored activities and field trips are greatly appreciated by teachers and students. Chaperones are asked to park their cars in the upper parking lot. It is the responsibility of a chaperone to assist the school staff in maintaining good order, encouraging polite responses, and monitoring for safety. Therefore, chaperones ordinarily may not bring preschoolers with them for field trips (see below for guidelines for chaperones).

Appropriate dress and behavior is a good example for the students. Refraining from the consumption of alcoholic beverages (including samples) and all tobacco products while supervising or attending a school-sponsored activity is required of chaperones.

### 5.9 Guidelines for Chaperones

#### **ALL CHAPERONES MUST HAVE COMPLETED THE PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN PROGRAM BEFORE CHAPERONING.**

The following guidelines have been established to make field trips both enjoyable and safe for chaperones and the students. We appreciate chaperones taking their time to volunteer and for following the guidelines.

1. Chaperones are needed to monitor and accompany school children. For that reason, younger brothers and sisters may not come on a field trip unless directed by the teacher.
2. If chaperones are driving students, each student must have a seatbelt that is fastened around him/her during the entire car trip or in a car seat as per Illinois Child Passenger Protection Act which states: "A child under the age of 8 years old must be secured in a child safety seat. However, if the vehicle is equipped with lap belts only in the back seat, a child weighing more than 40 lbs. may be transported in the back seat wearing a lap belt only. Drivers and all passengers must be secured in either a seat belt or child safety seat." There must always be two adults (who have participated in the Protecting God's Children program and successfully completed a background check) to chaperone children other than one's own. No exceptions to this policy will be granted.
3. Chaperones may not bring snacks for the students in their car or stop for food on the way to or at the conclusion of the field trip if they are driving students by car. If teachers feel snacks are needed, they will provide enough for the entire class.
4. Chaperones must stay with the group for the entire visit. A chaperone must always accompany children to the restroom.
5. The focus of the trip should be the care of the students. Chaperones must not allow distractions (talking to other parents, use of devices, etc.) to interfere with supervision of students.
6. Chaperones must be able to account for each child in their group at all times.
7. Chaperones should expect the following from the children in their care:
  - a. School rules apply unless specifically stated by the teacher.

- b. Good manners and common courtesy are required at all times.
- c. Specific guidelines for the field trip must be followed.
- d. Items of a dangerous or potentially dangerous nature must not be purchased or brought along on the trip.
- e. Each child must stay in the appointed group with a partner.
- f. Each child must cooperate with the chaperones.
- g. Each child must be where he/she is expected to be at the appointed time.

#### 5.10 Crisis Management/Disasters

A Crisis Management Plan is in place for the school. Should a crisis involving the entire school occur, parents will be notified via, the text message “Parent Alert” through FACTS SIS and via email.

Parents coming to school to pick up students should meet in the Community Center. Children will be brought to the Community Center to meet their parents. If an evacuation of the school is necessary, we will walk the school to the Mid-Illinois Jets Gymnastics Center.

St. Ambrose Catholic School prepares for disasters and updates procedures as needed. Specific procedures for fire, intruder/lockdown, earthquake, tornado, and other possible disasters are reviewed with the students as mandated by the State. Should there be an emergency, it is important for parents to know that staff members care for their children until parents are able to come to school. Students are released to parents or those persons specified on the emergency forms. It is imperative that these forms are annually updated.

#### 5.11 Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) or Law Enforcement Officer (When questioning is requested)

If a properly identified DCFS worker comes to school to question a child, school personnel must allow the child to be interviewed. The Principal arranges these meetings that take place in the school or parish center. The Principal/school staff may not call parents to inform them of the DCFS visit. The Principal ordinarily is present for these interviews. Parents are contacted by the DCFS following the interview.

If a properly identified law enforcement officer comes to question a child, the parents are called so that they may be present for the interview. If parent(s) cannot be reached, the officer may not interview the child unless there is a warrant. If there is a warrant, or if parents are reached but are unable to be present, the Principal or his/her designee should be present for the interview.

#### 5.12 Emergency Forms

An emergency form is required yearly for each child enrolled at St. Ambrose Catholic School. This form is completed by a parent/guardian and must be kept updated. If there is a special circumstance, the school office must be informed by the parents IN WRITING regarding the procedure to be followed.

#### 5.13 Emergency Procedures

St. Ambrose Catholic School has implemented an emergency preparedness plan. The school also keeps emergency supplies at several locations in the school. Evacuation diagrams and emergency procedures are posted in each room. In order to keep our students as safe as possible, drills are conducted regularly (per state guidelines) and precautionary measures are established to be followed in the event of emergencies.

#### 5.14 Emergency School Closings

St. Ambrose Catholic School prepares and updates emergency closing procedures as warranted. When weather conditions or other factors necessitate the closing of school, the decision is made as early in the morning as possible. Parents will be notified via text message using “Parent Alert” on FACTS SIS. Parents may also obtain school closing information on WBGZ, (1570 AM), or on Channels 2, 4 and 5. School personnel make every effort not to close school early for the sake of parents who work. If in-person learning is not safe due to weather, the school will transition to a virtual learning day.

In the event we are at school when weather conditions become treacherous, parents may come for their children at any time. Staff will remain with the children until everyone has gone home.

#### 5.15 FACTS SIS

St. Ambrose Catholic School employs the FACTS SIS school management system. This system is the school's primary record-keeping source. All attendance, lunch menus, and grade reports are generated and stored in this system. All parents of enrolled students have access to FACTS SIS. This allows parents to access grades, homework, student directory, school calendar, and teacher correspondence. The system also tracks incidental finances including lunch accounts, after care, and more. All parents are encouraged to use this tool as frequently as possible.

#### 5.16 Field Trips/Retreats

The school provides appropriate educational field trip/retreat experiences for the students. Field trips/retreats are a privilege, not a right. If a student fails to meet academic or behavioral requirements, that student may be denied attendance to a field trip/retreat. Ordinarily each class has the opportunity to take at least one field trip during the school year. Students are asked to pay for the cost of the field trip. **Students who do not attend a field trip may not attend school that day and will be marked absent.** If a bus has been selected as the mode of transportation, riding in a separate vehicle is not an option, unless approved by the Principal.

#### 5.17 Fundraising Policy

In keeping with the mission of St. Ambrose Catholic School, “to provide a foundation of religious truths and values” for its students, this policy on *fundraising activities* is designed to support the efforts of the school, as well as St. Ambrose Catholic Church, with decisions about activities that help students learn about the value of identifying and responding to the needs of both the local and global communities.

The Principal and SAPA will recommend and implement fundraising activities within the school and will consider all conflicts with curriculum imperatives as well as other Church activities when recommending fundraising events.

The final approval of all fundraising activities rests with the Pastor. The Pastor is not limited in his sources of input but may utilize information provided by the Principal, the School Board, the St. Ambrose Finance Council, and the guidelines provided in Catholic doctrine.

Among the key principles of Catholic Social Teaching that guide Parish fundraising decisions are:

· *Human Dignity*. All people have an essential dignity by virtue of the fact that they are created in the image of God.

· *Community and the Common Good*. Individuals and groups within the Catholic Church, in particular, and, society, in general, have an obligation to pursue not only their own interests but the good of all.

