Family Handbook

St. Joseph School, South Porcupine

2026-27

Show me Your ways, LORD, teach me Your paths. Guide me in Your truth and teach me, for You are God my Savior, and my hope is in You all day long. (Psalm 25: 4-5)

Northeastern Catholic District School Board

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NCDSB Mission and Vision

Northeastern Catholic District SCHOOL BOARD

MISSION STATEMENT

Learning together. Striving for excellence. In service to God and each other.

VISION STATEMENT

Faithful and thoughtful learners, working together to transform the world.

School Board Information

The Northeastern Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) is the product of the coming together of regions, of boards, of schools, and of people from Catholic Communities throughout Northeastern Ontario.

The Board serves communities within the Districts of Cochrane, Timiskaming, Nipissing and Moosonee.

Each region has its own roots, and in fact, had its own separate school board at one time, operating with both English and French language sections.

Currently, we have 12 elementary schools, 1 secondary school, and an Adult Continuing Education Centre.

Director of Education:	Tricia Stefanic-Weltz
Superintendent of Education:	Jennifer Dunkley
Trustees (Timmins/area):	Glenn Sheculski (Chair)
	Colleen Landers
	Fred Salvador Jr.
	Paula Del Guidice
	Jacob Dunkley, Jewelianna Corbett (Student Trustees)

School Information

St. Joseph School, warmly known as the Little School on the Lake is a beautiful, small community school filled with spirit and pride. We enjoy a healthy partnership with our parents, church and community representatives and work together to provide our students with diverse and meaningful educational experiences. We strive to maintain a warm and inviting school environment that promotes respect, acceptance of others, and excellence in academic, social and spiritual endeavours.

Address: 207 Huot St., South Porcupine, ON P0N 1H0

Email: sjtmsec@ncdsb.on.ca

Phone: 705-235-4622

Fax: 705-235-4246

Website: https://ncdsb.on.ca/profile/st-joseph-school/

Find us on: facebook

St. Joseph School Staff

Principal:	Andrew Schaer aschaer@ncdsb.on.ca
Secretary:	Jana Lavoie sjtmsec@ncdsb.on.ca
Child & Youth Worker:	Cindy Brazeau cbrazeau@necdsb.ca
Custodians:	Mackenzie Horton
Educational Assistant:	Catheline Royer
FDK Teacher:	Kathryn Swartz kswartz@necdsb.ca
Grade 1/2 Teacher:	Pam Levesque plevesque@necdsb.ca
Grade 3 Teacher:	Kristina McCord kmccord@necdsb.ca
Grade 4 Teacher:	Desirae Cookson dcookson@necdsb.ca
Grade 5/6 Teacher:	Corey Bechard cbechard@necdsb.ca
Itinerant Teacher:	
Literacy/Numeracy Lead and Resource Teacher:	Kathryn Swartz kswartz@necdsb.ca
Lunch Monitors:	

School Schedule

Time	Schedule	Notes
8:30 am – 8:45 am	Outdoor Time for Students/Breakfast Program	-All students are to transition to the school yard using the hill by Door B (by the flagpole). -The earliest students can arrive is 8:30 am. -Students will enter the building to take part in the Breakfast program.
8:45 am	School Day Begins	-Any student arriving after 8:45 am must report to Door A (Main Office by Gym).
9:55 am – 10:10 am	Recess	
10:20 am – 10:30 am	Morning Snack	-Students may have a healthy snack or partake in the Northern Fruits and Vegetables Nutrition Program.
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	Lunch	-Supervision is provided as required.
12:00 pm – 12:30 pm	Recess	-Supervision is provided as required.
3:00 pm – 3:15 pm	Recess for Walkers and YMCA/Dismissal for Students on the Bus or Being Picked Up.	
3:15 pm	End of Day	-Dismissal for students that walk or are transitioned to the YMCA.

Attendance

Attendance is taken daily in the morning and afternoon. As part of our Safe School Policy, parents/guardians are called when students are absent from school. Should there be a planned absence for your child or an absence from school for any other circumstance, please contact the school by phone or email to let the Office know the reason and the duration of the absence.

Drop Off, Late Entry, and Early Pickup

In most circumstances, buses drop students off at the top of the hill (by the flagpole); should you drop your child off at school before 8:45 am, please bring them to the same location. If you drop off your child after 8:45 am, please bring them to Door A (Main Entrance by the Gym).

When students arrive late, students must check-in with the school secretary to confirm their attendance at school.

No student is permitted to leave school property without prior consultation with the Office. This includes when students are on the playground or on field trips. Any walkers wishing to leave at 3:00 pm as opposed to 3:15 pm must have verbal/written permission provided to the Office.

