



St. Joseph Catholic School Code of Ethics and Confidentiality Agreement for Volunteers

It is the policy of St. Joseph Catholic School to promote and encourage school volunteers in order to expand and enhance parental and community involvement with our school while maintaining an adequate level of safety and security for all.

A “school volunteer” is defined as an individual who-- without expectation of receiving monetary compensation or employee benefits—offers to provide assistance to St. Joseph Catholic School in any capacity. School volunteers may include, but are not limited to, coaches, classroom helpers, observation-students, student-teachers, tutors, lunch servers, various PTO roles, chaperones, etc. A school volunteer serves under the immediate supervision and direction of the professional staff of the school to whom he/she is assigned.

- A school volunteer does not include a parent, grandparent, or other family member who may visit a student’s classroom for a limited time for holiday parties or an open-house. Although not a school volunteer, these individuals, as guests of the school, are expected to respect and abide by directions from St. Joseph Catholic School’s professional staff.
- A school volunteer also does not include a one-time visit by an outside guest (i.e. firefighter for fire prevention awareness day, etc.) who is invited by a teacher, with prior approval of the Principal, to give a presentation to a class or group of students. Such invited guests are also expected to respect and abide by the directions from St. Joseph Catholic School’s professional staff.

The St. Joseph Catholic School Code of Ethics Extends to Volunteers: The common goal of all those who work within the framework and policies of St. Joseph Catholic School is the spiritual, physical, social, and academic development of children. To that end, the covenant we hold with one another, including teachers, parents, guardians, students, and school volunteers, calls upon each of us to work in harmony in an ethical and professional manner to meet the needs of children above all else, recognizing that

each individual child has unique needs. All employees and volunteers are asked to work in good faith and are prohibited from betraying any confidences or revealing any personal information about any student or employee per the St. Joseph Catholic School Code of Ethics.

Becoming a Volunteer: St. Joseph Catholic School offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities to promote a school-home-community partnership for quality education. Some assignments provide the volunteer with a chance to work with children, while other experiences are available for those who prefer not to work directly with children. The services of volunteers in classrooms and offices particularly provide welcome support to teachers and school personnel through non-instructional tasks, permitting teachers more time both to work with students, as well as enrich the curriculum and children's learning opportunities.

Prospective school volunteers **must** agree to and successfully complete each of the following:

- Personal interview with the Principal
- Background Check
- Virtus Training and Sex Abuse Policy (per Diocesan policy)
- St. Joseph Catholic School Code of Ethics and Confidentiality Agreement

Personal Interview: An individual who wishes to volunteer at St. Joseph Catholic School shall be interviewed and approved by the Principal prior to serving at the school. The Principal's decision whether to approve the volunteer candidate rests solely within the sound discretion of the Principal and shall be based upon the best interests of the school and its students.

Background Check: In order to protect the safety and security of children and school staff, volunteer applicants must submit to a criminal background investigation using the applicant's name, date of birth, gender, race, and Social Security Number.

- If an individual refuses to submit the background check, that person shall be ineligible to be a volunteer at St. Joseph Catholic School. This includes a refusal to submit to all or part of the background check.
- If an applicant successfully passes the original background check and is permitted to serve as a school volunteer, that individual must report any subsequent arrests, as well as any criminal convictions to the Principal, including any misdemeanor violations.

- If a criminal background check indicates that an applicant has been convicted of and/or pled guilty or nolo contendere to a crime, or if a subsequent criminal arrest or conviction is disclosed or discovered, the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston will determine whether the applicant/volunteer may be present at the school

Scheduling Assignments, Reporting for Assignments, and Identification:

St. Joseph Catholic School expects school volunteers to communicate with their assigned staff member regarding their intention to volunteer and schedule times for performing volunteer services. St. Joseph Catholic School is a professional setting. Volunteers and staff are to communicate with each other in a timely fashion with respect to changes in assignments and schedules to facilitate an orderly environment for our students. School volunteers upon arrival at the school must first sign in at the school office. Volunteers are issued a volunteer badge, which they must wear in a prominent manner at all times when in the school. Upon completion of their volunteer activities on any given day, each volunteer must return to the office and sign out before leaving. This is a safety requirement.

Confidentiality: Volunteers will come in contact with or have access to certain confidential and personal information about students, families, and employees of St. Joseph Catholic School, whether such information is written, oral, or through observation. St. Joseph Catholic School and those who work at St. Joseph Catholic School, including volunteers, are required by State and Federal law to protect confidential and personal information regarding students and employees. Such laws include, but are not limited to, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; the Americans with Disabilities Act; The Federal Rehabilitation Act, §504; and, the West Virginia Human Rights Act.

Protecting privacy rights respects the dignity of each individual and is an aspect of the trust necessary for a healthy educational and work environment. Additionally, violation of the privacy rights of students, families and/or employees may subject St. Joseph Catholic School and the individual(s) who breach that trust to claims for breach of confidentiality, invasion of privacy, emotional distress, defamation, discrimination, and harassment (including claims of bullying).

- Confidential and personal information about students, families and/or employees may not be discussed, exhibited, displayed, posted, or disseminated in any way, either orally or in writing, except when expressly authorized.
- School volunteers must not reveal, orally or in writing, any sensitive or personal information observed regarding any student's academic performance and/or the

student's physical, social and/or mental health; provided, however, that a school volunteer may discuss such observations and concerns with the student's classroom teacher, school administration, and/or the school's pastor, each of whom have a specific role with respect to the operation of the school and its internal and external reporting structure.

- When a school volunteer is sharing information, orally or in writing, with authorized staff, the school volunteer must be aware of his/her surroundings. Oral communications should be quiet and discreet, so as not to be overheard by others. Written communications must be treated in a confidential manner, so that they are secure and not easily viewed by others.
- School volunteers must understand and be sensitive to the fact that they are not privy to all information related to a specific student or staff member's family life, challenges, and/or disabilities (including hidden disabilities or conditions). Gossiping, speculating, and/or leaping to conclusions regarding events that a volunteer may observe-- but not understand in context-- can result in actual harm.

If a school volunteer engages in behavior that violates the policies of St. Joseph Catholic School, the written or oral instructions of school personnel, and/or engages in any behavior that is—actually or potentially-- adverse to the safety and welfare of any student, staff and/or visitor of the school, the Principal, in his/her sole discretion, may prohibit the individual from serving as a volunteer and may take further steps, as deemed reasonably necessary by the Principal, to protect the safety, well-being and standing of the school, its students, families and staff.

VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT

I, _____, the undersigned, have received a copy of the foregoing St. Joseph Catholic School Code of Ethics and Confidentiality Agreement for Volunteers ("Volunteer Agreement"). I have read the Volunteer Agreement and had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the same. I understand each term of the Volunteer Agreement. I expressly acknowledge that if I serve as a School Volunteer, then I shall be bound to comply with the Volunteer Agreement, as well as the policies of St. Joseph Catholic School and the directives of authorized personnel. I further expressly acknowledge, understand and agree that it is essential for me to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the students, families and employees of St. Joseph Catholic School. I understand that if I violate this Volunteer Agreement, then St. Joseph's Catholic School, at the sole discretion of the Principal, may take appropriate and necessary steps to address such violation, which steps may include, but not be limited to, prohibiting me from serving as a School Volunteer; prohibiting me from entering the school premises; and/or, removing my student(s)/child(ren) from St. Joseph Catholic School.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Checklist

- _____ Personal Interview with Principal
- _____ Background Check
- _____ Virtus Training and Sex Abuse Policy
- _____ Code of Ethics and Confidentiality Agreement

Principal's Approval: _____

Date: _____