· *Preference for Assistance to the Poor*. Christians are required by the Gospel to make a deliberate choice to assist the poor, the sick, and those who suffer injustice. Catholics should see the world

through the eyes of the poor as well as others who suffer. Everyone should be treated as equals and not as objects of pity.

·*Sustainability Needs of St. Ambrose Parish.* Fundraising to assist particular needs of the Parish community and help students understand their responsibilities for stewardship – now and in the future.

It is good for students to have the opportunity to work for charitable causes, but not to the extent that it might disrupt teacher and/or office routines or student responsibilities at home and at school.

If a teacher or student wishes to promote an individual project, this may be done during lunch, before or after school, or through announcements. Each project must be cleared through the Principal.

### 5.18 Gifts

Every recipient appreciates gift giving. However, the collection of money for gifts for staff, students, parents, or other family members could become a hardship for families. Collections of this nature must be reserved for very special occasions. Authorization from the Principal must precede any collection of money at school. Please remember that participation in collections/gifts like these is always optional. Families and individuals give as they are able and deem appropriate.

### Invitations/gifts:

Party or other social invitations may not be distributed in school unless the entire class is invited. Gift giving should not be done within the school/parish parking lot unless it is a class activity involving all children. Please do not have flowers, balloons, etc. delivered to school as the gift cannot be delivered to the classroom during school hours.

## **5.19 Health: State and Local Policies**

### Communicable Diseases

The Principal is required to notify the Department of Public Health when a student is sent home because of a suspected communicable disease.

### Head Lice

For the good of all the children, the wellness coordinator or designee screens for head lice infestation when necessary. The school will take three steps:

1. Provide treatment instructions.
2. The child is sent home until treatment is completed.
3. The child's contacts are checked for head lice.

If a child has been infested, parents are asked to report this information to the Principal or the Office Manager to take the necessary precautions to protect other students and staff.

### 5.19 Illness/Injury at School

All student, staff, parent, and volunteer accidents, injuries, or illnesses occurring on parish/school property during educational activities shall be reported to the Principal or other designated authority as soon as possible. Efforts will be made to contact the parents/guardians for information and instructions (except for minor scrapes, bruises, or other minor incidents). If parent(s) or guardians cannot be contacted and the illness or injury is believed to be serious enough to require medical

attention, the student will be taken to a doctor or hospital for treatment. This action by the educational personnel does not obligate the person, parish, or school to assume financial responsibility for the treatment of the student.

No student will be allowed to go home alone due to illness or accident without parental consent.

#### 5.20 Immunizations

In accordance with State Law, the school must have a record showing that students have had the proper immunizations. This record must list each immunization and the date on which it was given. A licensed medical professional must sign this record.

#### **Students entering preschool, kindergarten, grade six, as well as transfer students MUST HAVE THE APPROPRIATE IMMUNIZATIONS AND PHYSICALS BY THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL.**

If the child cannot receive an immunization for medical reasons or due to a documented shortage of a vaccine, a signed statement must be obtained from a physician. Illinois Law states that the school must have a record of up to-date immunizations for the child or the school must exclude the child from attendance.

#### Physical, Dental, and Eye Examinations

Physical examinations are required within one year before a child enters preschool, kindergarten, and sixth grade. Dental examinations are required for kindergarten, second, and sixth grades.

A law effective January 1, 2008, requires that all children enrolling in kindergarten and any student enrolling for the first time in a public, private, or parochial school shall have an eye exam. Each child is to present proof of having been examined by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches or a licensed optometrist within the previous year before **October 15** of the school year. If the child fails to present proof by October 15, the school may hold the child's report card until either (a) the child presents proof of a completed eye examination or (b) the child presents proof that an eye examination will take place within 60 days after October 15.

A record of examinations is part of the child's permanent record. Illinois Law states that the school must have a record of up-to-date immunizations for the child or the school **MUST** exclude the child from attendance.

Students participating in the athletic program must have a sport's physical current for the year of participation.

Vision and hearing screenings are provided at school for students in mandated grades. Parents of students in other grades may request screening for their child.

#### 5.21 Insurance

Insurance information is posted on the school website. If school insurance is desired, the completed form with payment must be turned in to the school office.

Failure to request school insurance indicates family insurance covers the child.

### 5.22 Library (Memorials)

In order to provide a variety of books for everyone, library guidelines have been set. Students are responsible for library books checked out in their name. When children are ready to assume the responsibility of borrowing books, they are allowed up to five books at a time (grade dependent). Books are due back the following week.

Responsibility for the acquisition of library materials rests with the appropriate library personnel who discharges this obligation consistent with selection criteria and procedures.

### Memorials

The library provides a program of gift or memorial books. Should a family wish to remember a loved one on a special day or as a memorial, the library will arrange for a book to be donated to the library in the name of that loved one. The library staff provides a bookplate in the book and sends a note of recognition to the person designated by the family.

### 5.23 Lunch

Children may bring or purchase their lunch. Milk is to be ordered by the Semester or by the year. Lunches brought to school during the morning should be left in the drop box outside the door. Office staff will make sure students receive the lunch. Names must be written on the lunches that are dropped off. Parents should write the child's name somewhere on his/her lunchbox.

Children may not leave the school grounds to eat at nearby restaurants unless accompanied by the parent/guardian or grandparent. This person may take ONLY his/her own child/grandchild to lunch during the scheduled lunch period. If someone other than a parent or grandparent is planning to take the child out, there must be a handwritten note from the parent/guardian granting permission. Children may NOT order lunch for themselves to be delivered to the school. Parents or guardians may order lunch for his/her child and MUST personally deliver it. The school office will not accept deliveries for any student.

Lunches will be offered every day of the week. On Mondays Julia's Catering provides food. On Tuesdays and Thursday LeMay's Catering provides food. On Wednesday we offer Subway and on Fridays Little Caesar's Pizza. Lunch calendars are posted in advance. Lunch money should be sent to the school office in an envelope with student(s) name, homeroom, and "Lunch Money" clearly labeled. This money must be sent in \$25.00 increments until May, when the accounts may be calculated more closely. Lunch accounts may also be accessed and paid for with credit card. Please contact the office for details. Children with a negative balance in their lunch account will need to call home for lunch money, or they will be unable to order lunch that day. In this case crackers or a small snack will be provided so that the student has something to eat. Money in the lunch account at the end of the school year will remain in the account for the next school year.

### 5.24 Medication

**In accordance with Illinois Law, St. Ambrose staff members dispense medication only in a life-threatening situation (i.e. allergic bee sting, blood sugar disorders, etc.).** This medication must be delivered to the office in the original prescription container only by the parent or guardian. The prescription bottle should contain the following information: name of student, name of drug, dosage, and time interval medication is to be taken. Using the appropriate medication form, the parents must provide a written request and permission in order that the school may comply with the physician's orders. This form requires the signature of the physician as well as the parents. Upon receiving the

medication and permission form, both a parent/guardian and an office staff member must review the information on the form and on the container to ensure that the medicine is dispensed properly.

**If a child requests additional medication during the school day, the school will call the parents who may choose to bring that medication to school and dispense to the child. The State of Illinois considers cough drops as medication.**

The office/school personnel may not dispense medicine that does not have the proper form signed by a physician and parents.

Parents are allowed to request that children who self-carry and/or self-administer epinephrine and children with asthma who self-medicate with inhalers be allowed to on the school campus.

