ST. BERNARD'S School

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025



August 7, 2024

Dear St. Bernard's School Family,

Welcome back to a new school year filled with opportunities for learning, growth, and discovery! Whether you're a returning member of our community or joining us for the first time, we are delighted to have you as part of the St. Bernard's family.

At St. Bernard's, our commitment to unity, collaboration, and support remains at the forefront of our mission. Each student, parent, teacher, and staff member plays a vital role in our shared journey. From our youngest learners in Pre-K to our experienced fifth graders, we are all contributors to the culture that defines our school.

Throughout the year, we will offer numerous occasions for you to engage with our community. Weekly prayer services, monthly family events, parent-teacher conferences, and various special activities provide excellent opportunities to connect. We encourage you to participate actively and experience the spirit that makes St. Bernard's truly unique.

As you read through this Family Handbook, you will find essential information about our school's policies, programs, and extracurricular offerings. Our dedicated staff is always here to support you, so please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or need assistance. We are committed to ensuring your time at St. Bernard's is rewarding and enjoyable.

Thank you for being a part of the St. Bernard's School family. Here's to an incredible year ahead!

God Bless,

andrea Killourne-Hill

Principal, St. Bernard's School



St. Bernard's 2022-2023 Faculty and Staff

Father Martin Cline - Pastor Andrea Kilbourne-Hill - Principal Megan Czadzeck - Assistant Principal, Kindergarten Kristin Perry - Administrative Assistant Alison Miller - Pre-Kindergarten Jenni Evans - First Grade Karen Labonte - Second Grade Katie Gaylord - Third Grade Lauren Lazarus - Fourth Grade Rebecca Peria - Fifth Grade Kristi Colarusso - Learning Support Teacher Amanda Nolan - Pre-Kindergarten Aide Amy Daley - Art & Co-op Katie Smith - Music Christine Adams - French Adam Parker - Physical Education Peggy Carroll - Cafeteria Supervisor Tom Clark - After School Program Director Becky Sutton - Float Aide & After School Assistant Kennice Rich - After School Assistant Jo Larabie - Custodian Bernie Cushman - Maintenance Allison Rozon - Volunteer Service Coordinator Amy Hagar - Foster Grandparent - Cafeteria Assistant Geraldine Hague - Foster Grandparent - 1st Grade Assistant Eileen Haynes - Foster Grandparent - Librarian Cathy Nason - Foster Grandparent - Reading Teacher



St. Bernard's Education Council

President - Amy McCormick Vice President - Amanda Lavigne Secretary - Mindy Fredenburg Courtney Barden Deb Bates Hannah Carroll Kristina Clifford Dane DeGrace Chris Neill Ruth Schmidt

The History and Philosophy of St. Bernard's School

Diocese of Ogdensburg Mission Statement

Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Ogdensburg promote and proclaim the Gospel message in the context of the tradition and official teachings of the Catholic Church. Rooted in the humanities and sciences, they exhibit academic excellence and identify the uniqueness of their students. They foster a vision and desire in the students to develop as individuals and members of families and to continue life-long growth as Catholics and believers influencing society and the world.

St. Bernard's School

St. Bernard's School is a pre- kindergarten through fifth grade Catholic elementary school in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. The curriculum stresses academic achievement within a Catholic community.

The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the State of New York curriculum and Next Generation Learning standards, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas.

History

When Father Joseph Creeden arrived at St. Bernard's Parish in Saranac Lake in 1922, the parish lacked a school. Father Creeden immediately set out to correct this problem. He acquired a small house located on what is now the



school playground. The five room school house opened in the fall of 1922. During the second year of operation the school's enrollment increased to the point where a new school was needed.

The present building at 63 River St. was completed in 1924 and classes began in the fall. St. Bernard's added a sixth grade in 1926, a seventh grade in 1932, and an eighth grade in 1933.

In 1957 Father Zimmerman set out on a plan to build a new Catholic high school. In the fall of 1959 St. Pius X High School opened and at the time students in grades seven and eight were transferred from St. Bernard's to the new high school. Pius X remained open for 12 years, closing in June 1971. In 1962 a four room primary school was built next to St.Bernard's elementary building. Today the "Little School," as it is commonly referred to, houses our pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes, our Specials classroom, and the Parish Religious Ed classroom.

