

# Saint Lawrence School

231 Main Street  
West Haven, CT 06516



## *STUDENT / FAMILY HANDBOOK 2024-2025*

*Revised 8/14/2024*

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## ***Welcome***

The Pastor, Administration, School Board, Faculty and Staff of Saint Lawrence School welcome each family to our community. This handbook has been prepared to provide you with important information regarding school policies, rules and procedures. It has been updated for the **2024- 2025** school year.

Parents share the responsibility for their children’s understanding of the philosophy of the school and the rules that flow from that philosophy. Therefore, they are asked to discuss this handbook with their child(ren). In this way, parents/guardians share in the life and growth of the students in the setting of Saint Lawrence School.

Students and parents are to sign and return the enclosed forms entitled HANDBOOK on the first day of school. This form indicates that both parents and students have read and discussed the contents of this handbook and agree to be governed by it.

## ***Letter from the Pastor***

Dear Parents and Guardians,

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you always! Welcome to St. Lawrence School in West Haven! Fr. Ricardo Borja, the parochial vicar, and I look forward to meeting you and your children in the days and months ahead. I have been blessed with parents who sacrificed to give my brother and I the gift of a Catholic education from kindergarten to 8th Grade at Sacred Heart School in New Britain. Those years were vitally important in my life since it laid a strong foundation for the future.

St. Lawrence School founded in 1917 is a part of the mission of St. John XXIII Parish which is comprised of the Catholic community in the City of West Haven. We worship and adore the Lord in St. Louis Church of St. John XXIII Parish and St. John Vianney Church of St. John XXIII Parish in West Haven. Our community is diverse, representing many cultural and ethnic backgrounds, wherein we offer Masses in both English and Spanish. Please know that you are always welcome to join us in worship in either church. For more than a century, our school has successfully educated thousands of children within a Christ centered community providing an exemplary academic setting to form the future leaders of our Church and civil society. That continues to be our mission today in “Shaping the Leaders of Tomorrow.”

Thank you for choosing St. Lawrence School and for giving the gift of a Catholic education to your children. I encourage you to be active in our Home and School Association (HSA) and to avail yourself of the volunteer opportunities offered in our school. Please know that you and your children are in my daily prayers. May God bless you and your families!

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Fr. José A. Mercado Pastor

## ***School Motto***

***“SAINT LAWRENCE SCHOOL –SHAPING THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW”***

## ***Letter from the Principal***

Dear Students and Families,

It is with great honor and privilege that I welcome you to the Saint Lawrence School family. Our faculty and staff are optimistic about a great year ahead! We continue to have the goal for all of our students, families, and friends of the school to feel at home while at Saint Lawrence School. With this in mind, we have a shared commitment for our students to learn, be safe, and have fun each day at our school. Each child's social-emotional health continues to be our focus and guiding light. We have worked together to establish clear expectations and procedures that will foster a safe, orderly, and meaningful learning environment.

As the year progresses, we encourage you to keep this handbook in a safe place, and to consult it as needed when you have any questions or concerns about a particular procedure or school policy. Should you need further clarification on anything, feel free to reach out to me directly.

Throughout this handbook you will see ***policies and policy numbers indicated in boldface, italics and parentheses***. These policies are taken directly from the Archdiocese of Hartford's Handbook of Policies and Procedures for Catholic Schools.

I encourage all families to remain involved through the entire educational process. We look forward to your attendance and engagement at school meetings and functions, as well as your personal commitment to support our school community in all of our endeavors.

I am confident that, together with the partnership between our Home & School Association, we will encourage our children to become the best they can be, while focusing on a mission of mutual respect, kindness, and service to others in their Christian lives.

Sincerely, ***Mr. Jim Messina***

## ***A Student's Prayer for the New School Year***

Dear Jesus, a new school year has begun. It's great to see my friends every day, but not as great to have homework each night. It is fun to learn new things, but not so fun to study for tests and quizzes. Please help me, Dear Savior, to do my best this year in all my studies, in the subjects I like and even in the ones I find challenging. Help me to open my mind wide to all of my experiences. Help me to open my heart to all my classmates, teachers, and staff. We pray that this be a great year for all of us. Amen!

## ***A Teacher's Prayer for the Beginning of a New School Year***

God, our heavenly Father, great Teacher to us all, walk with me in this new teaching year.

You have placed in my care a roomful of children, each unique and each loved by You. Help me to teach them well and to value their differences and their special gifts and talents. May I praise and affirm them often, remembering how precious they are in your sight. If I have to remind them of the school's high expectations, help me to do so with love, keeping in mind how patient and forgiving You are with me.

Holy and loving God, great Teacher of us all, be near me, guide me, and inspire me in every class I teach this year.

Amen!

# ***Saint Lawrence School's Mission Statement***

*We believe Saint Lawrence School provides academic, moral, social, and educational excellence to all in a Christian environment centered in the person and Gospel of Jesus Christ.*

*We see children as unique individuals and lifelong learners, while celebrating their cultural diversity and unique talents.*

## ***Statement of Philosophy***

The philosophy of St. Lawrence School flows from the Church's participation in the mission of Jesus. As a loving community with a responsibility to our students and their families, the faculty and staff are committed to promoting academic excellence integrated with a vision of life and learning centered in the person and Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and God our Almighty Father.

## ***History of the School***

Saint Lawrence Parish, founded in 1886, celebrated its first Mass at its present structure in 1910. Shortly after this time, under the direction of Reverend Jeremiah Curtain, plans were made to open a school for Christian education of parish children. In 1917 Saint Lawrence School opened under the direction of two Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambery.

The brick structure was designed to contain twelve classrooms. The upper floor was used as a dormitory for the sisters while the convent was being erected.

In 1920, the upper floor classrooms of the school were opened. This completed the configuration of grades 1-8 in the school. A kindergarten was opened in 1940 and continued for nine years. In 1955 a new addition, which included four classrooms, a gym/auditorium, student lavatories, and an office complex, was added. By this time the enrollment had increased to 450 students with two sections of each grade level. This class structure continued for approximately 25 years.

With the restructuring of another area Catholic School in West Haven from a middle school to a complete K-8 school, families from the West Shore area no longer needed to avail themselves of the services of Saint Lawrence School. This, together with an economic recession, caused a drop in enrollment at Saint Lawrence School. Therefore, during the 1980-1981 school years a plan was implemented to restructure the school, which included maintaining one section of each grade. This was a gradual process that took several years to complete. However, it allowed space to reopen a kindergarten class in 1980 as a half-day program in two sessions. In 1989, it was decided to have one full day kindergarten program. This decision noticeably impacted enrollment at this level.

This restructuring also enabled the school to solidify its financial base and to create new programs such as pre-kindergarten (1988) and an after-school program (1990). The main office was relocated to a more accessible area on the main floor. In recent years, a music room, science lab and an art room have been established. The library has been relocated and enlarged.

The present-day school now houses a pre-kindergarten program for 3 and 4 year-olds, a full-day kindergarten program and one section of each of Grades 1-8.

Other factors that have positively influenced enrollment trends is the availability of school transportation provided by the City of West Haven, the closing of St. Louis School and the welcoming of students from other faiths.

In the spring of 1995 the Sisters of St. Joseph, who had served the school successfully for 78 years, informed the pastor that their community could no longer provide personnel for the

administration of the school. The parish then engaged the service of the sisters of Notre Dame de Namur who assumed the leadership of the school on July 1, 1995. Under their direction, the school continued to flourish and maintain a high level of academic excellence grounded in Catholic theology and philosophy.

On June 30, 2000, the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur turned over the leadership of the school to Mary Pat Wirkus. This would also be a milestone in the history of Saint Lawrence School as she would serve as the first lay administrator of the school without any religious sisters on staff.

Another milestone in the history of Saint Lawrence School took place in August 2007, when Paul R. DeFonzo was appointed the first male lay administrator of the school until his retirement in June 2022. Mr. Frank Arnone was the principal of the school from 2022 through 2024, and Mr. Jim Messina began serving as principal in July 2024.

## *Archdiocese of Hartford Mission Statement: Education for a Lifetime Purpose and Vision for Catholic Schools*

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Hartford welcome students of all faiths, ethnic groups, and socio-economic backgrounds. The fundamental purpose of Catholic schools is to:

- Provide a safe, nurturing and secure environment in which students encounter the living God who, in Jesus Christ, reveals His transforming love and truth;
- Partner with parents to support students in their learning and in their search for knowledge, meaning, and truth;
- Create a Catholic climate that contributes to the formation of students as active participants in the parish community;
- Foster a culture of educational excellence through critical thinking skills, innovative and rigorous curriculum standards, a global perspective, and an emphasis on moral education, community, and service;
- Promote life-long learning that advances the development of the whole person – mind, body, and soul; and
- Graduate students prepared to become productive, virtuous citizens and church leaders who will fashion a more humane and just world.