Illinois state law requires the following for students to self-carry and/or self-administer **asthma** medication:

An Authorization for self-carry and/or Self-Administration of Asthma Medicine Form (obtain from School Office) completed by parent or guardian.

The prescription label for the medication containing the name of the asthma medication, the prescribed dosage, and the time at which or the circumstances of administering asthma medication.

A request from St. Ambrose for an Asthma Action Plan for the student under Illinois state law requires the following for students to self-carry and/or self-administer an **Epinephrine auto-injector**:

An Authorization for Self-Carry and/or Self-Administration of Epinephrine Form (obtain from the Scholl Office) completed by parent or guardian.

A written statement from the Student's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse containing:

- Specific written authorization from the student's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse for the student to self-administer and/or self-carry an epinephrine autoinjector
- The name and purpose of the epinephrine and the prescribed dosage
- The times and/or circumstances under which to administer the epinephrine auto-injector

### 5.25 Money

All cash or checks sent to school must be sent in a sealed envelope with the student's name, amount enclosed, and the purpose.

### Found articles:

Should a child find money or anything of value, he or she must take it to the office. The office staff will attempt to find the owner. If it is not claimed within a reasonable amount of time, the money or item will be donated to our Community Outreach collection.

### 5.26 Newsletter

A newsletter is provided at the end of each week, usually on Fridays. This newsletter has relevant information concerning school activities.

Parents are welcome to use the newsletter as a means of communicating school-related information to other parents. Please submit information to the Principal by Wednesday at noon. The information should be sent as an attachment.

#### 5.27 News for Parish Bulletin

Parents representing school organizations who wish to have school-related information printed in the parish bulletin are asked to submit that information to the Principal who, in turn, submits it to the parish office. This procedure avoids duplication of efforts and/or conflicts. This information must be submitted by noon on Tuesday.

#### 5.28 Office Equipment / Faculty Workroom

The staff workroom, copy machines, and other office equipment are for the use by school staff only. Parents who wish to have copies made may request them from the office personnel who will make arrangements to provide copies as time permits.

### **5.29 Parent Communication**

#### Teacher Availability

Teachers should not be interrupted during class time (7:50am – 2:50pm). Teachers will be available for conferences before, during, or after school by appointment only.

#### Principal Availability

If parents have contacted the appropriate person, but still need further discussion, they may schedule an appointment with the Principal. The Principal will meet with parents before, during, and after school by appointment only.

#### Parent Responsibility

St. Ambrose parents have the following responsibilities;

- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences, events, fundraisers, etc.;
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- To notify the school with an emailed or written note when the student has been absent or tardy;
- To see that the student pays for any damage to Chromebooks, school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
- To meet all financial obligations to the school;
- To inform the school of any special situations regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;

- To treat all staff members with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

At home parents have a responsibility to ensure their student(s);

- Get to bed early on school nights;
- Arrive at school on time and are picked up on time;
- Is dressed according to the school dress code;
- Completes assignments on time;
- Has a charged Chromebook for the school day and other necessary materials; and
- Has lunch money available in his/her account or has a nutritional sack lunch every day.

### 5.30 Parents' Service Hour Requirement

**ALL** Parents are expected to participate in the programs of both church and school, as time and circumstances permit, and to participate in the major school and parish fundraisers such as SCRIP, Dinner Auction, Golf Tournament, Apple Fest, Trivia Night, etc. Each family is required to serve a minimum of 8 volunteer hours per semester – 16 hours per year. Family members other than parents may contribute volunteer hours to a specific family (volunteers working in any capacity at the church or school must have completed Protecting God's Children training). A buyout is available if parents do not wish to volunteer.

#### SCRIP Participation:

The **SCRIP** program is one of the main fundraisers to help benefit our school. Each family will be required to purchase \$2,000 in SCRIP for a 12-month period (May 1 to April 30). You may designate other family members (grandparents, aunts/uncles, etc.) to contribute to your account by completing the name at the bottom of each SCRIP form and/or by contacting the school office personnel who will be tracking the SCRIP orders. If you are unable to meet the \$2,000 minimum, you will be responsible for 10% of the remaining balance. Scrip may be purchased online at [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) using a debit or credit card or a checking account. Families can purchase e-gift cards online or by using the RaiseRight app. Families may also have the gift cards shipped to their house or gift cards may be sent to the Parish office and picked up.

If a family chooses to NOT participate in the SCRIP program, that family will be required to "BUYOUT". The buyout amounts are as follows:

- \$200 – 1 student in the family
- \$275 – 2 students in the family
- \$300 – 3 or more students in the family

**IF YOUR FAMILY DOES NOT REACH THE MINIMUM \$2,000 COMMITMENT BY APRIL 30 OF THE CURRENT SCHOOLYEAR, YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO PAY THE APPLICABLE 10% AMOUNT OF THE REMAINING BALANCE. INVOICES WILL BE SENT TO THOSE FAMILIES.**

1. SCRIP certificates are purchased on your behalf and are not returnable.

2. When you receive your filled SCRIP order, please verify accuracy immediately. In the unlikely event that you should find a discrepancy, please contact the Director of Operations (466-2921) within 7 days.
3. SCRIP is available in the parish office during normal business hours and will be sold after MOST weekend Masses in the front of church.
4. SCRIP cards are the same as cash and should be handled accordingly. St. Ambrose School is not responsible for cards that are lost, stolen, or misplaced.
5. You must sign the Waiver of Responsibility form before cards will be released with your child. These forms will be kept on file and St. Ambrose School accepts no responsibility for cards delivered in this manner.
6. If your check is returned because of non-sufficient funds (NSF), you will be charged a \$20 fee payable to St. Ambrose Home and School SCRIP account. After two NSF checks are tendered on your account, your SCRIP ordering privileges will be limited to cash or money order only.

7. The SCRIP “calendar year” will run from May 1 until April 30.
8. Families are able to register online at [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) using the St. Ambrose enrollment code (FC7AE65B7459). Families may also use the Raise Right App on their phone to register and purchase SCRIP Cards.

### 5.31 Parent-Teacher Conferences

A parent-teacher conference (K-8) is scheduled after the first quarter, usually in late October. Pre-school parent-teacher conferences are usually conducted in the Spring. Additional conferences may be scheduled throughout the year by contacting the teacher involved for an appointment or by contacting the school office.

### 5.32 Parents/Visitors Visiting School

All school doors will remain locked during the school day. Parents/Visitors will be admitted only by the front door after ringing the security system bell.

Parents/Visitors must come to the school office before meeting a child or bringing something to a child. Parents should not go to a classroom during school hours even if a visit to the classroom has been pre-arranged with the teacher, without first signing in at the office and receiving a visitor’s badge/sticker. Teachers will be asked to confirm appointments with parents. Visits are welcomed when they are arranged and convenient for students, teachers, and parents.

### Parental Visitation of Non-Custodial Parents

Non-custodial parents may not arrange to visit the classroom or call for the children unless there is a court order stating specific arrangements. A copy of the custody section of the divorce decree must be on file in the school to ensure that the school follows correct procedures. It is the obligation of the custodial parent to provide this information.

### 5.33 Parties / Birthday Treats / Food Allergies

Students in grades K-8 have occasional celebrations during the year. Room parents organize these events in conjunction with the teacher. These celebrations are meant to be simple and fun. **Treats must be commercially prepared, prepackaged, and in individual or precut servings and must pay careful attention to known food allergies (peanuts, tree nuts, milk, etc.) within a class.** Birthday treats must be limited to a cookie or cupcake per child. Parents are asked not to send drinks or paper products. Birthday treats should be brought before school or left in the school office if treats must arrive during the school day. Parents may not take the treat to the classroom without permission from the office. The celebrations must be done in moderation.

