



TOPICS about St. Joseph School you need to know!

Cheat Notes!

Parent, Teacher, Group (PTG):

Parent Teacher Group has three functions:

1. Fundraising
2. “Fun”raising / Community Building
3. Parent/Guardian Education

You can volunteer for:

- PTG Officers
- Room Parents
- Committee Event Chairs and committee members – located on our website
- Buddy Families: Buddy families serve in two main capacities: as welcoming partners, and as guides for a family that is new to the school. The Buddy Family reaches out to the new family and provides them support, social opportunities, resources, and familiar faces to help foster a living connection to the school.
- All parents/guardians are PTG members and are required to volunteer each year for 35 hours. You must have all your volunteer requirements in before volunteering.
- There are so many ways to participate, including attending virtual meetings.
- Volunteering is easy on Signup.com. It will send you reminders of the events you commit to helping.
- Active PTG participation helps parents/guardians meet other parents/guardians and be a part of putting on fun events for their children!

The School Board:

- The School Board helps guide the principal, and the direction of the school.
- Board Members consist of parents/guardians, community members, grandparents, parishioners, teachers, and the administration. It is responsible for the forward movement of the school.
- Evaluates the Mission and Vision of the school.
- Oversees the writing and execution of a strategic plan.
- These member partners “roll up their sleeves” and work behind the scenes.

How the School Operates - This is your school. We work hard to provide equitable access to every community member. We are committed to creating awareness and embracing our community’s diversity, and we demand kindness, inclusion and belonging. Transparency with the school vision budget, and policies. We count on volunteers to stretch our resources and better supply the students and our families the best experiences and memories possible. It is important to be accountable to each other.

Together we make decisions that are good for all our children. Teachers and staff focus on the social, emotional, academic, success and the creative and spiritual growth of each child. It is important that all stakeholders create and participate in clear and consistent communication. We always ask for input from the parents & guardians – share comments and questions through asking Room Parents, filling out surveys, attending Breakfast with the Principal, calling, emailing, or just coming in!

Our community is welcoming and hospitable. It is made up of parents/guardians, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins and special friends who are all invested in their children’s education. This community has created a sense of welcome and belonging because parents and extended family are our partners.

We are committed to teaching and developing the “Whole Child” in partnership with our parents/guardians.

- We believe that parents & guardians are the most influential adults in the lives of our children.
- We teach self-advocacy and agency.
- We encourage students to do their best and be their best selves each day.
- We support a student’s ability to take responsibility.

- We teach skills that are needed to thrive as we move forward into the future.
- We empower children to make good choices and understand the relationship to resulting consequences.
- We allow them to fail sometimes to help support perseverance and grit.
- We provide space where all are respected, included, and feel that they belong.
- We communicate with and support parents in helping their students succeed.

Office “Must Knows”:

- **Attendance:** If your child is absent, you must email the Office Manager (and copy the Teacher) prior to 9:00am. If your child is suspected or diagnosed with any communicative infections, we ask that you contact the Office and the teacher.
- **Medication:** If your child takes medication – prescribed or over the counter – it must come to the Office in a ziplock bag with instructions. The Office will dispense the medicine. The child is not allowed to keep any medication on their person, backpack, cubby or locker. Parents need to complete the form and send a prescription signed by the doctor.
- **Choice Lunch Program:** You may sign up for delivered, fresh and organic lunches at any time. Go to www.choicelunch.com It takes a few minutes to sign up for the new year. Download the app on your phone!
- **Paying the bills, purchasing, and contributing:** The Office Admin will send you instructions and a reminder to enroll on Blackbaud – our tuition and management system. You can set up your account to debit your checking and/or savings account or choose to pay with your credit card each month as you do with other bills you pay online. You will also be able to purchase Tiger wear, view the decrease in volunteer hours and track other spending. If you use our Extended Care program or have a preschooler, you will sign in and out and be billed through Procure. The PTG also uses betterworld.org for fundraisers – all easily used on your phone and paid with your debit and credit cards.
- **Communication:** The Tiger’s Tale is sent every Monday at 8:30am via Constant Contact. It provides information about current and upcoming activities as to what is happening in our school community. Teachers will communicate via ClassDojo in the younger grades and with Schoology. Assignments, grading and student progress can be found in real time on Schoology for grades 5th-8th. Please read your emails from the Office Admin. Always call and email with questions. Refer to the [Parent Student Handbook](#) for answers, as well.

