

Parent & Student Handbook

2025 - 2026
SCHOOL YEAR



Dr. Tony Watlington | Superintendent
Donna Ragsdale | Assistant Superintendent - LN1
Lisa Wilmer | Principal
Jeanine Wells-Hughes | Assistant Principal
Marianne Kennedy | Assistant Principal

J.W. Catharine
6600 Chester Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19142
215.400.8150 (Main)
215.400.8151 (Fax)

Principal's Welcome

August 2025

Dear Catharine Family,

Welcome to the start of the 2025-2026 school year! As a member of the J.W. Catharine family, I am excited to re-launch all of the learning, community, and connection that our students, staff, and families expect from us.

Our school leadership team, in addition to our teachers and other support staff, has worked extremely hard over the summer to develop and enhance our learning program. Our planning for our educational experience is based on our guiding principles:

- Ensuring the health and safety of all scholars and staff
- Protecting our mission and vision
- Being adaptive
- Keeping relationships close
- Communicating intentionally

As we begin to work together, we remain focused on two goals: to protect learning and to promote home and school connectedness.

Protect Learning: Our goal is always to ensure that students continue to learn and develop. It is critical that we continue to hold ourselves accountable with engaging students with rigorous curriculum and high quality learning tasks that are paired with high quality instruction. We know that there has been unfinished instruction from the spring. Therefore, protecting our time with our students then becomes even more important. We will protect our time for students by providing instruction that contains the elements of effective teaching practices with time for student individualization. We are also committed to protecting teacher development as well- we provide weekly opportunities for teachers through professional learning, collaboration, and data analysis so that we are prepared to provide the best possible experience for our scholars.

Promote Home and School Connectedness: We see the value in our connection with students, families, and with each other. We will continue to connect with families through personalized calls home, parent conferences, and consistently updating our website, and increased use of our social media pages. We want to keep you updated on the most recent and important information. Therefore, please check out our website [Joseph W. Catharine](#), which provides more detailed information regarding our instructional and safety procedures.

We look forward to partnering with you this year.

Ms. Lisa Wilmer | Principal

Mrs. Marianne Kennedy & Mrs. Jeanine Well | Assistant Principals

Table of Contents

Principal's Welcome	2
Table of Contents	3
School Personnel	6
School Pride	9
Mission Statement	9
Vision Statement	9
Colors & Mascot	9
Guidelines To Support Instruction	10
Procedures Admission	10
Procedures Dismissal	10
Inclement Weather Admission	10
Inclement Weather Dismissal	10
Delayed Opening	10
Emergency School Closing	11
Early Dismissals	11
Scheduled District-Wide Early Dismissal Days	11
Attendance Excused Absence	11
Attendance Unexcused Absence	11
Attendance Lateness	12
Daily Operations	13
Breakfast & Lunch	13
Bus Procedures	13
Visitors	13
Volunteers	14
School Uniforms	14
Catharine School Uniform	15
Communications	16
Updating Personal Information	16
Class Dojo	16
Monthly Calendar	16
Catharine Website & Social Media	16
Parent Portal	16
Academics	17
Report Cards & Interim Reports	17
Grading	17
Honor Roll	17
Textbooks	17

Homework	18
Chromebooks	18
Student Support Services	19
Counselor	19
MTSS Multi-Tiered System of Support	19
Child Abuse & Neglect	19
School Nurse	19
Medical Neglect	20
Mandated Health Screenings	20
Special Education	20
Esol Services	20
Intensive Behavioral Health Services (Ibhs)	20
Code of Conduct	21
Student Safety	21
Parent / Guardian Responsibilities	21
Student Responsibilities	21
Student Safety Bullying	21
Student Safety Harassment	21
SDP Policy 252	22
Electronic Device Policy	22
Student Discipline	23
Act 26	23
Student Discipline Problem Solving	24
School Activities & Events	26
PBIS Positive Behavior Intervention and Support	26
Cougar Corner Store	26
Class Trips	26
School Assemblies	26
Student Safety Program	26
Band and/or Orchestra	26
Student of the Month Awards The "Student of the Month"	26
After School Clubs	27
Please Note	27