### Tree Nut-Peanut free snack suggestions

Here at St. Ambrose, we have students that have an allergy to tree nuts and/or peanuts as well as other common allergens, including milk, gluten, etc.. In order to keep all students safe in our school, we have provided a list of suggested items you may bring in for, birthdays, parties, etc.

When you are purchasing items, please read all the labeling on the package or box even those in fine print. If you have noticed that the box or package has changed, please double check before purchasing the item. For the safety of our students who have allergies, please send in items that are individually wrapped

and are clearly labeled. If you notice that the item does not have the ingredients listed clearly, please do not send in that item.

Here are some labels you may see on packages and boxes. If you see these phrases on a box or package, please do not purchase the item. These are items that could be dangerous to our St. Ambrose students who have allergies. Also, please do not purchase items that contain coconut oil. The oil will be in the list of ingredients, so you have to look closely at the list.

“May Contain Peanut or Tree Nuts” “Processed on shared equipment with Peanuts or Tree Nuts”

“Manufactured in a plant with Peanut or Tree Nuts”

“Contains Peanut or Tree Nut Ingredients”

Tree Nut-Peanut free snack suggestions

- Goldfish (Name Brand) ● Teddy Grahams (Name Brand) ● Cheez-Its (Name Brand-original) ● Doritos (Name Brand; cheese flavored) ● Hostess cupcakes (Name Brand Only) ● Hostess donuts: powdered, chocolate (Name Brand Only) ● Rice Krispie Treats (Kellogg Brand Only) ● Oreos (Chocolate/Golden) Name Brand Only ● Pringles ● Skittles (Mars Brand Only) ● StarBurst (Mars Brand Only) ● Airheads ● Gummy Bears (Haribo Brand Only) ● Fruit Snacks (Betty Crocker Brand Only) ● Pretzels (Rold Gold, Great Value) ● Popcorn (SmartFood Brand) ● Graham Crackers (Honey Maid) ● Scooby Doo Graham Crackers ● Cheetos (Name Brand) ● Sun Chips (Original, Sour Cream, Cheddar) ● Tootsie Roll Pops ● Tootsie Rolls ● Dum Dum Suckers ● Junior Mints ● Hershey Kisses (Name Brand Only; Milk Chocolate Only)

### 5.34 Records

The permanent record includes the registration form(s), academic records and transcripts, attendance records, and testing information. It does not include discipline reports or correspondence. The Pastor and Principal are the only staff persons who release records to parents. Parents must make a written request to the Principal for records at least 24 hours prior to the time they wish to view or receive unofficial copies. The original permanent record may not be taken from the building. Official records are not released to parents for the purpose of transporting them to another school. The receiving school will not accept records delivered in this manner. A process is in place among schools for the official transfer of copies of records. Unofficial records are provided by the school if the receiving school needs basic information.

Records may be reviewed by school officials, teachers, and counselors, to auditors of federally funded programs, and to other officials if there is a court order. Records may be released to the FBI, government officials, juvenile officers, lawyers, and police only with the written permission of parents or by a court order.

Official school records will not be released until all fees and other obligations are satisfied (see Financial Policies).

### Non-Custodial Parents

St. Ambrose Catholic School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment regarding the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, a 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 there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

#### Inactive File of School Records

When a student graduates or transfers, the permanent cumulative record is placed in an inactive file. This file contains attendance records, academic records, standardized test results, health and immunizations, teachers' names, promotion/retention information, and any other pertinent information. Nothing disparaging is recorded on the permanent record. According to Illinois State Law, the records are kept for 60 years.

#### A Parent's Right to Change a Record

Parents have the right to request that statements be changed or deleted in a student's permanent file. If the Principal refuses to change or delete the statement in question, the parents or student have the right to add their own statements to the permanent record.

#### 5.35 Temperature Guidelines for Recess, Outdoor Events, & St. Ambrose Sporting Events

An opportunity to get fresh air and exercise, as well as to socialize with classmates, is an important part of the school day. For this reason, children may not be excused from recess without a written note from the parent stating the reason for the request. In the unusual circumstance that a child needs to be excused for more than three school days, a written statement from the physician is required. The physician is asked to state the duration of the excuse as well as the reason for the excuse. Electronic devices will not be allowed during recess. Personal toys brought to school are discouraged and the school assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen items.

**Medical guidelines for outside Winter recess: 10 degrees or below, students stay inside; 10-20°, student may spend 5-10 minutes outside; 20-32°, students may spend 10-15 minutes outside; 32° + no restrictions to outside recess. Wind chills will always be considered when making these decisions.**

**Medical guidelines for outdoor Summer recess, outdoor school day activities, and St. Ambrose outdoor sporting events: When temperatures or heat indexes reach triple digits (100 degrees or higher) outdoor activities are not permitted.**

#### 5.36 Sacramental Preparation

Students who are baptized Catholics hope to receive the sacraments. Sacramental Preparations are parish programs for school and PSR students. In the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois, after extensive consultation and with overwhelming approval by the delegates to the Diocesan Synod in 2017, Bishop Thomas John Paprocki, established that the sacrament of Confirmation precede First Eucharist, thereby restoring the order of the sacraments of initiation to their original purpose and meaning. Students in 2nd grade students are eligible to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are eligible to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist.

#### 5.37 Sacrament of Reconciliation

Parents and families are encouraged to participate in the regularly scheduled Penance

Services or times for the individual celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance) throughout the year. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is part of the sacramental life of the parish and should not be restricted to a school event. Therefore, parents have the responsibility of modeling the reception of the sacrament for their children by participating regularly at the Parish celebrations of the sacrament. The sacrament of Penance may also be celebrated by appointment with the Pastor. It is hoped that this positive experience of the sacrament will lead the children to make this a lifelong, grace-filled, and healthy practice.

#### 5.38 Sacramental Records

Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist information is entered on each child's permanent record. When registering for school, Catholic children who have not been baptized at St. Ambrose Church must bring a copy of their baptismal record and any other pertinent sacramental certificates.

#### 5.39 Smoking

Smoking, vaping and any other use of tobacco are prohibited on St. Ambrose Catholic School property.

#### 5.40 Supervision

When children are involved in a function held at St. Ambrose Catholic School, there must be at least two adults supervising at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, such things as scout meetings, athletic practices, and service projects. Staff and volunteers at all levels of service are required to attend a session of "Protecting God's Children". This includes, but is not limited to, coaches, librarians, playground workers, and scout leaders.

#### 5.41 Tardiness

In order to start the day properly, children must arrive on time. A student is tardy who has not arrived at school by 8:00 a.m. Should tardiness become habitual, the teacher will contact the parent. Teachers are not required to make exceptions or provide make-up work due to habitual tardiness.

#### 5.42 Telephone Calls

In order to prevent classroom distractions, students and teachers are not called from class for phone calls. Messages may be left by calling the school office (466-4216). Messages called in after 2:30 PM may not reach the child before dismissal. Ordinarily, children do not need to use the telephone during the school day.

