



*Rooted in Faith, Rooted in Mission, Rooted in Hope and Joy*

## St. Joseph Catholic School

Starting the next 53 Years of Catholic Education



# VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

2019 – 2020

WCEA/WASC ACCREDITED

## Welcome

We are thrilled you are joining us as a volunteer as we kick-off our 2019-2020 school year. You are probably familiar with the old proverb “It takes a village to raise a child.” We are extremely appreciative of our community resources of talents and commitments.

Each school year parents, grandparents, special friends and community volunteers donated over 7300 hours of service, a value worth well over \$182,500.

Volunteers work in every aspect of school operation, from the classroom, recess and lunch helpers, traffic moderators, construction and maintenance workers, student mentors to organizing and manning special events and extracurricular activities.

Please review this handbook. It gives an overview of the Volunteers program and provides important guidelines you should be aware of prior to volunteering. If you have any questions, feel free to contact office staff.

Thank you for providing your precious time, individual talents, and expertise as a St. Joseph School Volunteer. With the continued support of our community, we can provide a high quality education where every student is “first!”

Sincerely,  
Natalie Lenz-Acuña, Principal

## MISSION STATEMENT

St. Joseph Catholic School is a Christ-centered community of Life-long learners. Each child is valued and respected as a unique individual and as a member of God's family. St. Joseph Catholic School is committed to providing a well-rounded education for our students. We promote the Christian growth of each child as he/she develops spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially, technologically, culturally, and physically.

## PHILOSOPHY

In accordance with the Philosophy of Catholic School Education and the Diocese of Oakland, the Philosophy of St. Joseph Catholic School is based on the teachings of Christ and is reflective of the Christian community at St. Joseph Catholic School. Catholic education strives to spread the Good News of Christ's all-embracing love through the light of faith.

St. Joseph Catholic School promotes the Christian growth of each child.

- We support parents and caregivers in their role as primary educators.
- We provide relevant learning experiences to help students become confident and competent individuals who live within their community with integrity and faith.
- We recognize and celebrate the cultural diversity unique to our school, encouraging students to develop attitudes of mutual respect and understanding.

## VOLUNTEER QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### ***Why should I volunteer?***

You become part of the St. Joseph community and have an opportunity to improve the school for the children. You teach children the value of giving back to the community through your actions. Volunteers performing functions the school would otherwise have to pay for help keep down tuition and registration fee increases.

If your children are enrolled in St. Joseph Catholic School you are REQUIRED to complete a minimum number of Parent Volunteer Hours (PVH) per year/per family:

- Thirty-five (35) PVH are required for Grades TK-8; (15) Fundraising and (20) General

For more details regarding PVH, please consult the SJS Parent/Student Handbook for TK-8 Grade requirements. Parents, extended family, friends, and neighbors can become volunteers and work towards completing your family's PVH obligation.

### ***How do I become a volunteer?***

See the *Before You Can Volunteer* section of this document. Once you have completed the requirements, you can view volunteer opportunities for specific duties or events by going on to our website:

<https://www.stjosephpinole.com> and clicking on the Signup.com icon.

You may also contact the Office for any last minute assignments.

### ***I do not have teaching experience?***

A teaching background is not required since volunteers work under the direction of the professional staff. There are also many volunteer opportunities that do not involve the classroom.

### ***I'd like to volunteer, but I can't offer my services on a regular basis. Can I still volunteer?***

Yes! Check Signup.com for available opportunities. We always are in need of volunteers for lunchtime monitors. We also have opportunities on the weekends which are posted on Signup.com.

### ***How do I report my Volunteer Hours?***

If you're working during school hours at the school, be sure to sign-in and sign-out of the **Visitor Sign-in** binder at the front office. In addition, you will need to complete a volunteer form for the time you worked. All events

and meetings you attend will require that you complete a PVH form. The person in charge of an event or meeting will confirm your worked PVH. No credit will be given if you fail to complete and turn in the form to the office.

***May I choose the teacher with whom I want to work?***

Volunteers are placed only in classrooms where teachers have specifically requested assistance.

***Suppose I don't feel qualified to perform the assignment I have agreed to undertake?***

Please let us know your feelings. Remember, there are many different jobs. Talk to the teacher or Office for possible re-assignment.

***What do I do about discipline?***

Disciplinary action is the responsibility of the teachers and school staff. **Volunteers do not enforce discipline.** You may request students to work according to the rules in the classroom. You may also "instruct" the students regarding making better choices, thinking about consequences of their actions, etc. instead of disciplining them. Immediately notify the teacher if there is a discipline problem.

***My friends and neighbors will ask me about school. What may I say?***

We want you to talk about your school and your involvement. But you may have access to "privileged" information, which must be treated as confidential. Privileged information is important school business and must never be discussed outside of the school. Also, remember that criticizing school personnel and school practices are not acceptable, even on social media. In school, you are a professional working with other professionals.

# BEFORE YOU CAN VOLUNTEER

BEFORE volunteering, every person must have:

- a certificate for Virtus on file,
- back ground checks – Megan’s Law and Live Scan through the Diocese of Oakland.