School Personnel

Position	Name	Location	Email hit link
Teaching Staff			
AS K-1	Andrew Crookston	103	
AS 2-3	Shantell Corbin	104	
AS 3-5	Tim Noone	308	tnoone
Classroom Assistant			TBD
1:1		104	TBS
1:1	Amira Cobb		acobb
1:1	Charnetta East		ceast
1:1	Marquita Williams		mwilliams12
1:1	Rachel Smalls		
Classroom Assistant	Eleanor Townsend	308	elblake
1:2	Gwendolyn Walker	308	gwalker2
K	Ericka Wright	106	epwright
K	Michelle Moore	107	mmoore
K	Kayla Rodriguez (Ricketts)	108	Kayla Rodriguez
1	Aubrey Holmstrom	204	Aubrey Holmstrom
1	Emily O'Connor	205	Eucal O'Connor
1	Nicolette Morrone	206	Nicolette Morrone
2	Danielle Lance	201	Danielle Lance
2	Jill Shulman	202	Jill Shulman
2	Deborah Desir	203	Deborah Desir
3	Jaclyn Charrington	209	jdtrout
3	Trecia Stokes	210	Trecia Stokes
3	Wanda Ellis	211	Wanda Ellis
LS - K-3	Maeve McKaig	207	Maeve Mckaig
4 - Math	Sherrel Pigford	307	Sherell Pigford
4 - Literacy	Colleen Krautheim	311	Colleen Krautheim
4 - Science	Lauren O'Doherty	301	Lauren Odoherty
5 -ELA	Natalie Lovecchio	303	Natalie Lovecchio
ESOL - EL Point	Tamara Gerber	309	Tamara Gerber
ESOL	Elissa Brandon	309	Elissa Brandon @

School Personnel

Position	Name	Location	Email hit link
Teaching Staff			
AS K-1	Andrew Crookston	103	
AS 2-3	Shantell Corbin	104	
AS 3-5	Tim Noone	308	tnoone
Classroom Assistant			TBD
1:1		104	TBS
Psychologist	Kayla Lesiskof	311A	klesisko
Specialists			
Health/PE	Sean Fennell	Basement	Sean Fennell
STEM/Digital Literacy	Lauren O'doherty	301	Lauren Odoherty
Science	Andrea Wallace	305	Toni Pendleton
Art	Rebeca Baudille	208	Rebeca Baudille
Band	Denise Corrigan	Auditorium	DCorrigan
Head Start			
Teacher, Room 102	Rasheedah Mallory	Annex	rmallory@philasd.org
Teacher, Room 102	Daphne Owens	Annex	DSowell
Teacher, Room 213	Vaughn Johnson	Annex	VJohnson2
Assistant, Room 213	Daisy Burbage	Annex	DBurbage
Teacher,			
Climate Staff		Annex	
Facilities			
Building Engineer	Wayne Stewart	wstewart	
Custodial Assistant			
General Cleaner			
General Cleaner			
School Climate			
Climate Specialist	Mary Allen-Reid		MAllenReid
6 Hours	Sherri Croulet		scroulet
6 Hours	Shane Croulet		
4 Hours	Blanche		
4 Hours			
Food Services			

School Personnel

Position	Name	Location	Email hit link
Teaching Staff			
AS K-1	Andrew Crookston	103	
AS 2-3	Shantell Corbin	104	
AS 3-5	Tim Noone	308	tnoone
Classroom Assistant			TBD
1:1		104	TBS
Food Service Lead	Kristin Wilson	Cafeteria	

School Pride

J.W. Catharine is a Kindergarten through Fifth grade Elementary School located in the Southwest Region of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. We house 3 classrooms for each grade from Kindergarten through Fifth grade. In addition, we offer learning support and autistic support classes. We also offer pre-kindergarten classes in the Annex building. Students will be provided the opportunity to participate in Health & Physical Education, Art, STEM, and Writing specials.