#### 5.43 Use of Parish Facilities

Parents using school facilities are responsible for keeping the children (including older or younger siblings) in the designated room at all times. The room must be left in good order. Any trash accumulated must be placed in the dumpster.

The gymnasium is available on a limited basis. Anyone wishing to reserve the gym for a school-related activity is asked to contact the Principal. Activities not directly connected with the school are prohibited.

The Community Center scheduling is handled in the parish office and may only be reserved for parish (Church and School) activities and events.

The soccer field is available for practice. Each year a contact person is designated to facilitate scheduling. Contact the Athletic Director to schedule.

Two adults who have attended *Protecting God's Children* training must be present to supervise any activity involving children.

St. Ambrose Catholic School students are not permitted on the parish grounds at any time without an adult who is at least 21 years old and has attended *Protecting God's Children*.

#### 5.44 Valuables / Personal Items

St. Ambrose Catholic School will not be responsible for any personal items brought to school. These items may be used at the discretion of the teacher.

#### 5.45 Volunteers

St. Ambrose depends on parents and other generous persons to assist the school in a variety of ways throughout the year. Families are required to perform 16 hours of volunteer service each school year. We appreciate our volunteers and we encourage others to join them as classroom helpers, special lunch helpers, library workers, Parents' Association project helpers, etc. All volunteers working with students must have attended *Protecting God's Children* before participation.

**The undersigned (handbook consent form found at the end) parent/guardian/volunteer acknowledges, understands, and consents to all risks associated with volunteering at St. Ambrose Catholic School/Church (Parish), including but not limited to fundraisers, classroom events, school events, sporting events and coaching, church related services, and/or parish events inside or outside. The undersigned assumes all risks and responsibility for volunteer service as a free and voluntary act regardless of foregoing time requirements. Those volunteers, concerned about physical injury or otherwise, may elect and seek alternative volunteer service that presents minimal or no physical activity. Even in non-physical volunteer service, the undersigned assumes all risks and responsibility for volunteer service as a free and voluntary act regardless of foregoing time requirements. The undersigned hereby agrees to indemnify and hold harmless St. Ambrose Catholic School/Church (Parish) from liability in such volunteer activities, events, and/or service.**

## **6 Behavior**

In accordance with the stated philosophy of St. Ambrose Catholic School, that emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school to include courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, and concern for the overall school environment.

The Principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

The essence of Christian discipline is formation in virtue. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, *“The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God.”* (CCC1803)

There may be times when harm to students, staff, and the parent community is significant, and restoration is not possible. Such cases require special attention, and solutions may require time away from the school community. Possible disciplinary/corrective actions include;

1. The student may be sent home to prevent further harm.
2. The police may be called.
3. The student may be required to meet with a counselor and acceptable assurances given from the counselor to the Principal that the child is not a danger to themselves or other members of the school community before the child may reenter school.
4. A satisfactory Formal Conference must be held with parents, administrators and students, outlining the harm done and mutual agreement on the specific actions that will be taken to repair the harm.
5. A probationary period (either in-school suspension or out-of-school expulsion) may be required before a child may return to school. The Principal, in consultation with the Dean of Students, reserves the right to determine the seriousness of the infraction.
6. Student(s) may be asked to withdraw for cause.
7. Diocesan Policy requires that all threats will be taken seriously and investigated. If after investigation, the Principal, in consultation with the Dean of Students, deems it warranted, the school may require a student who threatens others through words or actions to be removed from school and not permitted to return until a mental health professional indicates, in writing, that it is safe for both the student and others in the school for the student to return to school. When this statement is received by school administration, arrangements may be made for the child to be readmitted to school.

We believe that each child is a unique person created by God to fulfill a special purpose in the world. Thus, it is the responsibility of the Catholic school to ensure that the Christian potential of each child is reached by developing and strengthening the whole person - spiritually, morally, intellectually, physically, and socially.

To aid in the development of the whole person and prepare students for higher level education, and society we will follow the guidelines outlined in the school handbook. Each teacher will utilize his/her own classroom management style and approach. Each teacher and/or the Principal will determine the severity of an infraction or behavior. We reserve the right to amend this policy at any time and we reserve the right to administer any consequence deemed appropriate when considering the context and circumstances of each individual situation.

At St. Ambrose Catholic School the approach to discipline for all students will follow the same general guidelines. These guidelines will be age appropriate and will always be geared towards helping the students learn from their mistakes. At times, those mistakes will come with consequences. These consequences are meant to help the student understand the inappropriateness of their actions, not simply a means of punishment.

The general discipline guidelines will:

- Initially identify and redirect/correct inappropriate/negative behaviors and actions. This will typically be handled by the classroom teacher.
- If the behavior persists after the initial redirection/correction, the disciplinary actions will progress in severity. The severity of these consequences will depend on circumstances and context. With a continuation of the negative/inappropriate behaviors, a meeting with the Principal and parents will be scheduled.

## 6.1 Discipline Policy

### PK, K, 1

The Preschool/Kindergarten discipline policy is carefully curated to help students develop appropriate behaviors in a school setting.

Students begin the school year with different levels of understanding in classroom/school rules and expectations. Keeping this in mind, the discipline policy for these young students maintains a sliding scale. Preschool and Kindergarten utilize a card system to give visual cues for appropriate and inappropriate actions/behaviors. Students will begin each day on green and be given several warnings (first semester and based on an individual student's understanding) before his or her card is changed to yellow or red. Parents and guardians can see the child's report at the end of the day on an individual behavior chart. Specific issues will be explained on the chart. We ask that parents and guardians discuss daily issues with the child and provide appropriate consequences at home to create a partnership in learning appropriate school behaviors. Yellow cards receive a five-minute loss of recess/free-time and red cards receive a ten-minute loss of recess/free time. A discussion with the student will occur as part of our Discipline Policy to garner understanding of what may have caused the incident and how to prevent future incidents from occurring. Red cards may require intervention by the Principal based on the nature of the incident. Any faculty or staff can require a change of cards for inappropriate actions or behaviors.

When student behaviors create an unsafe environment, the Principal and Dean of Students will be notified and a discussion between the Principal, Dean of Students, student, and parents will occur. Parents or guardians will be contacted if a Principal meeting is required. Students will also be rewarded for appropriate behavior with extrinsic rewards to positively reinforce good choices.

### Discipline Policy Grades 2-3

The second and third grade classes will use a clipboard chart to monitor student behavior on a daily basis.

- 1st checkmark= warning (no consequences)
- 2nd checkmark= loss of 10 minutes of recess
- 3rd check mark= all of morning/lunch recess is lost
- 4th checkmark= student will be sent to Principal's office

Students will have a monthly behavior chart that will be kept in their homework folder. It will be collected at the end of each month.

Serious offenses will result in an automatic trip to the Principal's office. Consequences for these major offenses could include detention, in school suspension, or out of school suspension.

Some examples of serious offenses include;

1. Inappropriate language/action
2. Property damage
3. Stealing
4. Fighting
5. Major disruptions: refusal to complete assignments, violent behavior, refusal to follow teacher instruction.