### *Administration*

Saint Lawrence School is a Roman Catholic School operated by **Saint John XXIII Parish** and subject to the policies and procedures of the Archdiocese of Hartford. Its administration is directly under the pastor of **Saint John XXIII Parish** and the appointed principal. They are assisted by a School Council which exercises shared responsibility for the school's mission. The members of the Council provide leadership, assistance, and support to the administration of the school in educational and financial matters.

### *Accreditation*

Saint Lawrence School was re-accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the State of Connecticut in 2016.

## *Admissions*

Saint Lawrence School is open to academically qualified children whose parents/guardians are members of **Saint John XXIII Parish** as well as those who live within the geographic boundaries of the parish. Other students may be admitted as space allows. Saint Lawrence School does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, gender, color or national/ethnic origin. Saint Lawrence School admits students of any race, color, and national/ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school.

When enrolling your child in Saint Lawrence School, you are agreeing to abide and be governed by the policies set forth in this “Saint Lawrence School’s Parent and Student Handbook”.

Students are accepted only if there are curriculum resources to meet their needs (*Policy 4.123*).

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to Saint Lawrence School:

1. Members of **Saint John XXIII Parish**
2. Members of other parishes

Children entering Pre-K 3 must be 3 by September 1<sup>st</sup> and bathroom trained.

Children entering Pre-K 4 must be 4 by September 1<sup>st</sup> and bathroom trained.

Children entering Kindergarten must be 5 by September 1<sup>st</sup>

Students will be conditionally accepted into Kindergarten with full acceptance contingent on displayed readiness on the Kindergarten entrance test.

At the time of registration, all new students seeking admission to Saint Lawrence School are evaluated on the basis of an interview with the principal and all school records past and present.

Application requirements include:

- Birth certificate
- Baptismal certificate
- Copies of the child’s last two report cards
- Standardized test scores
- Health records
- Record of IEP if applicable (special services) or 504 plan if applicable.
- Teacher recommendation from previous school
- Completion and return of 3-page application accompanied by application fee.
- Completion and return of the “Release of Records” form.

These requirements will then be reviewed by the principal to determine if Saint Lawrence School will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the student is part of the admissions process. Testing in some academic areas may be administered for incoming students in grades 3-8.

Students with special needs will be given the same consideration as all applicants, however, prior to admitting a student with diagnosed special needs, the administration will make a determination as to whether or not it believes it can provide an appropriate education for that child. Each child will be considered on an individual basis. (*Policy 5.103*)

Once a student is accepted, a parent must complete and sign the “Tuition, Fundraising, Volunteer Contract”. **All new students will be given a trial period of not more than ninety (90) school days in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at Saint Lawrence School.**

## ***Tuition Payment Plans***

Saint Lawrence School offers two (2) options for the payment of tuition:

**Option One:** Full payment of tuition one week prior to the opening of school.

**Option Two:** FACTS Management Co. payments are deducted from checking/savings account and spaced over a ten (10) month period from July through April. An annual non-refundable fee of \$55 is deducted by FACTS at the time of enrollment.

**Students are not admitted to class on opening day unless the FACTS plan is in place or tuition is paid in full. No student is eligible to begin school on opening day if there is a balance in tuition from the previous year.**

**All tuitions must be current at the beginning of each trimester. Any student whose tuition is considered to be in default will NOT be allowed to return to class for the next trimester unless their tuition payments are made current. Late fees will apply after a 10-day grace period.**

**Saint Lawrence School reserves the right to use legal means to obtain tuition or other money owed to the school. Please see the Tuition, Fundraising, Contract for details.**

## ***Tuition Subsidy***

Parishioners of **Saint John XXIII Parish** qualify for a tuition subsidy if they are in regular attendance at Saint John Vianney and/or St. Louis Churches and use the envelope system on a regular basis to be verified by the parish secretary.

Parishioners from another parish may qualify for a subsidy of \$250 per student. If the Pastor agrees to pay this subsidy, it will be credited to the tuition account.

***After a child completes one year at Saint Lawrence***, parents who are so qualified may apply for financial aid through FACTS for students entering **grades kindergarten through eighth.**

## ***Financial Policies***

Saint Lawrence School offers parents a private school education for their children at a reasonable cost. The operating expenses of the school are met by:

1. Tuition\* - must be current each month and paid in full by April 30<sup>th</sup>. Late fees will apply to any tuition past due by more than 10 days.
2. Parent Fundraising (Assessment)
3. Development
4. Subsidy from Saint John XXIII Parish

\*The financially responsible parent/guardian must see that tuition payments are made on time and that the Fair Share fund-raising obligation of \$500 (K-8), \$250 (Pre-K), per family is met.



## ***Fair Share Fundraising Requirements***

Each family is required to participate in the designated fundraisers to a minimum of **\$500 profit** to the school or pay the \$500 directly to the Home/School Association.

The major fund-raisers are and not restricted to: Catalog Sale, Pie, Cookie, Popcorn and Butter Braid sales and Lucky Month Calendar. A statement of your balance is provided after each designated fundraiser. *Any balance remaining after the last fundraiser will be billed by the school administration.*

### ***Additional Requirement – Mandatory***

**Each family must sign a contract to work 10 hours during the school year on fundraising events or assisting at school.** If a parent cannot fulfill their 10-hour obligation, a \$15 fee/hour will be applied to the remaining unmet time. **Please note: The Archdiocese of Hartford, as part of each school's Safe Environment Program, requires that all parent volunteers are background checked and Virtus-trained. The expense for this background check must be paid by each family.**

## ***Delinquent Tuition and Fees***

**No child may begin class on the first day of the new school year if there is any balance remaining from the previous year.**

The FACTS Management Co. charges a missed payment fee and may also drop clients after two consecutive months of insufficient funds in the designated account. For continued class attendance, full payment of the delinquent tuition must be made directly to the school within ten days.

**If the parent/guardian of a graduating student in Grade 8 owes any monies to the school, the student may not participate in the end of year activities. In addition, the school will withhold the student's diploma until full payment is received.**

**If the parent/guardian of a student in any grade owes any monies to the school, the student may not participate in any end-of-year activities until payment is made or a signed payment plan is in place.**

## ***Withdrawal, Dismissal and Transfer of Students***

When a student is withdrawn or dismissed from the school, tuition will be charged for each full and partial month the student was enrolled.

## ***Unprocessed Checks***

A fee will be charged if a check cannot be processed due to insufficient funds.

## *Home-School Dues*

Home-School dues of \$25.00 per family are to be paid no later than September 30. A late fee of \$10 will be added for all unpaid membership dues after October 1<sup>st</sup> (\$35). The dues are used to support the Home-School activities for the students. Please make checks payable to the Saint Lawrence Home & School Association.

## *Additional Fees*

It sometimes becomes necessary to request fees for field trips, dress-down days, etc. We ask parents to cooperate with these requests.

**Graduation fees must be paid in full by October 1<sup>st</sup>.** Students will not be allowed to participate in any 8<sup>th</sup> grade end-of-year activities unless this payment has been met.

## *Accident Insurance*

As a matter of policy consistent with the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut State Law, and the policies of the public schools, students are not covered for medical expenses resulting from any injury received at school or in their participation in school-sponsored events away from school premises. Any medical bills or injury claims should be referred to the primary medical coverage in place for your child.

## *Emergency Data Card*

The Student Emergency Card must be completed, signed by each parent/guardian and returned to the school on opening day. This card is kept in the office in case parents/guardians need to be contacted. All telephone numbers and addresses are to be accurate and clearly printed. **Please contact the school immediately if changes to this information take place.**

## *School Safety*

All students who walk to and from school are to cross streets at the corners and obey the directions of traffic lights and crossing guards. Students should never cross between parked cars.

## *Responsibility of the Parent/Guardian*

Since parents/guardians have given children their lives (or have committed themselves to raising a child as if they gave that child life), they are bound by a sacred obligation to educate their offspring and, therefore, must recognize that they are the primary and principal educators.

Regardless of the type of family structure, parents/guardians are the ones who must create a family atmosphere dominated by love of God and others, an atmosphere in which a well-rounded personal, social, and spiritual education is fostered. Hence, the family is the first and primary school for every child.