The original building now houses grades one through five, in addition to housing our cafeteria, AIS room, library, and After School program.

St. Bernard's School Mission Statement

St. Bernard's School, with its proud Roman Catholic heritage, is committed to promoting academic excellence, individual responsibility, and spiritual awareness in relationship with God and others.

St. Bernard's School Philosophy

St. Bernard's School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program in accord with the Curriculum Guide for Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Ogdensburg.

- To develop the total Catholic personality by instilling in the students a respect for life and reverence for Catholic living.
- To develop within the school a strong religious education program based on Catholic Theology, Scripture, Liturgical experience, and service so that each child will grow and develop in the Christian way of life.
- To facilitate the intellectual, social, and physical development of each child through a variety of instructional methods.



• To aid students in evaluation of their own capabilities and vocational possibilities.

It is the consensus of the faculty that every human being has the right to pursue knowledge corresponding with his/her dignity and God-given ability, regardless of background or sex. In the early years, education is of the utmost importance because through education and guidance the children of today become the Catholic citizens of tomorrow.

Catholic Education Goals

The primary goal of St. Bernard's School is to provide a faith-centered, quality academic institution in which the Gospel message of Jesus, liturgy, and social concerns are integrated into the total learning experience of the students, faculty, staff, and parents. In order to foster our mission and philosophy, the administration and faculty aspire to the following goals:

- To assist our students in being open to the Gospel message in order to experience a living relationship with Christ; through prayer, liturgy, instruction, community, and service to others.
- To guide our students to encounter Christ in ourselves and others and to recognize and share the gifts and talents He has given us.
- To offer our students a challenging, quality academic program providing students the opportunity to achieve their full potential.
- To direct our students to think independently and critically and to be accountable for their choices and behavior; both academic and social.

Faculty and Staff Commitment

In order to attain our goals, the faculty and staff commit to the following objectives:

- To model and teach Catholic values and principles to inspire faith formation.
- To practice the Catholic attitude of acceptance of each student and parent regardless of religion, race, color, gender, or national origin.
- To demonstrate competency and professionalism in our performance as educators.



- To support parents in their role as primary educators of their children and to foster regular, open communication.
- To respect confidential information concerning students and their families.

Parent Responsibilities

The education of the child begins in the family. Parents, as the primary educators, communicate, develop, and foster values, knowledge, and skills in the home environment. Parents make a choice for their child when they enroll him/her in St. Bernard's for an experience of Catholic education that fosters spiritual and moral development, with academic achievement.

Therefore, parents are encouraged:

- To support the child's practice of the Catholic faith by taking him or her to weekend mass regularly.
- To provide the appropriate materials and space for study and to show an interest in the child's school work, progress, and activities.
- To support St. Bernard's policies and the authority of the administration and faculty and instill lifelong attitudes of respect for all authority.
- To encourage the child to complete home assignments and to study his/her lessons and to check homework when requested/necessary.
- To insist the child obeys the regulations and principles of good behavior, including classroom rules and practices good manners at all times.
- To consistently require the child's accountability for academic and social behavior.
- To discuss concerns/problems appropriately with the faculty or staff, mindful of what is in the best interest of the child.

Student Responsibilities

In order to fully benefit from the opportunities offered at St. Bernard's, the student should:

- Appreciate the opportunity for Catholic education and participate fully and enthusiastically in the academic experience.
- Learn and apply basic truths and values of the Catholic faith and



acquire the discipline to live them.

- Think independently, learning to make sound judgments based on Christian principles.
- Become competent in decision-making, accepting consequences and developing a sense of responsibility.
- Recognize their individual talents and learn to use them to become a productive member of the community.
- Develop and practice desirable virtues in personal relationships.
- Acquire and utilize good communication skills.
- Commit personal service to God, family, church, and community.
- Respect and care for the school property and supplies.