### Upper Grade Discipline Policy (4-8)

To help encourage the behavior expected of upper grade students St. Ambrose will adhere to the following discipline guidelines:

- The teacher will determine the severity of the action, then decide if the action merits a verbal warning or a conduct referral.
- If the student is issued a conduct referral, the student must return the signed copy of the referral the following school day. If the referral is not returned, the student will receive a new referral in addition to the previous referral and parents will be notified. The teacher may also decide to send the referral electronically directly to the parent in which the parent can reply directly to the teacher.
- Two written referrals in the same week will equal an after school detention.
- Three written referrals in a quarter will result in an after school detention.
- Five written referrals in a semester will result in a parent meeting with the Principal and the upper grade homeroom teacher to discuss consequences.
- The second semester will begin with a fresh start. All students will start back with zero pending referrals.

\* Saint Ambrose Staff may assign a conduct referral for actions and behaviors that are not on this list.

Disciplinary infractions that will result in consequences, include but are not limited to (this is not a totally comprehensive list, as other inappropriate behaviors will also lead to consequences);

- |   |                         |                          |
|---|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| -class disruption / minor disruption      | -tardiness/absenteeism  | -excessive talking/noise |
| -failure to bring necessary materials     | -horseplay/scuffling    | -throwing objects        |
| -disrespect to students or staff          | -inappropriate language | -harassment              |
| -misuse of social media /technology       | -violence               | -threats                 |
| -vandalism/destruction of school property | -bullying               | -insubordination         |
| -display of inappropriate images          | -misuse of devices      | -out of uniform          |
| -academic dishonesty                      |                         |                          |

### 6.2 Explanation of Consequences

- Probation – a stated period of time that a student may prove him/herself to be capable of cooperating with school policy and procedure. During this time, privileges may be withheld from a student.
- Detention – after school detentions may be issued for offenses. Students will spend 30 minutes after school in detention.
- In-school suspension – the student is assigned to an office, another classroom, or the Principal’s office for a specified number of days. The student completes his/her work for the day and eats lunch in the assigned room. The student will receive partial credit for work completed. Subsequent in-school suspensions will result in completion of work with no credit awarded.
- Out-of-school suspension – the student remains out of school not more than five school days. All schoolwork must be completed before returning to school. Partial credit may be given for work completed during an out-of-school suspension. Work must be submitted by 7:50 AM on the day of the return.
- Expulsion – expulsion is invoked as a last resort, but may be utilized if a student’s behavior warrants such action.

The following procedures may be followed prior to an expulsion:

- The student is suspended for a period not to exceed 5 days.
- A conference is arranged with Pastor, parents, and Principal in the hopes of finding a solution to the situation.
- The Pastor, after consultation with the Principal, makes the final decision and communicates that decision to the parents.

Expulsions and suspensions are very rare at St. Ambrose Catholic School.

### 6.3 Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is forbidden at St. Ambrose Catholic School.

### **6.4 Conflict Resolution/Grievance Procedure**

#### Informal Conflict Resolution

It is our hope at St. Ambrose Catholic School, that conflicts can be resolved at the lowest level. If a student has a conflict with another student, the resolution process might be able to begin there. If this is not likely, the student should go to the teacher on duty during recess or his/her homeroom teacher. If the conflict cannot be resolved, the Principal is consulted. The Pastor may become involved if the conflict cannot be resolved at that point. The child’s parent(s) or the Principal makes the contact with the Pastor.

The same process is followed if the parents have a grievance with a teacher. Start the process by consulting with the teacher, directly. If the interaction is not satisfactory, consult the Principal and subsequently the Pastor if needed.

Please note that it is not appropriate for the parent(s) of one student to attempt to resolve a conflict with another student if the conflict occurs during the school day on school property. Unless there is imminent danger of harm to one of the students, the resolution of conflict should be left to school personnel.

In the event that informal attempts at resolving the dispute have been unsuccessful, the formal grievance procedure below is to be observed.

#### Formal Grievance Procedure

A grievance is a dispute or difference raised by a parent/guardian against the school community to include the written policies of St. Ambrose Catholic School.

##### Level I - Principal

The grievant shall reduce the grievance to writing and submit it to the Principal within ten (10) days following the occurrence or knowledge of the event upon which the grievance is based. The Principal, in turn, will arrange a meeting within ten (10) days following the receipt of the written grievance. The Principal and the grievant shall be present for the meeting. With ten (10) days following the meeting, the Principal is to provide the grievant with a written recommendation concerning the grievance.

##### Level II – Pastor

In the event that the grievant is not satisfied with the recommendation of the Principal, the grievance may be appealed within ten (10) days to the Pastor. This appeal is presented in writing to the Pastor and must be accompanied by a copy of the Principal's recommendation. Either the grievant or the Principal has the right to request a meeting with the Pastor. The Pastor shall communicate his decision with the supporting reasons in writing within twenty (20) days of receiving the written grievance. The decisions of the Pastor final.

#### 6.5 Behavior Expectations of All Members of St. Ambrose Catholic Parish community

The following behaviors are unacceptable within the St. Ambrose Catholic Parish community:

- Assaults or harassment of a staff member, student, parent, guardian, or family member.
- Intimidation or verbal abuse of any member of the community – in person, in writing, or electronically (i.e. e-mail, Fast Direct, text message, social media).
- Undermining of church and school policy and/or procedure.

Failure to comply could result in the dismissal of the student/family involved from St. Ambrose Catholic School.

#### 6.6 Certification and Authorization for Background Check

All employees and volunteers of St. Ambrose Parish who are involved in programs or activities with children are required to sign the statements of certification and authorization for background checks as

well as a statement indicating an understanding of the child abuse policy of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

This certification and authorization is completed by all parents at the initial school registration and is kept on file as long as the family is associated with St. Ambrose Catholic School. The purpose is to assist the parish in providing for the safety and well-being of every student.

### 6.7 Child Abuse Policy

All persons in the employ of St. Ambrose Parish and those acting in behalf of the parish in its programs and activities are to respect the dignity of the persons entrusted to their care. They should avoid personal indignities such as sarcasm, ridicule, nagging, name calling, and other forms of public humiliation.

Such persons shall never employ corporal punishment nor inflict physical abuse with respect to those entrusted to their care.

The Catholic Church is explicit in banning any form of sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, or other similar acts. Persons in the employ of this parish or acting in behalf of the parish in its programs and activities are reminded of this prohibition and the parish reaffirms that conduct of this nature is absolutely forbidden and is cause for immediate dismissal.

### 6.8 Harassment Policy

St. Ambrose Parish will not tolerate any unwanted and unwelcome behavior that interferes with a student or staff person's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. All allegations of harassment will be taken seriously and investigated immediately. Harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- verbal epithets, derogatory jokes, comments, slurs, or imitations
- inappropriate comments
- sexual advances or sexual forms of behavior
- visual derogatory or sexually oriented posters, photography, cartoons, drawings, gestures, etc.
- physical touching, assault, blocking normal movements, or interfering with work, study, or play
- retaliation
- threats
- propositions off-color jokes inappropriate physical contact
- innuendos sexual offers, looks, and gestures

### 6.9 Bully Free Policy/Cyber-bullying

1. St. Ambrose Catholic School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal, written, or posted threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously, in jest, or on-line) will incur consequences including detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. While on the school network, unauthorized use of chat clients, social networking sites, and personal web-based email are prohibited. Certain sites are now specifically banned. One social media app, Yik Yak has been used too frequently for bullying and is now banned at St. Ambrose. Yik Yak is an anonymous social media app that is unfortunately being used by some individuals to bully students and threaten harm and violence in schools throughout the country, including instances in our diocese.