Our school is only an extension of the education that began the day a child was born. Long before he/she enters our doors, the child has learned most of his/her basic personality traits and habits from his/her parents. So, once in Saint Lawrence's School, the child does not begin his education;

she or he is merely continuing it, relying still on the help and support of his parents/guardians.

**Your spoken words and actions toward the school and the teachers is most important because it will be reflected in the words and actions of your child.**

Parents/guardians are required to maintain a *UNITED AUTHORITY* between themselves and the school. It is up to the parent to preserve the union of authority which makes the teacher in the classroom an extension of parental authority.

Parents and all care givers are reminded that criticism, complaints, gossip, words spoken in anger or even jest, are absorbed by the children and affect their attitude towards the school and the faculty and staff. This includes unspoken feelings which children very easily pick up. Even when we think children do not hear or understand – we can assure you that they do!

Respect and obedience cannot be learned solely in school. They must be learned in the home.

**The Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Schools has requested all Catholic Elementary Schools of the Archdiocese to include the following in their Handbooks:**

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to cooperate with school staff for the welfare of students. If, in the opinion of the school administration, parental/guardian behavior seriously interferes with teaching, learning, and the orderly operation of the school, the school may require parents/guardians to withdraw their children and sever their relationship with the school.

*(Policy 1.214)*

### ***Parent's Role in Education***

We, at Saint Lawrence School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life—physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of Saint Lawrence School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

A good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at Saint Lawrence School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (Pre-K to 8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest for challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she can become.

### *Parents as Partners*

As partners in the educational process at St. Lawrence School, we ask parents: to set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights;
- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the school day;
- Is dressed accordingly to the school dress code;
- Completes assignments on time; and
- Has lunch money or nutritional lunch every day.

We also ask you to commit to the following:

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

### *Non-Custodial Parents*

Saint Lawrence School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to 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 this court order.

## *Release of Students*

Children miss instruction when they leave school early or arrive late. Therefore, routine visits to the doctor, clinic, dentist etc. should be scheduled after 2:20 p.m.

However, when it is necessary to request an early dismissal, please send a note to the teacher and CC the office staff. This note should indicate the name of the person (other than the regular caregiver) who will be coming to pick up your child.

Students will be released only to a custodial parent/guardian; a non-custodial parent/guardian only after the school has made the determination that such non-custodian parent/guardian is authorized to take the child; or to a person designated and authorized by the custodial parent/guardian. **The individual to whom the student is being released is required to come into the school, show identification, and sign the student out (Policy 5.202).**

Parents are reminded to notify the school in writing each time there is a change in the dismissal of their child; for instance, the child is being dismissed as a walker and not taking the bus on a particular day, or vice versa. Without a dated note signed by the parent, the teacher is required to dismiss that child according to the child's regular normal dismissal procedures.

## *Reporting Absences*

**The safety of students requires that the absence be reported by 8:00 a.m.** Please call the school office at 203-933-2518 to report their absence. Please include the reason for the absence. **We do not accept calls from students.**

## *Attendance*

Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to success in school. A student misses vital instruction when absent and is also not prepared for the next day because of this lost instruction. Absences beyond ten (10) school days in a given year seriously hinder a student's promotion. Absences of more than thirty (30) days usually require mandatory retention and a referral to Department of Children and Families as per the guidance of the Archdiocese of Hartford.

**If a student is absent from school, he/she is not permitted to attend any school functions that day: shows, sporting events, dances, etc. Eighth grade students who wish to shadow for a day at another school must first obtain a "Permission to Shadow" form from our main office, the form must be completed in full and signed by a parent and given to the principal at St. Lawrence.**

## *Punctuality*

**Homeroom starts promptly at 7:50 a.m. and classes begin at 8:00 a.m. Students will be marked tardy if not in their classrooms prior to the 8:00 a.m. bell.** The habit of being on time and prepared for the day's responsibilities is expected of each student. The student who is habitually late for school seriously interrupts the learning process for all in the classroom, as well as interrupting the office routine/announcements, prayers, etc. that take place each morning. Students who are tardy for any reason, other than a late bus, are to report to the main office for a late slip. Parents must stop in the office first when bringing a child to school late.

Tardies are recorded on both the report card and on school records. Excessive tardies will result in a family meeting with the principal and will likely affect a family's ability to qualify for tuition assistance. This can also hinder middle school students' abilities to be accepted to our local Catholic High Schools.

## *Vacation Policy*

Please make every effort to plan family vacations during the scheduled school vacations. **Teachers are not obligated to prepare assignments for students who take vacations during school time.**

In such cases it is the responsibility of the student to make up the missed work. Students will have 5 school days to complete any missed quizzes or tests that were administered while they were away from school. This may result in incomplete grades on progress reports and report cards.

## *School Office Hours*

The school office is open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. except for holidays. On early dismissal days the office will close by 1:00 p.m.

## *Weather Emergencies*

Saint Lawrence School follows the "NO SCHOOL, DELAYED OPENING or EARLY CLOSING" announcements of the West Haven Public Schools. These and any other emergency announcements will be on New Haven area television stations: Channels WTNH 8, WFSB-3, WVIT 30, and Fox CT News. Please listen to these stations and watch for Saint Lawrence School announcements.

In addition, cancellations, delayed openings, and early closings will be emailed to all parents. **Please do NOT call the school (as this is very disruptive), but rather check your school email and/or local television stations.**

## *Admittance and Security*

The entrance doors are locked at all times, so visitors must "buzz in" to be audibly and visually screened by office personnel before being allowed access to the building. For the safety and security of all students and staff, all parents and visitors to the school must immediately report to the school office on the first floor when entering the building. **PLEASE NOTE: All interior and exterior entry points, stairwells, and hallways are under 24/7 video surveillance for the protection of our staff and students.**

The permission of the principal (or the office staff) is necessary before visitors may proceed beyond the office, and **ALL** visitors must sign in and receive a pass. If the office staff does not know a visitor, identification will be required.

**No visitors, parents, guardians, etc. may go to any classroom before, during, or at dismissal unless authorized by the school office.** Visitors observed without a pass will be stopped and escorted to the office for the protection of the children and staff.

## *Asbestos*

### **To: All Parents, Teachers and Employees of Saint Lawrence School**

In compliance with AHERA regulations, we are required to inform all of the above-mentioned individuals associated with St. Lawrence School of the Asbestos Inspection Report and Management Plan. This Report/Plan is on file in the school office and is available for review by any parent, teacher, etc. during normal business hours of the school. Please make your request for reviewing this file to the principal.

## *Fire/Evacuation/Lock-Down Drills*

Students are to clear the building in total silence and good order. Directions of the staff are to be followed. Drills will be held at a minimum of one per month. No visitors other than emergency personnel will be allowed access to or departure from the building or school grounds during a drill. We are not required to report any non-emergency drills to any person outside the building.

## *Crisis Plan / Safe Environment*

In accordance with the Office of Catholic Schools Policy 5.617, Saint Lawrence School has a School Safety and Crisis Intervention Manual kept in the main office which outlines the procedures to be followed in the event of an accident or serious injury, fire, bomb or bomb threat, intruder, incapacitated teacher, bus accident, death of an employee or student, etc. In addition, Saint Lawrence School has periodic safety and crisis drills each year so that all our employees and students are familiar with the procedures outlined in the manual.

## *Use of School Phones*

A student must have the permission of a teacher or staff member for the use of any office phone. In the case of an emergency and a parent needs to contact a student during school time, such communication shall be through the school's office phone. Children should never be contacted via cell phone during the school day and After School Program. The permission of the principal is needed for a student to be called to the phone in the Main Office.

Also, in case of emergency, the office staff will be happy to give your child a phone message. These requests should be made **no later than 30 minutes before dismissal** so as to provide adequate time to convey the message.

## *Use of Cellular Phones*

**The use of cellular phones, including text messaging and/or the taking of pictures, is strictly prohibited during the school day and on the school buses (Policy 5.509).** If a student has a cell phone, it must be **off at all times and out of sight**. It may **not** be clipped to the waist, belt, or book bag. Likewise, **wrist phones such as Apple iWatches are discouraged from being brought to school.** These can easily be broken and the school assumes no responsibility for devices brought to school. Furthermore, students are not allowed to make outgoing calls or to receive incoming calls at any time during the school day or during the After School Program. These are severe interruptions to classroom instruction.

Also, the school will not be liable for lost, broken, or stolen cell phones and smart watches. Any calls to home must either be made from the office phone or the nurse's office. **If a parent needs to contact a student during school time, such communication shall be through the school's Main Office or after school hours via electronic communication devices.**

Any cellular phone use, including text messaging, or use of camera phones during a test shall be considered and treated as cheating (*Policy 5.509*) with an automatic grade of 0%.