The school offers a variety of academic and social activities to ensure we meet the needs of the whole child.

Mission Statement

- Create a rich experience in the classroom that provides a solid foundation for independent learning.
- Develop positive relationships with students to build respectful and responsible young people.
- Foster a safe environment so that all of our students can learn and grow in a positive atmosphere.
- Build a community between home and school.

Vision Statement

The Catharine School vision is to prepare our students to be respectful, responsible students ready to succeed in school and progress to higher levels of academic excellence.

Colors & Mascot

School Colors: Blue #205593 & Yellow #f7cc1b

School Mascot: Cougar



Guidelines To Support Instruction

Procedures | Admission

School hours are from 7:30 AM until 2:09 PM. There is a 30-minute lunch period and 15-minute recess during the day. Students are expected to be in the schoolyard at 7:20 AM. When the bell rings, all students are expected to walk to their lines in the schoolyard. Teachers will then escort students into the building. The yard will not be supervised before 7:10 AM.

No children are to be in the yard without supervision.

Procedures | Dismissal

Students will be dismissed in the school yard each day - weather permitting. Students will exit the building and line up at their classroom number with their teacher. Parents/Guardians are expected to remain behind the gate until a staff member opens the gate. Gates will be opened at 2:05 PM each day for parents/guardians to meet their child.

Inclement Weather | Admission

Students in Grades K-2 will enter through the auditorium and sit in designated areas.

Students in Grades 3-5 will enter through the auditorium or rear entrance in the school yard and proceed to the gymnasium to sit in designated areas.

Inclement Weather | Dismissal

Students in Kindergarten will remain in their classrooms. Parents/Guardians will enter through the main entrance and proceed to the classrooms for pick-up.

Students in Grades 1-2 will be seated by classroom in the auditorium. There will be signage posted to safely exit the building. Parents are welcome to meet staff at the 66th street entrance.

Students in Grades 3-5 will be dismissed from the school directly to the gate to meet parents/guardians or walk home.

Delayed Opening

Due to inclement weather or other emergencies, it may be necessary to cancel school for the day or have a "delayed opening". If this should occur, parents and caregivers are asked to tune in to the local news, visit the school district's website www.philasd.org, or call the district's parent hotline at 215-400-4636. A message will also be posted on Class Dojo

Emergency School Closing

In cases of severe weather conditions, which might cause schools to close early, please listen to radio station KYW 1060 for reports concerning “ALL PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS”. Families should develop an emergency plan for your child, in the event of an early dismissal due to weather or any other emergency. In the event of an emergency which requires that the staff and students be evacuated from our building, our relocation site will be:

Tilden Middle School's Auditorium
6601 Elmwood Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19142

Upon safe arrival, teachers will contact all parents/guardians.

Early Dismissals

No early dismissals, for any student (K- 5) are permitted after 1:30 PM without documentation. Remember, normal dismissal time is 2:09 PM; any child who needs to be dismissed prior to this time needs to send in a written request to the homeroom teacher giving full explanation and time requested. This ensures that your child is ready for you at the desired time. Your child will be called to the main office and escorted to the designated area to be signed out and picked up. Parents and/or guardians must have proper identification when picking up a student.

As a reminder, please try to arrange appointments for after school hours.

Scheduled District-Wide Early Dismissal Days

On early dismissal days, all students will be dismissed at 11:09 PM. Please make the necessary arrangements for your children on these days.

Attendance | Excused Absence

The basic reasons for excused absences are personal illness, death in the family, quarantine, and other urgent reasons. The term “urgent reasons” is to be strictly construed as primarily affecting the pupils themselves, rather than some member of the family. When your child returns to school after an absence, he/she must bring a signed note from you explaining the absence; absence notes are sent to the main office.

Attendance | Unexcused Absence

The definition of unexcused (illegal) absence includes parental neglect, illegal employment and truancy. When a student has ten (10) days of unexcused absence, not necessarily consecutive, his/her names must be reported to the district truancy officer.