This app is somewhat different than others due to its anonymity and its notorious and prevalent use for activities that violate our child safety policies. As such, effective immediately, for the safety of our school children and staff, the social media app Yik Yak is banned from all school and personal devices on our campus. Anyone with the app on their device and on school premises will be subject to discipline up to and including termination and/or expulsion. Using the app off premises could be subject to the same discipline if such use is directed to the school, other students, or school staff.

Staff and students have responsibilities to make every attempt to create and maintain a bully-free atmosphere at St. Ambrose Catholic School.

#### Staff Responsibilities

- Conscientiously provide curriculum, instruction, and discussion related to bullying prevention
- Closely supervise students in areas of the school and playground
- Quickly and sensitively respond to bullying reports
- Take seriously parents' concerns about bullying
- Investigate reported bullying incidents
- Assign consequences for bullying based on the school behavior procedures
- Provide immediate consequences for retaliation against students who report bullying

#### Student Responsibilities

- Treat each other respectfully
- Refuse to bully others
- Refuse to let others be bullied
- Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied
- Try to include everyone in play, especially those who often are left out
- Report bullying to an adult

#### 6.10 Sexual Misconduct Policy

The Diocese of Springfield in Illinois promulgated a pastoral policy regarding sexual misconduct with minors. It intends to explain the action of the Diocese when an allegation of sexual misconduct with a minor by parish personnel is received; to assure a proper pastoral response to those allegedly offended, to their families, and the alleged offenders; to establish policies to screen out prospective new employees and volunteers with a history of prior sexual misconduct; and to educate the church community on this policy.

#### 6.11 Off-Campus Conduct

The administration of St. Ambrose Catholic School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not consistent with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day.

This off-campus behavior includes, but is not limited to cyber-bullying, the misuse of social media, and/or illegal or criminal actions.

## **7 School Uniform Dress Code (2020-2021)**

Students wear uniforms at St. Ambrose Catholic School. In addition to providing a sense of group identity and self-discipline, uniforms reduce distractions, eliminate competition for attention, and minimize social differences.

It is expected that students maintain a neat, age-appropriate appearance at school or at any function that is an educational extension of the school day. Uncombed hair, untucked shirts, faded pants, torn hems, untied shoelaces, low-slung pants, inappropriately short shorts and culottes, heavy make-up, and excessive jewelry are not appropriate.

### Face Coverings

At St. Ambrose Catholic School, all students, staff, and anyone in our buildings will be required to wear a face covering at all times. Face coverings must cover the mouth and the nose. This requirement applies to all schools within the state of Illinois. Cloth face masks are the recommended acceptable covering. They are to be worn in accordance to the school health and safety policy. Coverings must be clean and fit properly over the nose and mouth. Face coverings shall not contain any kind of statement (political or non-political), slogans, inappropriate images/profanity, references to drugs/alcohol or anything that is contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church. The administration has the right to decide if a face covering is deemed inappropriate. If a student's face covering is deemed inappropriate, it will be confiscated, and the student will be issued a disposable mask. The inappropriate face covering will be sent home at the end of the day. If the student chooses to again contest the policy by wearing an inappropriate face covering, disciplinary consequences will be administered based on the severity/nature of the situation. Examples of appropriate images include; St. Ambrose/Marquette logos, team logos, artistic designs, seasonal images and cartoon characters.

Students must bring at least two clean/laundered face coverings to school daily. A minimum of two face covering is needed in case the covering needs to be changed during the day.

We realize that for many students, especially our youngest students, this will be a difficult adjustment. To assist in this adjustment, we will take the following steps:

- Face coverings may be removed outside. Social distance will be maintained.
- Teachers will conduct classes outside as often as possible. This will allow for opportunities to remove face coverings while maintaining social distancing.
- We have created a "mask free zone" in our Outdoor Classroom area, which is gated and locked. This is an outdoor space between the buildings. Students will be able to step outside for a few minutes (with office staff supervision) to remove their masks. They will be extended this courtesy whenever necessary.
- We will continue to positively encourage and support those students who are struggling with the adjustment.

**SHIRTS** (all shirts must be tucked-in)

- Polo-style knit shirt: Plain red, navy blue, gray, or white traditional with long or short sleeves, pointed collars and buttons.
- Turtleneck: Plain red, navy blue, gray, or white.
- T-shirt: plain white (only if worn under uniform shirt).
- Marquette and St. Ambrose logos are permitted on shirts. No other emblem/logo is permitted.

#### PANTS/CAPRIS

- Plain navy blue or khaki poly-cotton pants or capris that fit to the waist.
- Plain navy blue or khaki poly-cotton elastic-waist pants.
- Blue jean-style and cargo-style pants are not permitted. This is to include any riveted details on pockets.

#### SHORTS

Plain navy blue or khaki poly-cotton dress shorts hemmed to the knee and fit to the waist.

- Baggy shorts, athletic shorts and cargo style shorts are not permitted.

#### JUMPER/CULOTTES/SKIRTS

- Solid navy, solid khaki, or navy and red plaid jumper, culottes, and skirts are permitted.
- Girls in grades K-5 may wear jumpers, skirts or culottes. Girls in grades 6-8 may wear culottes, or skirts.
- Gym shorts or leggings may be worn under jumpers, culottes, and skirts. Legging colors may be SOLID red, navy, white, gray or black.
- Jumpers, culottes, and skirts should be no more than 3 inches above the knee. If a skirt appears too short, two female staff members will take the student to a private space and will use a 3 inch index card to measure the length. If the length is too short, the student must be provided a different uniform.

#### SWEATERS

- Solid red, navy blue, gray, or white crew neck pullovers or cardigans are permitted.

#### SWEATSHIRTS

- Crew neck pullovers or hoodie-style sweatshirts are permitted.
- Must be plain red, navy blue, gray, or white and may have a St. Ambrose or Marquette logo. Other color sweatshirts with Marquette logo are also permitted. No other logos are permitted.
- Uniform polo-style shirt or turtleneck must be worn under a sweatshirt.
- Fleece items, jackets, vests, or over shirts of any other variety may only be worn to recess and to and from school and church. This is considered outerwear.

#### SHOES

- **Only** athletic shoes are permitted in school. Athletic shoes with white soles are preferred. They must be in good condition and have laces tied.

- Boots may be worn outside in the winter. Only school shoes are allowed inside.
- Sandals and clogs are not permitted, including on dress down days.

## SOCKS

- Socks or tights must be worn at all times.
- Socks must be SOLID white, red, navy, gray or black.
- Tights may only be worn in SOLID red, white, navy, gray or black

## MISCELLANEOUS

- Belts may be worn as long as the end of the belt is tucked into the belt loops.
- Jewelry should be worn in moderation. Hats may not be worn in the school building.
- Tattoos or writing on the body or school clothing are not allowed.
- The Administration reserves the right to prohibit anything he/she determines to be a classroom distraction.

## HAIR

- The hair is to be neat and groomed.
- Extreme or unusual colors and styles are not permitted
- In compliance with Illinois SB 0817, St. Ambrose Catholic School will not prohibit any hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture.
- The Administration reserves the right to prohibit anything he/she determines to be a classroom distraction.

## Non-Uniform Days / Dress Down Days

Non-uniform days occur occasionally. Clothing should always be neat clean and modest.