**In the event a student is caught using a cell phone/smart watch during the course of the day**, the electronic device will immediately be confiscated and given to the principal. The principal will secure the device and it will be **returned to the parent/guardian** under the following conditions:

1<sup>st</sup> Offense – at the end of the day

2<sup>nd</sup> Offense – at the end of next school day

3<sup>rd</sup> Offense – at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> school day following the electronic device's confiscation

4<sup>th</sup> Offense – the student will be required to serve an in-school suspension

The principal may check phones, emails, photos, messages, and other information on students' electronic devices while on school property when there is suspicion of inappropriate activity. *Policy 5.502* states that upon reasonable suspicion of inappropriate activity that may subject a student to any level of discipline, or in the interests of safety of students and staff, the Principal and/or his designee, may search students' desks, lockers, personal belongings, and anything brought onto school property including, but not limited to, handbags, briefcases, purses, backpacks, clothing, cell phones or other electronic devices and the content within such devices such as emails, photos, messages, or other information. The school administration may seize such items and retain them until the end of the school day or longer. The school administration will have the prerogative to turn over any such items to the police if there is evidence of illegal activity.

### ***Lost and Found***

Any clothing items found in the school building will be placed on the rack outside the main office. After a reasonable amount of time, if unclaimed, they are then put in the Pre-K building for the uniform exchange program. It would be extremely helpful if all items are clearly marked with your child's name with a permanent marker.

### ***Health Regulations***

The State of Connecticut requires that all children who attend school must have all immunizations required by law (*Policy 5.601*). Children may receive them from their own physician or the West Haven Health Department.

Physical examinations are required for entry into Kindergarten and during Grade six (6) and for all students attending school in Connecticut for the first time. If the services of a private physician are not available, these physicals may be obtained from other agencies. Please consult the school nurse for a list of these resources.

Please respond to all requests by the school nurse for immunizations and the records thereof. It is the duty of the principal, by law, to exclude students who are in non-compliance with school health regulations. During the school year, please keep the school nurse, secretary or principal informed of specific health needs of a serious nature.

The following screenings are administered in school:

Vision – Grades K – 6

Hearing – Grades K, 1, 2, 3,5 and 8

Scoliosis – Grades 5 – 8



## *Medications*

By law, neither prescription nor over-the-counter medicines of any kind can be brought to school. Therefore, please administer short term medication either before or after school hours. In case of an emergency, a parent or guardian may come to school and administer medication. If a child needs medicine during school hours on a long-term basis, a form must be requested from the school nurse, properly filled out and returned to the school before medication can be administered.

## *Medical Notification*

The school nurse will be responsible for notifying classroom teachers about the nature of the life-threatening allergies faced by students. This notification will include an explanation of the severity of the health threat, a description of the signs and symptoms to be aware of and what allergen (food, materials, etc.) to avoid.

## *Illness*

Parents are encouraged to provide adequate nutrition and sleep needs of their children. This is the best way to prevent illness and lost class time in school-age children. There is also a strong connection between fatigue, chronic illness, lack of energy and students who have unsupervised use of a TV, smart phone, or video games in their bedrooms.

Children who are ill may be contagious and spread infection to other students and staff. Therefore, please keep your child at home if these symptoms are present: **runny nose, persistent cough, flushed face, fever, red throat, pink eye, rash, or upset stomach.** Any injury which occurs out-of-school should also be taken care of before the student returns to school. If a child becomes ill in school, he/she will be sent home by the nurse or office personnel as soon as the appropriate person can be reached. **A child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.**

## *Child Abuse/Neglect-The following is based on Archdiocesan Policy 5.605.*

Saint Lawrence School considers the abuse/neglect of children, in any form, to be contrary to our mission and against the laws of the State of Connecticut.

Legally and morally, all staff members of the school are REQUIRED to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the CT Department of Children and Families (DCF). In fact, any teacher, nurse, or administrator who does not report such suspicions is in violation of state law and is subject to criminal punishment.

When it is determined that such suspicion exists, the school CANNOT investigate. Rather, a referral from the school must be made to DCF. It is the responsibility of DCF to notify the parent/guardian and to investigate the case.

Saint Lawrence School will cooperate fully with DCF. However, the school and its personnel do not make any judgment of any parent or other adult in any such case.

All such cases will remain TOTALLY CONFIDENTIAL between DCF, other authorities involved, the principal, and only those staff members directly involved.

## ***Breakfast/Lunch Program***

Again this year, Sodexco will be offering our students the option of purchasing a nutritious breakfast upon arrival. Breakfast and hot lunches are served every day. Free or reduced prices are available to those who qualify. Forms are sent home at the beginning of the year or may be obtained anytime by calling the school office. **Breakfast or lunch may NOT be charged at any time.**

A peanut-free table will be designated for those students who have peanut / other nut allergies.

## ***Curriculum***

Saint Lawrence School follows the curriculum standards, guidelines and daily time schedules as established by the Office of Catholic Schools. The textbooks used for all major subjects provide for a continuity of instruction, thereby giving the students maximum opportunity to be successful in acquiring the required basic knowledge in each subject.

Teachers are generally available to help students most days during after school office hours. Students should be encouraged to ask for help when it is needed. Plans to stay after school need to be made 24 hours in advance, and the parents must send in a note. Pick-up time is usually 3:05 p.m. and is set individually by each teacher and is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. The teachers will walk the student(s) to the door and supervise their dismissal to the parent. If students are not picked up by 3:10 p.m. the student will be escorted to the After School Program and the parents will be assessed the hourly fee for that program, \$10 per hour.

## ***Textbooks and Backpacks***

Each student must have a book bag or backpack to transport books home and to protect them from the elements. ***In addition, chains, keys, dolls, toys, trinkets, etc. are not permitted on the outside of the backpacks for the student's safety.*** If backpacks with wheels are purchased, be mindful that they may not be rolled up or down the stairs of the school, in the hallways, or up and down the stairs of the bus. For safety reasons, all straps, strings, etc. must be secured and not allowed to be hanging from the backpack.

All hard-covered textbooks must have book covers or book jackets on them.

**No student is to write in or deface a textbook.** If a textbook is damaged or lost, the cost for replacement of the book is the responsibility of the student. The average book price for a hard-covered textbook is approximately \$100-\$150.

## ***Homework Requirements***

Homework will generally be given in all grades on a regular basis. Homework shall be designed to serve a positive purpose, shall be assigned on a regular basis, and shall be closely integrated with class work (***Policy 4.105***).

In accordance with diocesan policy, the teachers on each level will determine what is appropriate for the students. This time of study should not include TV, video games, and telephone time. Parents can help students understand that the purpose of homework is to prepare them for successful participation in class.

General time allotments for homework are as follows:

***Grades 1-3: 30 minutes    Grades 4-6: 60 minutes    Grades 7 & 8: 120 minutes.***

Homework should be based on the ability needs of the students as well as students' total homework load. Homework as practice exercises may not constitute more than 5% of the total grade.

Saint Lawrence's Home & School Association generously provides every student with a homework planner/agenda in the upper grades and a homework/note portfolio in the lower grades.

### ***Homework Detention Notice***

When a student misses a homework assignment, he or she will be given a homework slip. **If the completed work and signed homework slip are not brought in the following day, during homeroom period, your child will be given an after-school detention.**

- Detention is served the next day. Families are responsible for providing transportation home for their child. Pick up time will be at 3:10 sharp.
- If the homework/detention slip is not returned, the teacher will call home and the consequence is now a two-day detention.
- If a student fails to hand in homework three (3) times in one month, a conference with the principal, parents/guardians, and teacher is required.

Teacher-assigned homework is part of the student's grade in each subject. Homework counts as a portion of the student's overall grade. Families should provide the necessary time and space and check to see that all assignments are fully complete. It should be noted that all homework is not always written work. Lack of homework should not be excused by the parent. If an unusual family circumstance occurs, then a note to the teacher before the school days begins is expected and appreciated.

### ***Make Up Work***

Students are to make every effort to make up work missed due to absence. **It is the student's responsibility to document the assignments and collect worksheets from teachers.** If homework or make up work is not handed in within the pre-assigned time, the student will take a failing grade for the work.

### ***Student Work***

Students' schoolwork is sent home periodically according to each teacher's plan and schedule. Please be aware of these opportunities and respond to them in the manner designated by the teacher.

Teachers are available to help students who are having difficulty most afternoons after school. A signed note is needed from the parent, and the child must be picked up at 3:10 p.m.

### ***Formal Testing***

The students' progress is monitored by quizzes, end of unit tests, teacher-designed tests, as well as the Diocesan Testing Program.