Attendance | Lateness

Students are considered late after 7:30 AM. Students having five days of unexcused lateness, not necessarily consecutive, will have his/her names reported to the district's truancy officer. Consistent lateness is a sign of an interrupted learning experience and will be dealt with accordingly. For example, students may not be permitted to participate in school-sponsored activities.

Daily Operations

Breakfast & Lunch

All children are invited to participate in our free breakfast and free lunch program. If you wish for your child to participate in the breakfast program, they should arrive at the school by 7:10 AM. Students must enter through the cafeteria entrance. Breakfast will conclude at 7:25 AM; students will report to their classroom lines to wait for their teachers. Kindergarten students will eat breakfast in their classrooms through September only. Then, Kindergarten students will eat in the cafeteria and be escorted back to their classroom line by a Student Safety.

Students are expected to observe good manners at all times. Lunch may be brought from home, but no child is permitted to leave the building to buy lunch and bring it back to school. Glass bottles are not permitted. No candy, soda, or gum is permitted in school.

Lunch Times	
10:15 AM - 11:00 AM	Kindergarten & First Grade Lunch
11:00 AM - 11:45 AM	Second Grade & Third Grade Lunch
11:45 AM - 12:30 PM	Fourth Grade & Fifth Grade Lunch

Bus Procedures

If your child is a bus student, they must obey very simple but strict rules of safety when riding. This includes:

- All children must be seated at all times.
- All children should engage in conversations that have an acceptable level of noise.
- No pushing, shoving, vandalism, throwing things, fighting, tripping, inappropriate language, or any other acts which may jeopardize the safety of passengers or the driver.

Violating these safety rules will result in any of the following disciplinary actions:

- Written warning to the parents/guardian
- Mandatory parent conference with administration/designee
- Suspension from bus for 5 days with written notice
- Permanent suspension from bus with written notice

Visitors

At Catharine, we follow the SDP Policy for Visitors: Parents/guardians are encouraged to be an active participant in their student's education. Visits to schools should be scheduled in advance whenever possible. To ensure that all of our buildings are safe and successful learning environments, all visitors, whether they have scheduled a visit or not, must first report to the main office to sign in, state the reason for their visit, present photo identification (if possible), and receive authorization from a school administrator to proceed with the visit. School administrators cannot guarantee a meeting at the time of an unscheduled visit. In the event that school administrators are not able to meet with a visiting parent/guardian during an unscheduled visit, the school will reach out within 2 school days to schedule a meeting.

When visiting school property, parents/guardians are expected to:

- Support the policies of The School District of Philadelphia, Code of Conduct and school handbook.
- Respect the rights of others, including students and staff.
- Model appropriate behavior for your student.
- Respect all members of the school community and comply with school norms.
- Refrain from all abusive and profane language.
- Refrain from all physical confrontation and refrain from encouraging/inciting physical confrontation.
- Refrain from bringing weapons of any kind onto school property. Bringing weapons of any kind onto school property will result in an immediate exclusion.

Volunteers

Your involvement in your child's education is critical to his or her success. We recognize the diversity of talents and experiences of our family partners. Therefore, we encourage parents/guardians to choose from a list of volunteer opportunities offered at our school. **Opportunities include:** volunteering in the cafeteria, recess yard, coordinating fundraisers, being a chaperone on school trips, or tutoring students in special activities. All volunteers must possess a child abuse clearance and criminal background check. To volunteer at J.W. Catharine, please contact Ms. Bute, SISL -vbute@philasd.org.

School Uniforms

The School District of Philadelphia has adopted a mandatory uniform policy for all students in Kindergarten through grade twelve. By fully embracing a uniform policy, we work purposefully to promote a positive school climate and instill self pride in our students and school community. All J.W. Catharine students must wear their uniforms daily. No hoodies are permitted. Our staff will work

valiantly to ensure that all students are in uniform compliance. Students not in full compliance will be disciplined accordingly. For example, students may not be permitted to participate in school-sponsored activities. Should you need assistance with acquiring uniforms, please contact Ms. Fair, Counselor - mjfair@philasd.org.