The ABCs of St. Bernard's School

After School Program

The St. Bernard's After School Program runs from dismissal to 5:15pm each school day. Tom Clark is the director and there are various program assistants. Children from St. Bernard's pre-kindergarten to 5th grade may attend. Cost is \$5 per hour. Payment will be due biweekly.

Attendance

St. Bernard's K-5 school day is 8:00 to 2:10. The Pre-K day is 8:00-1:00. Students are expected to be in school for the 8:00 AM bell.

If your child will be tardy:

 Please call the school office or email Ms. Perry (<u>perry@stbernardsschool.org</u>) before 8:15am if your child will need a school lunch.

If your child will be absent from school:

- Call or email the office in the morning to let us know your child will not be in school.
- Write a note or email stating the date and reason for absence.



If your child arrives after 8am:

- Buzz the main office door and wait to be let in.
- Sign your child in.
- School staff will walk PreK and Kindergarten students to their classroom if they arrive after 8am.

If your child will be picked up early from school:

- Write a note/email telling the time your child will be picked up and who will be picking him/her up.
- Buzz the office door and wait to be let in.
- Sign your child out.

If your child is going to ride the bus to a location different from their regular bus stop:

• Write a note telling where you would like him/her dropped off.

If your child's normal end of the day schedule is different from normal:

• Send an email or bloomz message to the teacher or email/call the office.

If there is a change in plans during the school day:

• Call the school office.

Teachers often do not check their Bloomz or email after the lunch period, so if there is a change in plans during the day, please call the school office

Student absences from school that are recognized as excused absences:

- sickness
- death in the family
- religious observances
- health clinics
- impassable roads due to inclement weather
- approved, school-sponsored trips
- required court appearances



Before Care

St. Bernard's offers free Before Care to allow children to arrive as early as 7:15 for the school day. Students should come into the school using the library door or ring the front doorbell and go directly to the cafeteria for Before Care. They may eat breakfast there or play quiet games.

Birthdays

Children who wish to may bring in one snack for the class to celebrate his/her birthday which will be given out at the discretion of the teacher depending on the class schedule. Due to allergies and intolerances, please refrain from bringing in lunch items for birthday celebrations.

Invitations for birthday parties can not be handed out at school unless every child in the class is being invited to the party.

Cell Phones, Electronic Equipment, and Toys

Students may not use electronic equipment that they bring from home at school. Students may not use cell phones at school. If your child needs a cell phone, they may keep it in their backpack (off) or it may be given to the office staff to keep safe until after school. Games, toys, stuffed animals, and cards (Pokemon, Yugioh, etc.) should not be brought to school. These items are not allowed at school unless requested for a classroom activity. They will be confiscated.

Closings or Delays

When school must be delayed, closed, or dismissed early due to weather conditions or other emergencies, announcements will be made through Bloomz and FACTS alerts. If the SLCS district delays or is closed due to weather or other emergencies, St. Bernard's will also delay or close.

Clubs

St. Bernard's School is excited to introduce our new co-curricular enrichment Clubs program, taking place on Friday afternoons before our prayer service. These clubs provide a unique opportunity for students to explore various interests, develop new skills, and engage with peers in a fun and educational environment. Each club session will last for approximately five weeks.



Code of Conduct

Standards of discipline are expected to ensure that the learning environment is orderly and conducive to learning for all students. Standards of discipline require respect for one another, staff, and for school property, compliance toward faculty and staff members, and appropriate social behavior.

Classroom teachers will create classroom rules and expectations with their class at the beginning of the year.

If students show a pattern of rule breaking or challenging behaviors, a Behavior Management Plan may be made with the principal and classroom teacher.

Students may be sent to the principal for severely disruptive behavior, unsafe behavior, or if the student has hit a threshold of chances within their classroom. The principal will give the student a break, discuss behavior, including antecedents, and propose some resolutions to try.

Communication

The school recognizes that parents are partners in education. For this reason, communication between families and the faculty and administration is very important. Any parent interested in speaking to the principal should call the office, 891-2830 or email <u>kilbourne-hill@stbernardsschool.org</u>. Parents can reach their child's teacher using their school email or through Bloomz messenger.