The Diocesan Testing Program is administered three times each year in Grades 3 through 8 through the NWEA MAP Assessment, administered to students in Grades 3-8 (*Policy 4.135*).

Families are encouraged to monitor their child's progress through these test results.

## *Support Services*

Through various federal, state, and city programs, the school has the part time services of a speech therapist, psychologist, social worker, and a special education teacher. The uses of these services are available only after conferral with the Planning and Placement Team of the City of West Haven. We encourage optimum use of these services whenever they are recommended by a teacher or the principal.

## *Band Program*

In conjunction with Future Musicians, Inc. and the Archdiocese of Hartford, the school offers a quality instructional program in instrumental music for a reasonable fee to students in Grades 4-8. Small group lessons are held weekly on a rotating basis. Advanced students may also have a forty-five-minute band rehearsal after school. Questions regarding the program can be directed to the FMI-CT office (203) 758-8374.

## *Field Trips and Chaperones*

Field trips are a privilege offered to students in good academic and behavioral standing. Students may be denied participation on the trips if they fail to meet the behavioral or academic requirements of the school.

To participate in a trip, the student must return the form provided by the school, properly filled out on all sides and signed by a parent or guardian. This form is to be returned at least twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled trip. **No other form, written letter, or phone call can be accepted. A completed permission slip received by school fax (203-933-2058) is acceptable. Children not enrolled in Saint Lawrence School are not permitted to accompany the class field trip (Policy 4.125).**

**School uniforms are to be worn on school field trips unless otherwise noted.**

The teacher, with approval of the principal, has final authority regarding which and how many parents officially chaperone a given trip. **Per Office of Safe Environments, all parent volunteers and parent chaperones must be background checked as and Virtus-trained. NO EXCEPTIONS.** Unless invited to do so, a parent not designated as a chaperone should not attend a field trip. Teachers will not take more chaperones than required. Also, in fairness to all classroom parents, the assignment of chaperones will be done in an equitable manner throughout the year. Because of the school's Catholic Mutual insurance, a parent assigned to be a chaperone may not bring other children along.

## *Recess*

The purpose of recess is to allow students time to exercise and have fun in the fresh air. Students will be withheld from participation if they exhibit rough or aggressive behavior. **Please be sure your child dresses appropriately for the weather and wears safe footwear for the blacktop / playground.**

## *Academic Information*

### **Curriculum**

The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of Connecticut guidelines, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. All Catholic schools follow curriculum

standards published by the Office of Catholic Schools (*policy 4.102*). Saint Lawrence School offers students opportunities for growth in the following major subjects:

### **Religion**

Religion instruction includes Catholic doctrine and tradition, Bible study, social justice, preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, and Eucharist.

Mass / Liturgical Services are held monthly throughout the school year.

### **Sacramental Program**

The Sacramental life of the children of the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at Saint Lawrence School. Students will receive preparations for two sacraments – Reconciliation, and First Eucharist – from the core of our efforts in Grade 3. In accordance with the Diocesan guidelines, candidates for the First Holy Communion will receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to the First Eucharist.

Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Eucharist are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition. The school must have a record of baptism on file for each child.

### **Language Arts**

Reading, English, Spelling, Vocabulary, Composition, Library Skills, and Appreciation of Literature, Superkids Reading (K-2), and Lexia Reading.

### **Mathematics**

Mathematic Skills, Concepts, Computation, Pre-Algebra, and Algebra I.

### **Physical Education**

Physical fitness activities that are developmentally appropriate for age group.

### **Spanish**

Vocabulary, common expressions, grammar, conversation, and culture for all grades. For junior high students this is a major subject scheduled daily. For students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through fifth, Spanish is scheduled one (1) day per week.

### **Social Studies**

World History, Geography, Economics, Connecticut History, United States History, and Current Events.

### **Science**

General Sciences and Laboratory Experiences.

### **Handwriting**

Students in Grades 3-8 are expected to submit all handwritten work in cursive writing.

### **Fine Arts**

General Music, Chorus, Visual Arts, Performing Arts (school productions), and FMI Band.

### **Computer Literacy**

Electronic Learning Devices, “SMART Board” usage, Google Classroom, iPads, Chromebooks, and Integration within curricular subject areas.

## Library

The school has a well-equipped library and media center. Students are encouraged to use the library for curricular enrichment and pleasure reading. The following rules are to be observed:

1. Borrowed books are to be returned on time and in good condition.
2. Damaged or lost books must be paid for before any new books may be taken out.

## Grading

Saint Lawrence School follows the current grading code as established by the Office of Catholic Schools (*Policy 4.134*):

### Grades 1-3: Measurement Codes for Primary Grades:

5 Consistently exceeded grade level expectations for this term.
4 Consistently achieved developmentally appropriate skills and/or expectations for this term.
3 Approaching mastery of developmentally appropriate skills and/or expectations for this term.
2 Approaching proficiency toward developmentally appropriate skills and/or expectations for this term.
1 Difficulty meeting developmentally appropriate skills and/or expectations for this term.
I Incomplete work for this term.

#### Grades 4-8:

A+	100-98	C+	79-77
A	97-94	C	76-73
A-	93-90	C-	72-70
B+	89-87	D	69-65
B	86-83	F	Below 65 – Failing
B-	82-80		

#### For “Specials”:

O	Outstanding
S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory

### Archdiocese of Hartford Grading Policy:

#### SA: Summative Assessments – 75%Chapter / Unit Tests

- Performance-based Assessments
- Research Papers
- Book Reports
- Essays
- Projects (including visual displays)
- Lab Report

#### CkPts: Check points – 20%

- Quizzes for comprehension or checking for understanding
- Checkpoints of skills that are corrected (not counted as part of homework)
- Steps in a process to a larger assignment / report / project

#### ECP: Effort, Conduct, Participation – 5%

- Rubrics or checklists for evaluation of student effort, conduct, or participation

- *Tracking homework completion as a life skill (working independently and handing in assignments when due)*

## ***Report Cards and Educational Progress Reports***

Educational Progress Reports are issued approximately one month before report cards for all students in grades 1-8. These reports provide the parents with the educational progress of their child. Educational Progress Reports are to be signed and returned within three (3) school days.

Report cards are issued three times a year per trimester. The dates for distribution of both report cards and Educational Progress Reports are posted below

### ***Important Dates***

	<b>Trimester 1</b>	<b>Trimester 2</b>	<b>Trimester 3</b>
Start	August 29th	December 2nd	March 5th
Progress Reports	October 11th	February 14th	April 24th
End of Term	November 27th	March 4th	May 30th
Report Cards	December 13th	March 14th	June 5th

## ***Conferences***

Formal conferences are scheduled twice a year, in addition to these scheduled conferences, teachers are available by appointment whenever the need arises. Teachers are to be given adequate notice when a conference is requested. **Consultations are not permitted during a teacher's class time.** Teachers and/or the principal may also request a conference with the parents.

## ***Awards***

In order to motivate our students to do their best, awards are given throughout the school year. These awards affirm academic progress and achievement, and areas of growth toward the social and religious goals of the school. All subjects, as well as attendance and behavior, are included when determining eligibility for honors and awards.

Sample of Awards are:

- Honors
- Catholic Spirit
- Service
- Academic Achievement
- Principal Award
- Student Recognition Awards of the Month

## *Honor Roll*

All major subjects are included when determining honor status: Religion, Language Arts, Literature, History/Social Studies, Math, Science/Health, and World Language. If a subject is taught fewer than three times a week, it cannot be considered when determining honors status. Any grade lower than a B- in a major academic area or lower than an S in a "special" shall negate honor roll status (*Policy 4.134*).

Students in grades 4-8 are eligible for honor roll status:

**1<sup>st</sup> Honors** – Minimum of four (4) "A's" with the remaining grades not lower than a "B" average.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Honors** – All grades must be a "B" average or above.

The honor roll will be published each marking period in the Parish Bulletin as well as the West Haven Voice.

## *National Junior Honor Society*

Each spring, a select group of seventh and eighth grade students are invited to become part of our school's chapter, **Charger Pride**, of the **National Junior Honor Society**.

Based on the guidelines established by this national organization to be considered for this honor, a student must be in seventh or eighth grade, show high SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT, exemplify LEADERSHIP, willingly give SERVICE to others, demonstrate solid CHARACTER, and practice good CITIZENSHIP.