Catharine School Uniform

Everyday Uniform	
Allowed	Prohibited
Yellow Shirt	Hoodies
Navy blue bottoms	Jeans
Black or brown shoes	Slides and open toed shoes
Gym Uniform	
Allowed	Prohibited
Yellow or Navy Blue Shirt	Hoodies
Navy Blue Sweatpants	Jeans
Sneakers	Slides and open toed shoes

Communications

Updating Personal Information

It is important that the school and teacher have emergency information, including current telephone numbers of parents or guardians at home and at work, and also the name of another adult that can be reached in case of an emergency. Cell phone numbers are helpful even if the parent is working. We will text in an emergency. **If at any time during the school year your phone number changes or your address changes, please advise the school immediately. Up-to-date records are essential to handling emergency situations.**

Class Dojo

Communication from Catharine will come in a variety of ways. Class Dojo is an application which is used to communicate daily information. You are also able to directly message classroom teachers. Please see Dean Johnson or Ms. Bute, SISL for assistance.

Monthly Calendar

A student event calendar will be sent home at the beginning of each month. Important events such as interim reports, half days, days off, field trips, testing, etc. will be identified. We will also post a copy on Class Dojo.

Catharine Website

catharine.philasd.org

Parent Portal

The School District of Philadelphia’s Parent & Family Portal gives you access to valuable information about your child’s education and school. Please reach out to Ms. Bute, SISL - vbute@philasd.org for support in signing up.

Academics

Report Cards & Interim Reports

For the 2025-2026 school year Report Cards are issued four times. Interim reports are distributed every 6-8 weeks. **Parents, if you are not receiving interim reports please let the school know.** Individual parent conferences will be scheduled 3 times a year to discuss your child’s progress. Your child will bring home more specific information closer to conference times.

Marking Period	Timeline
First	November 27, 2023 Full Day
Second	February 1 & 2, 2024 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Third	April 4 & 5, 2024 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Fourth	Report Cards will be sent home

It is our goal to maintain a positive parent/teacher relationship. However, teachers are unable to speak to parents during instructional time. Therefore, if you need to speak to your child’s teacher concerning their academics or behavior, please feel free to call and schedule a time (215-400-8150).

Grading

It is the goal of the J. W. Catharine School to develop programs and policies that will help improve the level of achievement of its students and to accurately assess that achievement. Major unit tests, quizzes, reports, homework, etc. are considered in determining grades. Please note the following policy:

Letter Grades Standard Rubric Letter Average Range	
Letter	Grade

A	90 - 100 Advanced 4
B	80 - 89 Proficient 3
C	70 - 79 Basic 2
D	60 - 69 Below Basic 1
F	0 - 59 Failing 0

Honor Roll

Students in grades three through five can make the honor roll by earning all A's and B's in their major subject areas. Students will receive a certificate and recognition at the quarterly award assembly.

Textbooks

Textbooks are the property of the School District of Philadelphia and should be handled with the proper care to keep them in satisfactory condition. Any student who loses or damages a textbook is responsible for replacing that textbook or will need to provide the school with financial compensation for that textbook at the book's current purchasing price.

Homework

Homework plays an integral role in the educational process. It is an opportunity for students to strengthen skills, reinforce study skills and encourage independent thinking and creativity. A parent or guardian can help their child's success in school with a positive attitude toward homework. The School District of Philadelphia's homework policy is that students are given homework at least four nights a week. Also, teachers may require that a parent or guardian sign homework.

Suggested Homework Times	
Grade	Time
Kindergarten	20 Minutes
Grades 1-2	30 Minutes
Grade 3-4	45 Minutes
Grades 5	60 Minutes

Chromebooks

All students will receive a chromebook device & charger for their educational use throughout the year. It is expected that all students will bring their device to school each day and maintain safe care of it. If there should occur a problem with the device, please contact your child's teacher. We will ensure that the device is repaired. Parents and students will sign an acceptable use policy form agreeing to the school district's chromebook policy.