Whole Child Education – What does that mean? We are all made up of different parts and attribute who we are to what we know to how we learn. St. Joseph School is blessed to provide learning opportunities and experiences in a variety of ways, for students to build confidence, to learn who they are, what they like so they can be their best selves and succeed. Students in grades TK-5th engage in P.E., Art, Music, and Spanish, with technology integrated into their weekly schedule. Middle School students enjoy weekly enrichment classes (minus Music) to increase their ability in self-exploration. Teachers use different learning strategies such as blended learning targeting individual instruction which leads to individual student success. Each classroom has an Instructional Assistant to help teachers identify and serve the different needs of students in the class. Our academic coaches work to provide additional and specific help some students may need.

In each grade teachers work with students to set Academic and Social/Emotional Learning goals. The teachers and administration partner with our School Counselor and parents to shepherd students along their yearly journey. The Counselor works with individuals and classes to help foster social/emotional growth helping students navigate to do their very best and delivers the message of kindness and gratitude toward each other and our greater community.

Students learn to understand Cultural Awareness, Dignity, Belonging, Inclusive and Equitable Education. Teachers in all grades implement Blended Learning to cultivate a Student-Centered classroom. Students put their faith in action by participating in school-wide Service-Learning activities, both inside and outside the school and parish communities. Students will use a variety of technological resources and hands-on activities providing learning different experiences. We have creative spaces where students have a diverse range of making things and projects, including robotics, media, arts, tools, and technology to expose students to a range requiring wonder, commitment, and teamwork. Beginning in 6th grade, parents of Middle Schoolers are asked to purchase a device that students will use at school and home with all the school applications they need for whole-child learning. Upon graduation, they will leave with their device to use in high school.

Gardening is integrated into each classroom. Hands-on and project-based learning is an important part of teamwork and self-discovery. Students learn about life cycles, responsibility, enterprise, sustainability and being stewards of the earth understanding the growing necessity of recycling and conservation. In 4th grade students can join the Green Team Club who

are responsible for modeling and teaching other students about the value of taking responsibility for their own actions pertaining to recycling and leaving a very light footprint.

St. Joseph School offers a variety of Extra-Curricular opportunities including:

- St. Joseph School Athletic programs / Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) sports.
- After School Clubs including the Art Club and Tiger Times newspaper is available to students in 5th thru 8th Grades.
- Drama Production is available to elementary and middle school students
- Competitive Robotics and eSports Leagues
- Boy and Girl Scouts meet on campus
- Enrichment classes taught by community professionals after school on campus including Band (M.U.S.E.), Chess, Movement, and Cooking are available for a fee

Continuity of Instruction and Communication:

Students and parents/guardians know what is expected and can monitor student progress and will support home-school communication.

- **Schoology** is an all-encompassing application for students and parents/guardians. Students rely on this platform from 5th through 8th grades. Teachers communicate and assign classwork, homework, assessments, and grading.
- **Google Classroom** integrates Docs, Sheets, Slides, Gmail, and Calendar into a cohesive and simple platform to manage our students and teacher communication. Using Google Classroom also helps us reduce our use of paper and makes us all better stewards of the environment. The learning advantage is that students use their executive functioning skills to help organize time and production of work, at school and at home.

Grading: PowerSchool is used for tracking students' formative and summative work. Students have access to PowerSchool starting in 4th Grade. 5th through 8th grades access Schoology encourages students and parents/guardians to have regular conversations about their student's progress.

Communication:

- Schoology is a "one-stop shop" to both communicate and find grades and assignments.
- Teachers communicate through Class Dojo and via email. ClassDojo is a communication app for the classroom. It connects teachers, parents/guardians, and students who use it to share photos, videos, and messages through the school day.
- We use ClassDojo to work together as a team, share in the classroom experience, and bring big ideas to life in their classrooms and homes. Class Dojo is used to communicate via text with teachers and classroom instructional assistants as well. Take a minute to sign up to use it on your phone! The classroom teacher will send you an invitation.
- Read bulletins and the weekly newsletter sent home via emails from Constant Contact (Tiger's Tale and other emails)
- Fliers and important announcements will be sent via email, posted on school website, or sent home with students on Thursdays
- Check the school website for information: <https://stjosephpinole.org>.
- Check the school calendar on the website for most current information
- Read Room Parent email blasts that will provide information specific to your child(ren) classroom
- Read the CYO Bulletin board and webpage on our website for updated information
- Join our PTG and school board meetings (meetings are also available online) to help us continue to create the culture of our school community
- Consider leading or being a part of a committee that leads with change and service
- Attend our Parent/Guardian Education Nights with presentations on a variety of topics
- Post great things about the school and "like" us on Facebook / Instagram