Following the established guidelines of the NJHS, a Faculty Council, made up of the junior high teachers and principal, invites each Spring, those students in grades 7 and 8 who are academically eligible (maintaining an 90 Grade Point Average or above), and who meet the criteria in the areas of Leadership, Service, Character, and Citizenship, to apply for consideration by submitting the form, made available by the teachers, showing their accomplishments. No student is forced to apply and the responsibility for doing this rests solely on the student – not the teachers or the parents.

Based on the above, the Faculty Council determines which students will be inducted. The initiation ceremony for the NJHS induction is usually held in May.

## *Retention*

Advancement to the next grade at Saint Lawrence School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, attendance record, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade. Students may also be transferred to the next grade.



## *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, including sports, as determined by the administration.**

## *Concerts & Shows*

Each year Saint Lawrence School presents a Christmas Concert and a Spring Concert. The dates are given to families early in the school year and are also posted on the school's website. Families are requested to mark their calendars with these two dates so that there are no conflicts later on. All these productions involve the entire student body (PreK-8) and are part of the curriculum in both music and art. **Student attendance is mandatory at both productions.** Failing grades are issued if a child does not participate. Sport practices, games, dance classes, etc. are not excusable conflicts.

## *Code of Conduct/Discipline*

One of the more important lessons education should teach is discipline. It is the shared responsibility of the child's home and our school to accomplish this goal. Discipline is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people. It is the training that develops self-control, character, orderliness, and efficiency.

Good discipline is maintained by recognizing and praising good behavior and taking corrective action when necessary. Students are expected to put forth their best effort and to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that will promote a safe, orderly, and respectful learning environment. Students attending Saint Lawrence School should give evidence of a living faith in Jesus, and to try to act as He would.

Any behavior which causes the learning atmosphere to be disrupted or which infringes upon the rights of others in the school will not be tolerated and will subject the student to corrective measures.

Conduct, whether inside or outside of school, which is detrimental to the reputation of the school, or negatively impacts the school, is subject to disciplinary procedures (*Policy 5.501*).

School and classroom rules and expected behavior are explained to the students during the opening days of school and posted in the classroom. We ask all caregivers to share their expectations that each child can (and will) comply with them.

Classroom infractions (Level 1) can be (but are not limited to): failure to complete homework; lack of class materials; annoyance to classmates; excessive talking; lack of cooperation; inattentive behavior; any inappropriate lavatory behavior; bringing toys to school without permission; public display of affection; putting hands on another student; etc.

Infractions of general school rules (Level 2) can be (but are not limited to): conduct or behavior unbecoming a Catholic school student – both in and out of school; excessive tardiness; repeated violations of school dress code; cheating, forgery, or plagiarism (which will result in a failing grade

for the assignment); rude and discourteous behavior to students; gum chewing; swearing or inappropriate language; bus misconduct; throwing of objects; etc.

Serious infractions (Level 3) can be (but are not limited to): disrespect and defiance of staff/authority; stealing; fighting; altering grades; truancy; having/using tobacco, drugs, or alcohol; vandalism; having a weapon or dangerous instrument; harassment; bullying; repeated bus offenses; etc.

Acceptable corrective measures for Level 1 & 2 infractions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Teacher-student conference
2. Deprivation of privileges or preferred activities
3. Time-out in the classroom or other area in the school
4. Communication with parent via note, email, telephone or conference
5. Behavioral agreement
6. Daily or weekly reports to parents
7. Detention
8. Referral to principal
9. Suspension from school or bus
10. Loss of Sports Privileges

Acceptable corrective measures for Level 3 infractions will result in automatic suspension and/or possible expulsion due to the seriousness of the offense.

## ***Bullying***

**Bullying behavior, under any circumstance, will be tolerated.** Bullying is prohibited in all Catholic schools in the Archdiocese. It must not be tolerated during the school day or during any school-sponsored activities on or off school grounds. Bullying and intimidation are actions that are contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Any behavior deemed by the school administration to be considered bullying shall result in disciplinary actions, which may include detention, suspension and expulsion from school (*Policy 5.513*).

This bullying policy is applied to kindergarten through grade eight and does not apply to the Pre-School Program. It is recognized that these children are very young and are learning social skills.

**Bullying is defined as any repeated overt acts by a student or group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate the other student while on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, importantly, these acts must be repeated against the same student over time in order to meet this definition.**

Bullying includes physical intimidation or assault; extortion; oral, written, or electronic (cyber bullying) threats; teasing; putdowns; name-calling; threatening looks, gestures or actions; cruel rumors; false accusation; and social isolation.

Unkind acts that occur at that level will be handled by the child's teacher. The teacher will work with the student, family, and principal as needed to address these situations.

Any student who retaliates against another student for bullying may also be subject to the same disciplinary actions.

School employees, students, and parents who become aware of any act of bullying must report the incident to the school administrator for further investigation.

**Once a complaint has been reported, the principal will thoroughly investigate to determine if bullying has occurred.** Parents of children filing a complaint and named in the complaint will be made aware of the investigation.

Once the investigation is complete, the school principal will determine the consequences for the individual(s) on a case-by-case, age-appropriate basis. Consequences may include family/student conferences, professional counseling, detention, suspension, or expulsion.

### ***Harassment***

Like all the schools of the Archdiocese, Saint Lawrence School does not condone any form of harassment. All individuals are treated with dignity and respect. Harassment in any form is prohibited.

It is the policy of Saint Lawrence School to provide a school environment free of sexual harassment. Any manner or form of sexual harassment (by an adult or student) will be promptly and thoroughly investigated and, if warranted, appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, will be taken.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcomed sexual advances. Verbal harassment includes derogatory comments, jokes, or slurs. It can also include belligerent or threatening words spoken to another individual. Physical harassment includes unwanted physical touching or contact. Visual harassment includes derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, novelties, or gestures.

A student who harasses another student will be disciplined and may be expelled from school (*Policy 5.511*).

### ***Electronic Communication/Cyber-Bullying***

Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of electronic communication jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, or is disruptive to the school environment, or is contrary to Gospel values, the student may be subject to a full range of disciplinary consequences, including expulsion (*Policy 5.504*).

This policy applies to communications or depictions through e-mails, blogs, text messages, or website postings, whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communication, which: (1) are of a sexual nature; (2) threaten, libel, slander, malign, disparage, bully, harass, or embarrass members of the school community; or (3) cause harm to the school community.

### ***Internet Usage/Social Networking***

Engagement in online blogs or postings, such as, but not limited to: MySpace, Snap Chat, Instagram,

Xanga, Friendster, Facebook, YouTube, etc., shall result in disciplinary actions, including expulsion, if the content of the student's blogs or postings includes defamatory comments regarding the school, a person's dignity, bullying, harassment, threats, or other inappropriate comments that are contradictory to Catholic teaching (*Policy 5.510*).

**Conduct, whether inside or outside the school that is detrimental to the reputation of the school, including social media, may result in disciplinary actions including suspension, expulsion, or withdrawal from school (*Policy 5.504*).**

## *Weapons*

The administration is concerned for the safety of all students and school personnel at Saint Lawrence School and at school-sponsored functions. For this reason, students are prohibited from having or using weapons and/or dangerous instruments.

No student may possess or use, or attempt to possess or use, a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, including a firearm or electronic defense weapon, while on school premises, during any school term, or off school premises at a school-related activity, function, or event. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, including expulsion (*Policy 5.514*).

Dangerous instruments may include but are not limited to: pocketknives, razors, laser pointers, sharp & pointed objects, etc.

In order to avoid confusing messages to the children, please do not send in any toy weapons. They will be immediately confiscated and returned to the parent.

## *Due Process*

The guiding principle for administering school discipline at Saint Lawrence School will be fairness. This means that all parties to a disagreement will be given the opportunity to be heard. In the event of suspension, the principal will be involved and the parents or guardians will be notified. The principal and pastor are the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive a disciplinary procedure for just cause.

## *Lunchroom Behavior*

Good table manners and appropriate behavior are required at mealtime. No opened food or drinks may be taken from the breakfast/lunchroom to the schoolyard or classrooms unless arranged for previously by the teacher. For health reasons, including possible allergies, students are encouraged not to share their food.

## *Gum Chewing*

**Gum chewing is not allowed in the school building, on school grounds, or on the bus.** Parents and other adults who assist in school during the day should also abide by this rule as it demonstrates proper behavior for the student.

## *Smoking/Vaping*

Smoking, smokeless tobacco, and vaping is not permitted at any time on school property. This includes all activities sponsored by the school.

## *Drugs & Alcohol*

The possession/use of drugs/alcohol is prohibited. No student shall possess, use, or attempt to possess, use, or be under the influence of a prohibited substance on school premises during any school term or off school premises at a school-related activity, function, or event (*Policy 5.503*). If a drug/alcohol related problem is suspected or identified, parents will be notified immediately and offered assistance in procuring adequate medical and psychological assistance for the student. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, including expulsion.