Student Support Services

Counselor

Ms. Fair, the school counselor, is available to provide services to students and parents within the school community. Requests for counseling assistance or service can be made directly to the counselor at (215) 400-8150.

MTSS | Multi-Tiered System of Support

MTSS is a process that takes place in schools. The goal of MTSS is to help educators ensure that their schools offer strong instruction and a welcoming learning environment, and that all students have the support and resources they need to be successful academically, socially, and emotionally. In addition, MTSS:

1. Facilitates continuous improvement in core areas like academics, attendance, and school climate
2. Supports equity by making sure that all students who need extra help receive it
3. Is a team-based process with roles for all staff in the school
4. Ensures communication and collaboration among school leaders, teachers, and other staff
5. Provides clarity for students, parents, and caregivers about the services that are available at the school and about how students are being supported.

Child Abuse & Neglect

Under Pennsylvania Law (PL) 438, Act 124, 1975, Section 11 as amended by s.b.348, any person who in good faith, reports suspected child abuse “shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise result from such action”. School personnel, because of their sustained contact with school-age children, are in a position to identify children who may be abused or neglected. Thus, all employees are required to report suspected child abuse and/ or neglect.

School Nurse

Nurse Taisu is available daily. She can be reached at (215) 400-8150 by appointment, to discuss any health related problems or concerns regarding their children. There is a registered/certified school nurse in the building five (5) days per week. The school nurse provides acute health care for students, does mandated assessments, and provides on-going health counseling. When medication is to be administered in school by school personnel, written permission must be obtained from the student’s licensed physician. Parental or guardian request and authorization to give each specific medication must accompany the physician’s written approval/request. Medication must be in the original, labeled pharmacy container with the student’s name, medication, dose, and time interval written on the label.

Medical Neglect

The Catharine School complies with the Child Protective Law #438 ACT 124 of 1975, which states that failures to provide medical care for a child is considered an act of physical neglect and is considered a reportable offense.

Mandated Health Screenings

Screening	Description
Vision	Students have their vision checked yearly. If students fail the exam twice, parents are notified in writing. Parents are expected to take their child to the eye doctor within two weeks of such a notice.
Hearing	Hearing exams are conducted on students in the following grades: Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2 and 3. Parents will be notified in writing if a child fails the hearing exam.
Growth Screening	Children's height and weight are measured every other year.
Dental Screenings	Dental examinations are performed by a certified School Dental Hygienist in grades 1-5.

Special Education

J.W. Catharine School is committed to providing specialized services to children in the least restrictive environment, as required by the law. Students receive accommodations and modifications as outlined in their Individualized Educational Program (IEP). Please reach out Mrs. Toborowski, Special Education Compliance Monitor (atoborowski@philasd.org) for questions or concerns.

ESOL Services

Students whose first language is not English may qualify for ESOL services. Please review the English Language Development Instructional Guide. The Curriculum Instructional Frameworks reference modifications for ESOL students to ensure equal access to Tier 1 instruction. Please reach out to Ms. Gerber, ESOL Point Person (tgerber@philasd.org) for questions or concerns.

Intensive Behavioral Health Services (IBHS)

IBHS supports children with mental, emotional, and behavioral health needs. IBHS offers a wide range of services that meet the needs of children in their homes, schools, and communities. Please reach out to **Ms. Fair, Counselor (mfair@philasd.org)** for additional information.

Code of Conduct

Student Safety

Student safety is our #1 priority. Catharine has multiple layers of safety to protect everyone's health and wellbeing. View our [2023-2024 Student Code of Conduct](#).

Parent / Guardian Responsibilities

1. Support the policies of The School District of Philadelphia, Code of Conduct and school handbook.
2. Respect the rights of others, including all students and staff.
3. Emphasize the importance of being prepared for school and adhering to school norms.
4. Communicate student needs and concerns, and respond to school outreach regarding student needs, concerns and successes.
5. Respect all members of the school community and comply with school norms.