When these days are announced, the following dress code will be in effect:

- **DRESS DOWN DAYS ARE RESERVED FOR FRIDAYS.** One Friday a month, we have a “dress down for charity day.” One Friday a month we have a Student Council “themed” dress down day. The other Fridays in a month are reserved for the use of dress down passes and Spirit days. **No one is required to participate on dress down days and uniforms may always be worn.**
- All apparel must be modest, clean, and neat.
- Shorts comparable (boys and girls shorts) in length to the uniform shorts, including HEMMED jean shorts, are permitted
- Short shorts, knit sweatpants, cut-offs, sun dresses, tank tops, halter tops, sleeveless tops and skin tight clothing are not permitted.
- T-shirts with reference to alcohol, drugs or any other inappropriate slogans will not be permitted.
- At NO time may sandals, clogs, or boots be worn for a dress down day.

- Jeans may be worn but cannot have rips, tears, or distressed areas of any kind
- LEGGINGS - On dress down days, students may wear tights, leggings, or yoga pants as long as a skirt, shorts, or a shirt that reaches mid-thigh is worn over them.

### Eighth Grade Uniform Privilege

The eighth grade class may design a class sweatshirt and/or t-shirt in school colors that may be worn during school on designated days. The Principal must approve the design in advance.

### Uniform Infractions

It is hoped that a warning will solve the problem of a uniform infraction. Following a warning, students will be given appropriate clothing from the uniform resale to wear for the rest of the day and a fine and detention will be assessed. If the issue persists, additional disciplinary consequences may be administered.

## **8 Organizations**

### 8.1 St. Ambrose Catholic School Board

The School Board serves the parish by promoting the faith development of its members and the educational mission of the Church through a creative vision and planning for the future.

The Board is to advise and counsel the Pastor in his position as leader of the faith community in providing education and formation-in-faith for the entire parish community. In providing consultation for all aspects of the formal educational and catechetical programs of the parish, the Board shall attempt to adhere faithfully to the intent and spirit of the Handbook of Educational Policies of the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois.

### 8.2 Athletic Association

The purposes of school-sponsored athletic programs are to teach the skills of games, to foster healthy exercise, to teach fair play, and to provide participation and enjoyment for students. Athletic programs that deny certain students these opportunities, or that exert undue pressures on students, are inconsistent with these purposes.

School-sponsored athletic programs are part of the school curriculum and are subject to the policies of the Pastor, Principal, and Board of Education. They are among the general administrative responsibilities of the Principal of the school.

Further, school-sponsored athletic programs are to be guided by the general curriculum goals of the school and should in no way detract from the academic and religious goals of the school.

Academic and religious policies and norms for students participating in these programs are established by the Pastor and Principal and enforced by the Principal.

The athletic program is open to all students who are members of St. Ambrose Catholic School. Students who do not attend St. Ambrose Catholic School are not eligible to participate in athletics.

The Athletic Director is appointed by the Pastor and reports to both the Pastor and Principal. The Athletic Director has the authority to manage and maintain the sports program of the school in accordance with the policies and procedures of St. Ambrose Catholic School.

Should an issue arise concerning a child's participation on a team, the first contact to be made is with the student's coach. If the difficulty persists or cannot be resolved at this level, it shall be presented to the Athletic Director. Should a resolution still not be reached, the Principal shall be contacted. The final authority in all programs at St. Ambrose shall rest with the Pastor, whose assistance should be requested only after bringing the situation without a satisfactory resolution to the attention of the other levels of authority. At such a meeting with the Pastor, all other parties involved shall be present.

The Athletic Association is a parent group whose purpose is to advise the Athletic Director and assist him/her in providing the athletic program for the students at St. Ambrose Catholic School. This includes, but is not limited to, supervision of games, provision of concessions, and other fund raising projects, maintenance of equipment and uniforms, providing special events, paying bills incurred by the program, and keeping an accurate accounting of funds and records. The leadership of the Association includes a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and a representative from each of the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade parent groups.

The athletic program is self-supporting. Students wishing to play are assessed a fee for each sport for each season of play. These funds are used to purchase equipment, uniforms, and other supplies. Funds provided by the Catholic Athletic League in return for the use of the St. Ambrose gymnasium are provided to St. Ambrose Parish to pay the cost of utilities and maintenance of the gymnasium during the games.

### 8.3 Athletic Program Responsibilities

#### Athletic Director

- to oversee all athletic programs
- to act as a liaison between coaches, parents, and parish/school personnel
- to assist in implementing policies as established by the School Board, Pastor, Principal, Diocese of Springfield, and any other diocese or district as league play requires
- to maintain standards of safety regarding equipment and facilities used for both practice and competition
- to coordinate the scheduling of regular games and tournaments, and to make such schedules available to the Principal
- to coordinate the awards banquet
- to perform other duties necessary in order to fulfill the objectives of the parish, school, and Diocese

- to ensure that all coaches and their assistants have been trained in the Protecting God's Children program
- to ensure that the names of all coaches and their assistants have been provided to the Principal so that they may be submitted to the Diocese for the necessary criminal background check and may be fingerprinted through the Madison County Regional Office of Education.
- to monitor practices to help ensure that two adults are present at all times with students in the gymnasium

#### Coaches and Assistant Coaches

Each year all coaches and their assistants must;

- agree to adhere to Diocesan and school philosophy regarding athletics;
- have a basic knowledge of CPR;
- have a background and training in the sport they wish to coach;
- have attended Protecting God's Children and to have had a criminal background; (check completed through the Diocesan Human Resources office).
- have completed fingerprinting through the Madison County Regional Office of Education.

In order to ensure the safety of the players, parents are required to submit the following each year:

- proof of medical insurance
- a physical, updated annually, kept on file in school office

The athletic program cannot exist without parental involvement. While it is realized that the amount of time any parent can dedicate to a program will vary, suggestions include:

- giving support and encouragement to members of the teams
- assisting in coaching a team or providing moral support to the coach
- attending games and displaying good sportsmanship
- providing transportation to and from games and practices at scheduled times
- being responsible for seeing that their child is keeping up with schoolwork so that time spent with athletics is not detrimental to academic progress

Athletes are expected to be "team members." It is expected that athletes keep up with their schoolwork, behave well during athletic functions, and be responsible about notifying the coach when an absence from practice or a game is necessary. Repeated failure to inform the coach of an absence could result in loss of playing time or removal from the team.

Athletes are expected to:

- show respect for and cooperate with coaches and officials, and opponents at all times
- care for their uniforms, equipment, and facilities
- be aware that they represent St. Ambrose Parish. Good sportsmanship and Christian conduct are required at all times

- adhere to sports eligibility policy

#### 8.4 Parents' Association (SAPA)

The Parents' Association of St. Ambrose Catholic School was established to develop and deepen a greater partnership among the parents, the Principal, office staff and Pastor, faculty of the school, and all interested adults of the parish. The Association is intended to enhance the school program through financial and moral support and to build community within the school through activities and programs that welcome the involvement and support of all those involved in the school.

The leadership of the Parents' Association is comprised of a group of parents and other interested adults who have made commitments to coordinate one or more of the programs or activities sponsored by the Association. From this group a chairperson is selected.

Perceived needs of the school addressed by the Parents' Association are:

1. To assist in organizing educational programs for the benefit of parents and/or children
2. To assist in the organization of school social events
3. To help plan, organize, and assist in the school's fundraising events
4. To assist with recruitment and retention