Before and After school Extended Care:

The Tiger's Den Extended Care provides a safe place for your child(ren) beyond the school day and serves TK-8th grade students. Our focus is to provide time to do homework, socialize, play and discover and make things. It is time to connect with friends to work on projects that focus on self-discovery and collaborative learning. We provide a healthy snack. All after school classes and clubs are supervised by after school staff. **Extended Care runs 6:30-7:40am and continues from 3:00-6:30pm.** Online Registration opens on August 1st. You can pay an hourly rate and use it when you need it.

We offer before and after school Extended Care, and welcome community professionals to teach specialized classes after school.

We offer Robotics, eSports and lego clubs along with CYO sports for grades 3rd through 8th grades. Information about these options will be detailed in our August parent letter, sent out the first week of August.

The students electronically sign in and adults sign out with a QR code and/or pin, and families are billed monthly.

Where to Park / How to Drop Off and Pick Up Children. Gates will open at 7:40am. You can drive through the gate on Prune Street and up to the corner of the elementary school, where your student can exit your vehicle. Students can also walk in through the gate from the upper Pear Street (post office) parking lot or the Plum Street gate. You can pick up your child(ren) entering through the Prune Street gate and driving between the Elementary and Middle School buildings. You may also want to meet them at the Plum Street or Pear Street parking lots. Staff have walkies that will help direct your students and connect them with you. If you choose to walk in, please park your vehicle in the lot adjacent to the school on Plum Street. Do not double-park in or outside the lot, you will be ticketed. Note: no left turns are permitted onto Tennent Street until after 8:30am.

We Wear a Uniform: Uniforms are one of many traditions uniting all Catholic schools and help create a sense of belonging.

- St. Joseph School requires all students to wear a uniform; most options are gender neutral. Please no skorts.
- Uniforms can be purchased via Classic Designs' website at www.eclassicdesigns.com; delivered free to campus.
- Some pieces can also be found at Walmart, Old Navy, Costco, and Target.
- Please label all uniform items with your child's name in indelible ink.
- See Parent Student Handbook for details (on school website).
- Monthly Free Dress Days/Birthday exemption - offer variety and individual expression - still come with restrictions for safety
- Don't be out of uniform... 3 infractions = miss out on next Free Dress Day

Really Important Information

1. Complete the online application for the upcoming 2026-2027 school year, found on the bottom of the home page of our website at www.stjosephinole.org. Click the tab, [Learn about the admission process](#).
2. Make an appointment with the office to have your child assessed and participate in an interview with the principal.
3. Assessment on the following days:
 - All interested students **entering Junior Kindergarten (K1) and/or Kindergarten (K2)** are assessed as a group. The time for the assessment will be provided at a later time. Students entering the **1st through 8th Grades** will be assessed individually. We are scheduling three (3) dates for student assessments and parent/guardian interviews: **Tues. January 13th, Tues. February 10th and Thurs. March 19th with sessions beginning at 3:30pm.**
4. Other things we want you to do or think about:
 - Parents/guardians should plan on accompanying their child.
 - If you cannot attend the scheduled dates above, please let the Office know so we can schedule another time when your student can be assessed after these dates. As a reminder, parents/guardians of students entering Grades 1st thru 8th, must also provide a copy of the student's current report card.

Once your child is accepted, the principal will phone you and send an official acceptance letter, you will then receive an invitation to finish registering your child for the next school year. At that time, you are required to pay the first installment of \$150 toward the total non-refundable registration fee, with the balance of the second installment due March 30th. An invoice will be sent to you from Blackbaud. Your completed form will be electronically sent to the office once you press the submit button.

If you have any questions pertaining to applying or enrolling at St. Joseph School, please contact Mrs. Corey in the front office. For financial questions please ask Ms. Mendoza at 510-724-0242. We are excited to show you why St. Joseph School is the best place to learn and grow for your child and your family.

With Gratitude,

Mrs. Natalie Lenz-Acuña

Mrs. Natalie Lenz-Acuña, Principal