Student Responsibilities

1. Seek to understand and comply with all District and school level expectations.
2. Take personal responsibility to reflect on behavior and admit mistakes.
3. Hold yourself accountable to strive for growth and success.
4. Find motivation and joy in learning, in order to focus on academic success.
5. Report any conflicts or concerns to a school staff member.
6. Ask for help whenever needed.

Student Safety | Bullying

The District recognizes the negative impact that bullying has on student health, welfare, and safety and on the learning environment at school. The District also recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, and detracts from a safe environment. The District defines bullying as an intentional electronic, written, verbal, nonverbal, psychological or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent, or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with a student's education
2. Creating a threatening school environment
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

Student Safety | Harassment

It is the School District of Philadelphia's policy to maintain an educational environment in which harassment including sexual harassment, sexual assault and sexual violence in any form is not tolerated. The District defines harassment as verbal, nonverbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's known or perceived race, color, ethnicity, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, English language proficiency, veteran status, disability, or other protected classification.

To Report Bullying/Harassment Complaints:

Dean: Mrs. Johnson: mdavisjohnson@philasd.org

Additionally to report bullying, violence, harassment, threats and truancy please call (215) 400- SAFE. This is open 24 hours / 7 days a week.

SDP Policy 252

Transgender and gender non-conforming students are afforded certain rights under School Board Policy 252, including:

1. The right to privacy, and this includes the right to keep one's transgender identity private at school.
2. While students have a right to be "out" if they choose, school staff should not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender identity or gender nonconformity to others, including parents and other school staff, unless the student has authorized such disclosure.
3. Students have the right to be referred to by their chosen name and pronouns. The District recognizes that faculty, staff, and other students who repeatedly and callously refuse to honor a student's chosen name and pronouns, is considered discriminatory and that such behavior fosters a harmful, hostile environment.
4. The right to be included in the group that corresponds to their gender identity; this includes athletic teams and related programming.
5. The right to have access to the restroom or locker room that corresponds to their gender identity.

Electronic Device Policy

In order to minimize distractions, academic dishonesty, and theft, the use of cellular phones and electronic devices are prohibited at the J.W. Catharine School. Use is interpreted as using any cell phone function or feature, not just the sending or receiving of calls. This includes the use in hallways, restrooms, offices or any other place on school grounds; students may NOT take a pass out of class to use their phones. To that end, cell phones must be turned off and kept out of sight. Students who choose to not follow the cell phone policy will be subjected to the following discipline policy:

The Policy: Cell phones will be confiscated by any J.W. Catharine staff member at the time of incident and turned over to the appropriate administrator/designee. Parents/caregivers may only pick up the cell phone between 2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Any student refusing to adhere to the discipline policy will be referred to the Principal and/or Designee for insubordination and such behavior may result in a mandatory parent conference. Furthermore, any inappropriate use of cell phones, including but not limited to inappropriate photographs, text messaging, and recording/videotaping will result in confiscation of the phone; further consequences may include possible police referral.

Students bringing these devices to school do so at their own risk!

Student Discipline

Fighting is strictly prohibited at J.W. Catharine. Any student who engages in fighting will be subject to the following interventions/responses as deemed appropriate by the Principal/ Dean of Students.

Disciplinary actions/Interventions will range from:

- Verbal Warning & Apology
- Detentions
- Behavior Contracts
- Daily Reports
- Phone calls home
- Mandatory parent conferences
- Mediation
- Alternative Class Assignment
- Team Interventions
- Suspensions from one to five days (Grades 3-5)
- Disciplinary Transfer

The Principal and/or designee determine the level of infraction and the consequence as based on the results of the investigation of an incident. Throughout the administration of discipline we safeguard the confidentiality of all students. Communications, therefore, regarding the administering of discipline is limited.

Act 26

The Pennsylvania General Assembly has enacted legislation (Act 26), which requires all public schools to take a mandatory course of action in dealing with students who are found to be in possession of weapons.

1. The law requires the arrest and expulsion (exception of students under 10 years of age), for at least one year, of any student found in possession of a weapon on school property, in a

school program, or while traveling to or from a school program, including time on public transportation.