Dismissal Procedure

Upon dismissal, students will be escorted to one of two areas. For those that walk or attend after school care, they will be dropped off at the YMCA or accompanied out to the school yard through the parking lot to walk home (or bike, etc.)at 3:15 pm. Students taking the bus will line up on thehill outside Door B (by the flagpole)at 3:00 pm. Parents will pick up students at door B.

For safety reasons, parking on Huot St. is only permitted beyond the school property, preferably on one side of the road alongside the school.

Visitor Entry to the School

For safety and security purposes, parents/guardians are not permitted beyond Door A (Main Entrance by the Gym) without prior permission of the Office.

All visitors to the school must first request permission for entry at Door A, and continue to the Office to sign in. All individuals who are not staff or students are considered visitors.

Lunch

Students may only leave the school with verbal/written permission prior to leaving school property. No one will be permitted to call home for permission to leave the property unless there are exceptional circumstances. All students are expected to bring appropriate lunches and snacks, with reduced litter, where possible (i.e., reusable containers).

Milk Program

The Elementary School Milk Program is a partnership with the Dairy Farmers of Ontario. Milk can be purchased for students at a nominal price. More information will follow throughout the year.

Hot Lunches

Hot lunches are provided throughout the year. All funds raised go directly back into programming at the school. More information will follow throughout the year.

Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program

Funded by the local health unit, the Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program provides students with two servings of healthy fruits and vegetables per week—generally starting in January. The food is distributed by the school and is prepackaged or prepared by school staff.

Student Nutrition Program

Typically running 3-5 days a week, the Red Cross provides nutrition services for students that comprise either a breakfast or a snack.

School Cash Online

School Cash Online provides a safe and convenient way to pay and is used in all NCDSB schools. School Cash Online uses a secure online account to process payments, and you can either make a one-time payment for each item as it occurs, or load money to carry a balance in the online account to make payments in the future. Payment can be made through credit card or by EFT directly from your bank account. Families can access this service at https://northeasterncdsb.schoolcashonline.com/

Recess

Playground Rules

With the assistance of school staff, students must conduct themselves in a civil manner in alignment with the Student Code of Conduct. Any play on the equipment requires well-fitted shoes (i.e., not rubber boots, flip-flops, etc.).

Where challenges with school conduct persists, an *Incident Report Notification for Parents* will be sent home. This form must be reviewed, signed, and returned to the school.

Proper Dress

It is expected that students will attend school with the proper clothing necessary for outdoor time in a northern climate (i.e., winter clothing).Indoor recess will not be granted unless required for medical reasons or as a component of disciplinary action.

Inclement Weather

From time to time, extreme cold or rain requires the use of indoor recess time. In these limited circumstances, students will remain in their classrooms with supervision until such a time that they can return to outdoor recess.

Allergies and Prevalent Medical Conditions

St. Joseph School is an allergy sensitive school (no nuts)and scent free school. As such, we endeavor to provide the safest environment possible. Any known allergies or other medical concerns must be noted at the time of registration, as well as on an ongoing basis, and staff are made aware of cases where these may interfere with a student's health. In these cases, parents/guardians will be invited to collaborate with staff on a plan of care. Epi-pens and other similar devices are kept in a centralized location in either the classroom or the Office, and where appropriate, students are encouraged to carry their own device as well.

Head Lice (Pediculosis)

In the event of a suspected or confirmed head lice outbreak, parents/guardians in the affected classes will be notified. If a child is confirmed to have head lice, they are excluded from school pursuant to the *Education* Act until such a time that a treatment is complete and nits/lice have been eliminated. The completion of a *Parent Response Form* (provided by the school)must accompany the child upon their return to school.

Medication

When the school has been advised that a student requires medication on an ongoing basis or in an emergency situation, the parent/guardian and relevant physician must complete and sign an *Authorization for Administration of Medication Form*. This includes all prescribed medication (including

Asthma inhalers and EpiPens)and over-the-counter medication (e.g., Advil or Tylenol).The request and authorization by the parent/guardian and the relevant physician shall specify the medication, the dosage, the frequency and method of administration, the dates for which the authorization applies and any side effects as outlined by the physician. This must be completed yearly.

Accidents and Illness

St. Joseph school has staff members trained to deliver first aid. In cases where accidents occur, families will be notified as soon as possible. In the event of a serious accident, parents/guardians will be called immediately, and if necessary, an ambulance may be dispatched to the school.

Should a child become ill during the school day, parents/guardians will be notified and arrangements will be made to pick up their child.

Emergency Preparedness

In the event of emergencies, St. Joseph School has a rigorous emergency management plan. To best prepare for these events, both Fire Drills and Lockdown Drills are conducted at different points throughout the year to maintain readiness. Students are taught and coached through these procedures to reduce anxiety and learn the importance of safety in a public environment. During Fire Drills and Lockdowns, access to visitors will not be permitted at the school; signs will be posted during these limited instances.