The school-wide newsletter, Paws & Peaks, will go out on Mondays. These newsletters will have important information on school events, celebrations, and happenings around the school. Please make a habit of reading Paws & Peaks to stay updated.

Curriculum

The following curriculum will be used throughout the 2024-2025 school year. Teachers will often supplement this curriculum with additional resources throughout the year. Please direct any curriculum questions to the Principal.



ELA - Phonics to Reading (K-2), Ready Reading and Writing (3-5), Building Spelling Skills (K-5), CKLA (Pre-K), Handwriting without Tears (Pre-K-5) Math - Sadlier Math (K-5), Bridges (Pre-k) Religion - Gospel Weeklies (Pre-K-5) Science - Mystery Science (k-5), Scholastic News (Pre-K) Social Studies - Studies Weekly (2-5), Scholastic (Pre-K-1)

Digital Citizenship

St. Bernard's School will be implementing a digital citizenship curriculum throughout the year. Digital citizenship refers to using technology appropriately and staying safe while doing so.

All students and parents must sign and return the St. Bernard's School Acceptable Use of Technology form within the first week of school.

Drop Off & Pick Up Procedure

Morning Drop-Off (not including Before Care)

- Students may be dropped off between 7:40-8:00am.
- Cars should follow the "drop-off/pick-up" traffic flow Entering from Church St. and exiting onto River St.
- Please pull all the way forward before saying your good-byes to children and allowing them to exit your car.
- 1st-5th grade students will go directly to their classroom where their classroom teacher will have morning activities set up for them. Students who need to eat breakfast will be able to get a grab-and-go breakfast from Ms. Perry.
- Pre-K and Kindergarten students will go directly to the playground where they will have morning recess.

If you feel the need to get out of your car at drop-off, please park against the church or school instead of using the drop-off lane. Do not park in the drop-off lane.

• Morning prayer and announcements will begin at 8am to start the instructional day.

Drop-Off for Before Care (7:15-7:40)

• Use the "drop-off/pick-up" traffic flow - entering from Church St. and departing to River St.



- Students should enter the school using the library door and head immediately to the cafeteria
- Students may have breakfast in the cafeteria if they arrive before 7:40.

Pre-Kindergarten Pick-Up - 1:00pm

- Students will be dismissed at 1:00pm.
- Please park and pick-up your child at the Pre-K building, using the Pre-K bell.

K-5 Afternoon Pick-Up (2:10-2:20)

- Dismissal will begin at 2:10.
- Cars should follow the "drop-off/pick-up" lane system Entering from Church St. and exiting onto River St. **PLEASE DO NOT ARRIVE EARLIER THAN 2:10 FOR PICK-UP.**
- Please pull all the way forward. Your child's teacher or staff member will get your attention before releasing your child to you
- In cases of inclement weather, students may be dismissed from their classrooms instead, with an On-Duty staff member calling individual students when caregivers arrive.

After School Pick-Up (2:20-5:15)

• Families can use the bus circle in the front of the school or park in the back while picking up students from the After School Program. Please ring the front door (lake front door) and sign your child out from there.

Emergency Response Plan

Throughout the year, students will participate in many drills as part of our Emergency Response Plan, including Fire Drills, Shelter-In-Place Drills, Evacuation Drills, and Lockdown Drills. Students will be prepared by their classroom teachers before drills take place.

Field Trips

Classes may take walking field trips throughout the school year to explore our neighborhood, village, or get exercise. Teachers may also schedule field trips that may involve more extensive travel throughout the year. Teachers will



notify families of these field trips with at least a week's advance notice. Any chaperone who joins a field trip MUST have

completed the Virtus Child Safety Course, submitted a current background check, and signed a Code of Conduct.

Homework Policy

Regular homework for St. Bernard's School students is reading for enjoyment. This can include storytime with an adult or reading independently. Occasionally, homework is assigned to practice the lessons developed during class and provide opportunities for skill development or spelling practice.