2. The law defines a weapon to include, but not limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, firearm, shotgun, rifle, and any other tool or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. There is no requirement that the student use or try to use the weapon, and possession for self-protection is not a defense. Parents are encouraged not to send tools or supplies such as metal or pointed scissors to school with their children.
3. The law requires that violations become part of a students' permanent disciplinary record, and will be available to any school in which the student may later enroll. Parents will be required to sign an affidavit prior to enrolling their child in any public school to disclose the existence of any weapon violations or other serious violations.
4. These measures, required by Act 26, are designed as a safeguard to ensure that all public schools are safe havens in which all students may interact in an environment and climate, which fosters learning, and strongly discourages potential acts of violence.

Student Discipline | Problem Solving

The Chain of Command For Problem Solving

1. If you are angry, take a few moments to calm down. You won't be able to think clearly if you are upset.
2. Collect accurate facts and speak with a trusted person to help understand the situation.
3. Call the school to make an appointment.
4. Sign in at the school office.
5. Communicate calmly and clearly your feelings about the situation.
6. Listen to the other side to gain understanding.
6. Maintain a willingness to work together for your child's benefit.

Steps in the Communication Chain

Teacher

1. Work to maintain regular and polite communication with your child's teacher to address concerns as they arise. Teachers welcome any information that will assist them in meeting your child's needs. Most problems or concerns are resolved by speaking with your child's teacher directly.
2. Contact your child's teacher by note, email or voicemail indicating the nature of your concern and suggest a method and time for contacting you. By doing so, the teacher can be prepared with any necessary information when contacting you.
3. Let the teacher know when teaching strategies or assignments have been particularly effective for your child.

Dean of Students

1. Please complete a Parent Concern Form. This will allow you to communicate in writing your concerns about the situation.
2. The Teacher or Dean of Students will contact you within 24 hour to discuss your concerns. She/he will support you in coming to a resolution with all parties involved.

Principal

1. Principals are responsible for instructional leadership. If you and your child's teacher have been unable to reach a satisfactory solution, you may contact the principal. Depending on the nature of the problem, you may want to include the teacher and/or your child in a meeting.
2. Refer to the above Basic Principles for guidelines in meeting with the building principal.

School Activities & Events

Participation is a privilege, not a right! It is the goal of J.W. Catharine to recognize the achievements and talents of our students. Below are a few of the activities and clubs that may be offered throughout the school year.

PBIS | Positive Behavior Intervention and Support

Monthly the school recognizes students who exhibit our 3R's (Be Ready, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible) in a variety of ways (ex: dances, prize cart, etc.). In order to be recognized, students must earn a certain amount of class dojo points. A list of monthly events will be posted on class dojo.

Cougar Corner Store

Bi-weekly, students will be provided the opportunity to visit the school store to spend their " Cougar Cash". Cougar Cash can be earned daily by exhibiting our 3R's in the lunchroom and hallways.

Class Trips

Each grade level will participate in at least one field trip. Communication regarding the field trip will come from classroom teachers.

School Assemblies

Planned school assemblies will be added to the monthly student calendar. Quarterly, we will recognize academic, attendance, and behavioral achievements. Dates and times will be communicated as we are closer to the event.

Student Safety Program

Identified 4th and 5th grade students will support younger students with being safe in line at admission and dismissal. In October, safeties will assist with Kindergarten breakfast and safely escorting students to class lines.

Band and/or Orchestra

4th and 5th grade students will be provided an opportunity to participate one a week in lessons with our band or orchestra teachers. Students will showcase their talents at the winter and spring concerts.

Student of the Month Awards The “Student of the Month”

This award is designed to recognize students from each class who exhibit the core values in behavior and attendance. Recognized students will receive a certificate, student of the month lanyard, and have their picture posted outside of their classroom.

After-School Clubs

Students will be provided the opportunity to sign up for after school programs hosted by staff members. Clubs could include robotics, book club, homework help, etc.

Please Note

Student participation in these events is dependent upon student behavior throughout the building. Students not exhibiting the 3R's will lose participation privileges.