Privacy

Photos

In recognizing that privacy is a very personal matter, a consent form will be sent home at the beginning of the year to allow you to indicate whether or not you would like us to share photos of your child within the school community (i.e., on bulletin boards, social media, etc.).Should this form not be returned to the school, it will be assumed that you do provide consent for photo sharing.

Use of Cameras/Mobile Devices

The use of cameras or other recording devices without the consent of educators and the individuals involved is prohibited at St. Joseph School.

Mobile devices are also prohibited at the school. Should communication between a student and a parent/guardian be required, we are happy to facilitate communication using the school telephone.

Communication with Staff

Communication with staff is an essential element of a strong school-family relationship. Educators at the school are busy teaching and working with students during the day, but will endeavor to respond to your communication in a professional and timely manner (24-48 hours, if not sooner).While parent-teacher interviews are conducted following the completion of Progress Reports in the fall, we encourage you to reach out to your child’s teacher should you have any questions or concerns.

In an effort to reduce costs and paper waste, St. Joseph School has moved primarily to an electronic means of communication with families. Communication from the Office will be facilitated through email and the school's Facebook page, while individual teachers will share their desired method of communication with you during the first week of school. Should this present a challenge, please let us know and we are happy to find a solution (i.e., paper copies).

All documentation related to Individual Education Plans and Progress Reports/Report Cards will be sent home with your child in a sealed envelope when required throughout the school year.

Each Sunday evening, an email will be sent out highlighting important reminders for the week, as well as any upcoming events you should be aware of.

Transportation

Transportation is provided by the North East Tri-Board Student Transportation consortium. Requests for transportation are generally made by the school at the time of registration and rollover yearly. Special requests for transportation can be made on the consortium's website: enroute.mybusplanner.ca/ Contact the school should you have any question in this regard or if your child's transportation needs change.

Subject to the Student Code of Conduct, transportation is a privilege for students.

Inclement Weather Days/School Closures

In the event of bus cancellations, schools generally remain open for student learning. If bus cancellations are suspected, please check the North East Tri-Board Student Transportation consortium's website at enroute.mybusplanner.ca/ or tune into local radio coverage. Should your child be able to make it to school, we encourage them to attend. Otherwise, please inform the school of your child's absence.

In very limited circumstances, schools may close to student learning (i.e., sewer backup).Should this be the case, we will make every endeavor to contact you as early as possible. Should school be in session, staff will supervise students until such a time that parents/guardians can safety pick up their child.

Field Trips

Field trips are an essential component of experiential learning. At the beginning of the year, a blanket consent form will be issued allowing you to provide prior permission for any field trips occurring throughout the year. That said, we will inform families of all field trips in advance, and seek further permission where required (i.e., where form is not signed, extended field trips).

School Materials

In Class

Learning materials are provided for students in all publically-funded Catholic schools. However, we do recognize that individual preferences exist. Students are permitted to have their own school supplies, provided they do not interfere in the classroom (as deemed by the school).

Physical Education

Students are required to have a pair of non-marking indoor shoes for physical education and to change out of boots during the winter months of the year. Such shoes must remain at the school during the period of the school year unless specific circumstances permit otherwise.

Partnerships with Other Agencies

St. Joseph School partners with many community agencies in providing services to our students. While some of these partnerships occur within regular educational programming, we also recognize that specific services related to health and external referrals require parent/guardian consent. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Family/Volunteer Involvement

We strongly encourage opportunities for parents/guardians to volunteer in the school at various events. The school will reach out in cases where we need assistance throughout the year. However, according to Board Policy, a school-specific criminal record check will be required. Please contact the school prior to completing such criminal record checks.

Catholic School Parent Council

Catholic School Parent Councils are an excellent way to build a strong relationship between the parent/guardian community and the school. The council acts as an advisory body to the school, and generally meets four times a year (at minimum).Elections for Catholic School Parent Council occur at the start of the school year, with nomination forms sent home by the school. We encourage all parents/guardians to strongly consider running for Catholic School Parent Council.

Fundraising

While the Catholic education system is publically-funded, items such as fieldtrips and playground equipment require fundraising. As such, schools engage in fundraising on a regular basis. Any such fundraising is subject to the approval of the school board policy, and the support of Catholic School Parent Council.

Parish Life

St. Joseph School partners with the Diocese of Timmins, specifically St. Joachim Parish in South Porcupine, in developing a strong faith-based school community. While students practice their Catholic faith daily at the school, and through other opportunities such as the NCDSB Catholic virtues program, students also attend monthly masses. Father Henri Touaboy, C.S.Sp. is the parish priest. We strongly encourage all families to support their children in

developing their faith by attending weekly mass and partaking in the sacraments. For information regarding sacraments, please contact the parish rectory at (705) 412-0033 or saintjoachim@fibreop.ca