## *School Bus*

School bus service begins on the opening day of classes. Please estimate the time of your child's pickup/drop-off. As it usually takes a few days for the bus company to have all bus problems resolved, we ask that you be patient and cooperative during the opening days of school. Any necessary changes to the route or stops must be made through the school office. We will then request the changes from the bus company. Parents need to ensure supervision for their child upon arrival home or at the bus stop each day.

**Students are not allowed to ride a bus to which they are not assigned, nor are they allowed to get off at a different stop.**

The bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and must be respected and obeyed.

For a safe ride to and from school, students should be reminded frequently about the rules for good bus behavior. The rules can be summarized as follows:

- Remain seated at all times.
- Keep the aisles clear.
- Use quiet voices and respectful language.
- Do not bring devices/items on the bus that could cause a distraction for the driver.
- Follow the directions of the bus driver.
- Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner.
- Do not do vandalism to the bus.
- No fighting, physical contact, etc.
- No eating or chewing of gum.
- No throwing of things inside the bus or out the bus windows.

- 1) If a student exhibits any of the above unacceptable behaviors on the bus, parents will be notified.
- 2) If a "School Bus Incident Report" is given to the Principal, the student will not be able to ride the bus for one week starting the next school day.

- 3) With a second (2<sup>nd</sup>) "Incident Report", the student will not be allowed on the bus for one month.
- 4) With a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) "Incident Report" the student will not be allowed on the bus for the remainder of the school year.

## *School Property*

All loss or damage by a student to schoolbooks, furniture or other school property becomes the financial responsibility of the parents for the repair or replacement value of the damaged item(s).

## *Personal Property*

The school is not responsible for any loss of personal property. Personal belongings and clothing should be clearly marked using permanent marker with the student's name. Radios, cassettes, toys of any kind, CD players, cell phones and other electronic items are not permitted in the upper grades of our school.

## *Detentions*

All parents are notified by email of detention(s) for their child.

It is the students' responsibility to give a detention notice to the parent and report to detention on the assigned date. Unless excused by the principal, failure to do so will result in an additional detention. Any student who has three detentions within one school quarter will be required to have a conference with the Principal. This conference will include one parent and will be held during the school day.

Detentions are served at the discretion of the teacher. A minimum of a twenty-four (24) hour notice is always given. Postponements will be allowed for a legitimate family reason, sickness or a doctor's appointment. They will not be allowed for sports, extracurricular activities or other social obligations. Parents are responsible for transportation on the day the detention is served. The students are to be picked up promptly at 3:10 p.m. There is no staff supervision after 3:15 p.m.

If there are any questions about the detention, parents should feel free to contact the teacher. **It is NOT an option whether a child will serve the detention or not.**

## *Suspensions*

Fighting is considered a very serious offense that necessitates the removal of the student from the school building for the remainder of the day. This is to allow students a "cooling off" period. It also forestalls any continuation of aggression after school hours. An adult must bring the student(s) home and the parent/guardian must meet with the principal before the student(s) is allowed back to class.

Aggressive and disruptive behavior of any kind (pushing, kicking, yelling or harassment of another person, etc.) may also result in the suspension of the student from the school. This includes any disrespect shown to faculty or staff.

## *Expulsions*

Expulsion is used when other means of reaching the student have failed or if the student presents a serious threat to themselves or others.

## *Uniform Requirements*

School uniform items may be purchased at: Vio's Sporting Goods, 487 Campbell Avenue, rear entrance, West Haven 203-934-3368

The complete school uniform is to be worn neatly during school hours and when traveling to and from school. No item of the uniform is removed until students reach their after-school destination. All removable items are to be labeled. Complete details of our uniform requirements including accessories can be found on our school's website: <https://www.saintlawrenceschool.com/admissions/uniforms.cfm> The full uniform requirements are as follows:

### **Pre-K: Boys & Girls – Regular Uniforms**

All students in the Pre-K 3 & Pre-K 4 program are allowed to wear their Saint Lawrence School gym uniform each day along with sneakers. Light-up sneakers are NOT allowed as they can be very distracting. **Pre-K students may wear tied sneakers or Velcro sneakers.**

### **K-8 Girls – Regular Uniform**

Girls are to wear their khaki skorts along with their Saint Lawrence maroon polo (long or short sleeved), maroon or beige socks, unisex tied rubber sole shoes (brown or black) or buck suede shoes. Optional wear includes the burgundy micro fleece vest or jacket with the Saint Lawrence logo and maroon-colored tights. During the colder winter months (Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>-March 31<sup>st</sup>) girls may wear the khaki pants in place of the khaki skorts.

### **K-8 Boys – Regular Uniform**

Boys are to wear their khaki slacks along with their Saint Lawrence maroon polo (long or short-sleeved), maroon or beige socks – crew (no low/quarter socks are allowed), unisex tied rubber sole shoes (brown or black) or buck suede shoes. Optional wear includes the burgundy micro fleece vest or jacket with the Saint Lawrence logo. Belts are a must to keep the slacks securely held onto the waist.

### **Pre-K to K-8 Non-Compliance**

For the students' safety the following are not allowed: light-up sneakers, sandals, moccasins, boots, "Heelys", ballet slippers, platform shoes, high-heels, clogs, Crocs, slides, backless slip-on shoes, etc. Winter boots are NEVER allowed to be worn during the school day. Students must change out of their boots into their proper footwear upon arrival.

### **Summer Uniform – Boys & Girls**

The summer uniform is optional and may only be worn from the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school until Columbus Day and April 15<sup>th</sup> until the last day of school. The summer uniform consists of khaki shorts with the Saint Lawrence maroon-colored polo and uniform shoes (not sneakers).

## **Gym Uniform – Boys & Girls, K-8**

The gym uniform is required for participation in all gym classes. Students not in proper uniform will have a grade point deduction for the class. Students are allowed to wear their gym uniform to school for the day their class is assigned physical education. The gym uniform consists of the Saint Lawrence logo maroon shorts with the Saint Lawrence short-sleeved maroon polo, or, in colder weather, the Saint Lawrence long-sleeved maroon sweatshirt and sweatpants, and sneakers (no dress shoes). Teachers will announce at the beginning of the school year the day their students have physical education class.

## ***Jewelry***

Small simple earrings may be worn, one (1) per ear. Dangling earrings are not permitted. A simple watch (no beeping devices) and a neat inconspicuous medal is the only jewelry allowed. Watches that beep will be brought to the Main Office and may be claimed at the end of the school day. Repeated offenses will result in a family meeting with the principal. Silly bands are not permitted.

## ***Hairstyles***

Hair is to be styled neatly. The unnatural coloring of hair and hairstyles such as mohawks, is not allowed. Students may not have shaved or design cutting or long hair styles that hang down into their eyes. All students should have hair with bangs above the eyebrows. Boys' hair should be above the shirt collar, as well as trimmed around the ears and neatly combed.

For girls, scrunches', hair clips, rubber bands, etc., must be in the hair, not worn on wrists. No beads or scarves may be worn in the hair. Girls' headbands are to be school colors only: maroon, brown, black, or khaki. Students may be excluded from school if hairstyles are judged inappropriate by the administration.

## ***Makeup/Accessories***

- a) Students are not permitted to wear lipstick, mascara, or rouge.
- b) Students are permitted to wear CLEAR nail polish
- c) Nail polish of any color and artificial nails are not permitted at St. Lawrence School
- d) Strong-scented perfume is not permitted
- e) Students should have no visible tattoos or wipe-on tattoos of any kind.
- f) Hologram contact lenses are unsafe and should never be worn to school.



## *Daily Schedule*

7:30	Teacher supervision begins in the yard. Breakfast students report to the gym.
7:50	Students proceed to homeroom. Breakfast ends.
7:50-8:00	Homeroom Period- students who are not seated by 8:00 are marked tardy.
8:00	Opening prayer and announcements over the intercom.
8:05	First Class Period begins.
2:15	End-of-Day Homeroom Period
2:15-2:20	Announcements/Dismissal

HALF DAY SESSIONS DISMISS AT 12:10 P.M. No lunch will be served on half-days.

## *Dress and Appearance*

In order to promote an orderly learning environment in our school while preparing our students for later success in the upper grades and high school, our students will adhere to the following daily dress code as well as on dress-down days. We do expect parental discretion and cooperation in helping our students learn what is or is not appropriate for school.