Home Communication Folders (BEE Folders)

Students will bring completed work and school notes home in a home folder. Please, check their folder each night. Talk with them about the work they've been doing and check for any notes from the teacher or school. This helps to reinforce the importance of school work. Use the folder to send in any notes or money (labeled in an envelope, please).

Meals

Breakfast

Students may have free breakfast in the cafeteria if they arrive before 7:40am. If they arrive after 7:40am, they should get a "grab-and-go" breakfast from Ms. Perry's office.

Snack

Students should bring a healthy snack to school every day. They may also choose a snack item from the "*Snack Shack*" if they did not bring a snack. *Snack Shack* snacks are \$.25 each.

Lunch

Students may bring their lunch from home or order the school lunch. Our school lunch is provided through the Saranac Lake Central School District. A menu will be sent home each month or it can be found on the school district website <u>www.slcs.org</u>.

If students buy lunch, they can buy the Entree, an alternative sandwich, or a PBJ with sides. Milk comes with all lunches. They can also buy just milk.

There is no charge for school lunch, but milk alone is \$.50.



Families who may qualify for Free or Reduced lunch should complete an application and submit it to the office by September 11th. **Even though all students receive free lunch, it is essential for reimbursement that all families who may qualify for federal free/reduced lunch complete an application.**

Medication

In order for a child to receive any medication, prescription or non-prescription, at school please, provide the following:

- A written request signed by the parent and physician. The request should include the name of the medication, dosage, time it should be given during the school day, and duration. Forms are available in the office.
- Medication must be in its original container and have a fixed label indicating the student's name, medication name, dosage, method of administration, time of administration, and interval between doses.
- Medication must be brought to school by the parent.

Monthly Themes

All of our classrooms will be using the Friendzy Biblical SEL program this year, and we will follow the units together to help build school-wide cohesion.

September - S.P.A.R.K - Keep the Friendship Flame Burning

October - We Are One

November - Listen Up!

December - Stress Less - Breathe Easy

January - Bounce Back

February - Know Your Limit

March - Uniquely You

April / May - Sort it Out

June - Do The Next Right Thing



Parent-Teacher Conferences

Individual conferences will be scheduled twice throughout the year. In the fall, teachers will meet with parents only. In the spring, teachers will help students prepare for student-led conferences and students and families will meet together with the teacher. Teachers will send out Bloomz conference sign-ups 3 weeks in advance of conferences.

Conference schedules is as follows: November 25, 2024 - 3:00-6:00 November 26, 2024 - 7:30-11:30 February 27, 2025 - 3:00-6:00 February 28, 2025 - 10:30-1:30

Playground Rules

- Everyone can play
 - Make everyone feel welcome
 - Listen to different ideas
- Respect your friend's space
- Keep hands off your friends
 - No pushing or grabbing
- Keep your feet off your friends
 - No kicking or tripping
- Use the playground equipment correctly.
 - \circ Swing straight back and forth, not side to side
 - \circ Don't twist the swings
 - \circ Slide down the slide, don't run up the slide
 - One person on the monkey bars at a time
 - Use the monkey bars, only if you can reach them, don't jump to grab them. First grade and higher only on the monkey bars
 - \circ Don't lift children up to reach the bars
- Be a good sport

Photographs

Pictures of students other than your own child taken at school or school events should not be posted on personal social media pages. School personnel will only post pictures on the school website and facebook page of



students who have submitted a photo release form.

Prayer Service

One class or the principal will be in charge of the prayer service each week. Prayer Services will be held on Fridays at 1:30pm in the school cafeteria. The presentation will relate to the religious instruction in the classroom, the

Friendzy unit, or the time of the year (holy day, season). Student presentations may include songs, skits, artwork with a script, readers theater, poetry, etc. Presentation will be followed by announcements from the principal, pastor, or guest on upcoming events, PAW awards, birthdays, etc. Families are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Report Cards

Report cards will be available on FACTS portal and sent home at the end of each ten week marking period. There will be parent/teacher conferences at the end of the first quarter and midway through the third quarter.