- a) Students should keep their clothes, bodies, and hair clean.
- b) Students shall wear shoes held securely (tied) on the feet for their protection and safety while on school grounds or aboard school transportation. Socks must be worn at all times.
- c) Flip flops, boots, sandals, Crocs, open back shoes, or Heelys are **never** allowed in school.
- d) Students shall not wear hats or head coverings inside school buildings unless previously approved for special activities by the principal.
- e) Students shall not wear ripped or torn jeans on Dress Down Days or other school events.
- f) Students shall not wear decorations, symbols, mottoes, or designs on the body or clothing showing unacceptable products (tobacco, alcohol, and drugs), inappropriate clubs or groups or inappropriate words or pictures.
- g) Students shall not wear spandex, beach-type clothing, biker shorts, or pajama pants to school.
- h) Students shall not wear very short shorts or miniskirts, see-through clothing, or tube tops that leave the midriff showing. Halter tops, tube tops, and spaghetti strap tops are also not permitted.
- i) Students' clothing shall be worn appropriately as designed. For example, pants are to be worn securely at the waist, fastened with a belt. Underwear which is visible or worn as outerwear is NOT allowed.

**Special Note:** A student who violates the dress code will be required to change into appropriate clothing before returning to class. Parents will be called to bring in the appropriate clothing. **If the parent is unable to bring the acceptable clothing to school, the student will spend the day in ISS (In-School Suspension).** In addition, the student will lose all privileges for dress down days for the remainder of the school year.

## *Home and School Association*

Since there is a direct relationship between the involvement of parents/guardians and the success of students and the school's programs, families are encouraged to volunteer their services to the school in a variety of ways. When each family responds to even one area needing assistance, the school is truly rich in-home support. To avoid disruption, all services given to the school are to be rendered under the direction and supervision of the principal and/or teacher. All families are expected to pay the minimal Home & School dues by September 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year. Every student benefits from these proceeds thanks to the many projects and programs of our Home & School Association. There is a late fee of \$10. after October 1<sup>st</sup>.

## *Communications between School and Home*

Information from the school is generally sent home on Wednesday of each week via email.

It is of paramount importance that required notices be returned to school on time. This will enable us to complete our circle of communication.

We need at least one parent's email address that is checked on a regular basis. In this manner we will electronically send home as many of the communications as possible, thus cutting down on the amount of paperwork and costs. Please comply with this request. Also, please notify the school throughout the year of any changes in email addresses. The school reserves the right to charge a small assessment fee for paper communications in lieu of electronic communications.

## *Volunteers*

### ***(Background Checked and Virtus-trained Mandatory)***

Saint Lawrence School is very fortunate to have parents, grandparents, and other adults who volunteer to assist around the school. The students will at all times' show the utmost respect and courtesy toward these fine people as well as towards all teachers and other staff members. Volunteers working the lunch program, those on the playground and in the library, and adults assisting teachers in the classrooms have the authority to enforce school rules.

Students are expected to respect this authority as they do the authority of the teachers. Those students who do not will be subject to disciplinary action.

As per Archdiocesan policy (Section 1-215 of the Archdiocesan *Handbook*), for the protection of all children, as with employees, all regular volunteers will be required to complete an authorization allowing the Archdiocese of Hartford to conduct a Background Check on them. They are also required to take a one-time Virtus workshop, complete forms, with payment, and/or sign any release which may be required by the Archdiocese of Hartford or by State or local laws.

## *Gifts*

Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students. In addition, this exchange is not a school-related activity.

## *Birthday Celebrations/Party Invitations*

Invitations to birthday parties should be sent to the homes of students via the U.S. mail. **Individual party invitations may not be brought to school for distribution.** These are not school functions and can often lead to embarrassment and hard feelings. The only exception would be if the “birthday child” is inviting the entire class.

For confidentiality, telephone numbers and/or addresses cannot be distributed for party invitations.

In keeping with many public and private schools, we have developed a “wellness policy” due to the increasingly greater number of students with food allergies. This policy creates a school environment that promotes the health and well-being of our students, as well as their academic success. **As part of this plan, we have adopted a policy of “No Food” for birthday celebrations.** Instead, parents can do any of the following: 1) arrange with the classroom teacher to come in and read a story to the class; 2) donate a book to the classroom library in their child’s name; 3) for the lower grades, provide the materials for the children to make an art project or craft; 4) send in “goody bags which can include pencils, stickers, bookmark, eraser, crayons (no small toys and no food items); 5) send in a small gift certificate for each child to McDonald’s, Burger King, etc.

Also, on the day of the student’s birthday, his/her name will be announced over the intercom.

**There may be school or classroom celebrations where food is allowed, but all must follow the allergy restrictions for the students in that class. Final menus for events with food must be approved by the nurse, classroom teacher, and the principal.**

## *School Records*

Parents and legal guardians have the right of access to the school records of their children. A request is made to the principal in writing with twenty-four (24) hour notice.

## *Cheating / Plagiarism*

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. This includes plagiarism which is copying someone else’s work in an attempt to pass it along as one’s own work without any footnote references or credit. Students who choose to cheat will receive a failing grade and detention. Repeated cheating will result in suspension and/or expulsion. The membership of students within the National Junior Honor Society will be revoked.

## *Athletics*

The Saint Lawrence School athletics program is an important component of its educational mission. Our goal is to teach Christian values, develop good sportsmanship and provide healthful recreation. Since the role of the principal is to coordinate and direct all the various activities by which Saint Lawrence seeks to fulfill its educational mission, the sports program is administered by the pastor with the assistance of the principal and the athletic director.

Students only have the right to try out and be fairly evaluated. Students do not have the right to play on a team. Students only have the right to attend the school – everything else is a privilege.

The coach/Athletic Director makes the decision if the student/athlete can play in a game, not a note from the child's pediatrician. The doctor's note can attest if the student is healthy to play, but it is the coach's decision whether or not to play him/her.

The sports program is open to students in Grades 5-6-7-8 (unless league rules specify otherwise). **There is a required \$100 sports fee\* which must be paid in advance of each sport the student is going to participate in.**

\*NOTE: For Basketball and Cheerleading the sports fee is \$120. Families of students in basketball or cheerleading must commit to helping in the kitchen at least one (1) weeknight during the home games. Once this obligation is met, \$20 will either be refunded or applied as a credit to the parent's Assessment fee, thus resulting in a net payment of a \$100 sports fee.

**Participation in the sports program is a privilege and not a right. Students must maintain a minimum grade of "C-" in all regular subjects and an "S" in all special subjects.** All homework and long term assignments must be up to date. Students must exhibit good behavior during the school day as well as when participating in sports activities. **Students who are absent on a given day, or were in suspension, are not eligible to participate in sports events that day.**

The decision for player eligibility rests with the principal after consultation with the athletic director and the coaches. Good sportsmanship is part of the sports program. If a student is suspended from playing he/she is still required to attend the games and give moral support from the bench. If a suspended playing student misses two (2) games he/she is automatically suspended from the team for the remainder of the season. Included in the sports program are:

**Girls' Basketball      Boys' Basketball      Soccer**  
**Baseball and Softball      Cheerleading**

**Having teams depends on the availability of volunteer coaches.**

All coaches must receive the approval of the principal and pastor, pass background checks, and attend Virtus-training (Protecting God's Children). The coaches work in conjunction with the athletic coordinator.

## **Conclusion**

It is the goal of Saint Lawrence School to provide a full Catholic formation for your child. This goal will only be reached by striving for excellence in all areas of school life. No handbook can (or should) cover every situation that may arise as we proceed toward this goal. The intent of this handbook is to provide a framework for an orderly and purposeful participation in this school, which you have freely chosen for your child. Therefore, we ask parents to promote within the family structure respect for the contents of this handbook. Most of all, we ask that this respect be given to not only the printed word but also to the life, spirit and unique value system which makes Saint Lawrence a privileged educational environment for your child. The faculty, staff and administration look forward to our working together.

Many areas of school life may not be explicitly addressed in this handbook but are implicit within the context of the school in its role of being “in loco parentis” (in place of the parent).

Parents and students are asked to review and discuss the contents of this handbook and sign the enclosed forms (receipt of handbook, Telecommunication User Agreement, and Photo/Video Release Form. Each family is to return these forms, along with a completely filled-out emergency card, on the opening day of classes. Students will not be admitted if these forms have not been received.

## **Right to Amend**

The material set forth in this handbook may be amended by the school administration at any time. Notice will be given of any major changes via the weekly principal’s weekly newsletters/emails.

When enrolling your child in Saint Lawrence School, the parent and/or guardian is agreeing to abide and be governed by this school handbook