School Calendar

The full school-year calendar can be found on the school website and in FACTS portal. Events will be added to the school Google Calendar. Please feel free to sync this calendar with your own calendar application to stay updated. Monthly calendars will also be sent home with students, and families may receive additional information about classroom specific activities from classroom teachers.

Student Support Team

If a staff member develops a concern about a student's academic progress, behavior, or emotional well-being, they may refer the student to the principal to create a Student Support Team (SST). The SST will discuss the concerns and suggest interventions to help remediate those concerns. The SST consists of members of the faculty, the principal, and other personnel, such as speech therapist, remedial personnel, school counselor, nurse, etc. as needed for the particular concern. Classroom and/or school-wide strategies are put in place for most students referred. The SST may recommend Academic Intervention Services for students.



School Mass

Students in grades 3-5 will attend weekly mass on Wednesday at 8:30am. We will have full school masses once a month. Mass times and dates will be communicated to parents via email and on the school calendar.

School Visitors

All visitors must sign-in at the school office.

Specials

All classes will have a daily special. Monday - Physical Education (Spirit Wear!) Tuesday - French Wednesday - Art Thursday - Music Friday - Co-op (Cooperative Learning)

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

All teachers will implement the Friendzy Biblical SEL program which helps students develop responsibility and make positive interactions with their peers. SEL helps students identify their feelings and emotions and gives them strategies to successfully express themselves.

Tuition for 2024-2025

At St. Bernard's School, we prioritize affordability while maintaining high educational standards. Our per pupil cost is \$8,443, but thanks to generous parish subsidies and successful advancement efforts, we are able to offer the lowest tuition rates in the diocese to all families.

2024-2025 Tuition:

- First Student: \$3,600
- Additional Students: \$2,700 each

This means that even though the actual cost per pupil is higher, all families benefit from significantly reduced tuition fees due to our commitment to accessibility through financial support and advancement efforts.

In addition, we utilize a Fair Share tuition policy to ensure that all students,



regardless of economic ability, are able to attend St. Bernard's School.

To apply for financial assistance, please complete the financial assistance forms attached to this sheet and return them to the office. The principal will then contact you to discuss a financial assistance package.

Uniforms

The St. Bernard's School uniform for K-5 students is as follows:

Bottoms - Navy, black, or khaki pants, shorts, skirts, or skorts

Tops - White, gray, or blue (any shade) collared shirts

Jumpers/Dresses - Plaid, navy, black, or khaki jumpers or dresses with blue, white, or grey leggings, tights, or shorts underneath.

Plain (no logo) fleece, sweatshirt or sweaters in white, gray, or blue are acceptable.

Mondays are Spirit Wear days. Students may wear the school uniform or St. Bernard's Spiritwear with solid blue, black, or khaki athletic shorts or pants.

We have a LARGE amount of gently used (and sometimes even brand new) uniform items. Please contact the school office if you are in need of any uniform items.

There is no uniform for Pre-K students.

Volunteer and Fundraising Opportunities

Volunteers are helpful for recess, lunch, and during special events. If you would like to volunteer to help during the school day, please contact the principal. ALL adults who come into contact with students (paid and volunteer) are required to take a child safety course, complete a background check, and sign a Code of Conduct.

Tuition payments only make up a small part of our overall operating costs. Therefore, we rely on fundraising, parish and diocesan support, scholarships, endowment funds, and volunteers.

St. Bernard's School runs many fundraisers throughout the year. Some



include: a golf tournament, raffles, auctions, holiday calendars, the Black Fly 5K, and a Walkathon. A calendar of our

fundraising events will be sent home at the beginning of the year.

As a member of the St. Bernard's School community, you will have the opportunity to support fundraisers and volunteer your talents. Please consider volunteering with these essential activities when asked.

Withdrawal Policy

- Families must notify the school in writing if a student is to be withdrawn from the school.
- Registered students who withdraw before the first day of school are responsible for 1/3 of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw between the first day of school and the start of the second semester are responsible for ½ of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw after the second semester begins are responsible for the full tuition amount.
- Early withdrawal penalties and obligations are waived if the school asks a student to leave the program for any reason.