**NOTE:** It may take 3 weeks or more to receive clearance from Live Scan.

Volunteers who work twelve (12) hours or more a month with children must also have a TB risk assessment performed by a physician and have the results on file in the office.

## ***Volunteer – Megan’s Law Screening***

Megan’s Law screening must be done, by the Office, for any volunteer who falls under the categories listed below:

- All volunteers who work at the school site or in school-sponsored activities;
- All volunteers who participate in any overnight experiences (e.g. Caritas educational camp)

The screening results must be returned to the school by the Department of Justice prior to participation in the overnight field trip.

Conviction of a sexual crime will bar an individual from volunteering in either of the capacities listed above.

The Office is required to report the results of Megan’s Law Screening to the Oakland Diocese once a year.

## ***Safe Environment for Children Certificate***

**Each parent** must complete the session, print out the completion certificate, and bring it to the school office.

In order to complete the online course, please follow these steps:

1. Go to the website [www.virtusonline.org](http://www.virtusonline.org)
2. Log on and click “First-Time SIGN UP”
3. **Select Your Organization**, Click:
  - > “pick type” – Catholic Diocese
  - > “select Catholic Diocese” – Oakland Diocese
  - > “user type” – Adult User
  - > Click “Confirm”
4. Complete the **User Login Data** information. Remember to write down your Login-ID and password. Click “next step”
5. **Affiliation**
  - > “type” – Parent (you will be asked if you would like to continue as a parent. Click Yes)
  - > “location type” – Elem School
  - > “where located” – Pinole
  - > “location name” – St. Joseph School
  - > click “next step”
6. You will see the **Summary/Confirmation** screen. Please check data to make sure it is correct.
7. Click yes to “License” and click “Confirm Signup” to begin course.

The course is straightforward and should take about 60 minutes to complete. Once completed, please print out the certificate and turn in a copy to the school. Should you encounter any problems or have questions please contact the school for assistance at (510) 724-0242.

## ***Volunteer Background Screening (fingerprinting)***

- The Diocese of Oakland requires that all volunteers over the age of 18 who work with minors **must** be

Live Scan **fingerprinted and cleared** through the DOJ **PRIOR** to beginning service.

- Live Scan is required one time only for the Diocese of Oakland; sites will be notified by the Safe Environment Coordinator if subsequent arrest issues arise that would affect the volunteer. Clearance dates may be kept electronically for each volunteer.
- The Principal will make arrangements for the chancery representative to come to St. Joseph School for FREE fingerprinting once (1) time a year. The first event will be at the beginning of the school year. The school is unable to accommodate individual parental schedules. Advanced registration with the Office will be required.
- If you do not participate in these fingerprinting events at the school, you will be responsible for getting the fingerprinting done at your own cost:
  - The Diocese has fingerprinting services available at the chancery by appointment. You may contact them to arrange for fingerprinting.
  - In addition, any live scan provider can finger print a volunteer, but the Oakland Diocese form **must** be used. The form is available on our website for your convenience.

If you have any concerns regarding this policy, please contact the Office to schedule an appointment with the Principal.

### ***Volunteer Health Screening***

- All Volunteers who work at the school site twelve (12) or more hours a month must have a TB risk assessment performed by their physician. The results must be turned into the office.
- If no risk factors are identified, no further testing is required unless circumstances change (e.g. visit country with high TB risk, exposed to TB carrier, etc.)
- If risk factors are identified, then further testing may be required, which may include the PPD/Mantoux skin test, a chest x-ray or a Quantitative Feron Blood Test.
  - They must submit evidence of freedom from active tuberculosis, based on an X-ray of the lungs **OR** an approved intradermal negative tuberculin test taken within the immediate past six (6) months. This category of volunteers shall submit evidence of freedom from active tuberculosis every two (2) years.
  - If a skin test is positive, a chest x ray is needed, one (1) time only. Thereafter, a symptom screening is recommended each year, documented by a physician

## VOLUNTEER CODE

- Volunteers serving in the school will support and model the moral teachings of the Catholic Church and function faithfully within the mission and structures of the school, parish, and Diocese with proper respect for those serving in ministries.
- Volunteers are asked to recognize confidentiality as a living principle and respect the dignity of those with whom they work and come into contact.
- Volunteers should have a genuine interest in students, and a professional commitment to their volunteer activity,
- Volunteers accept responsibility to use contacts made through the school in such a way so as not to disrupt the peace, order, and tranquility of the school community.
- Should volunteers come into conflict on school related issues, it is the responsibility of both parties to resolve the dispute through personal diplomacy. If this cannot be accomplished, then you may involve the Principal who will resolve the dispute by executive decision.
- Any person who has a conflict with a school volunteer outside of the boundaries of school activities must settle that dispute outside of and without involving or using school resources.

## QUALIFICATIONS

You should have: a genuine interest in students, a professional commitment to your volunteer activity, regular attendance, a cooperative attitude, flexibility, good health, and a willingness to attend training sessions, as needed.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

### ***Conduct***

- Volunteers may not conduct personal business at school.
- All cell phones must be turned off and put away.
- Volunteers should never touch students in any way that is aggressive, disciplinary, or sexual in nature.
- Volunteers **DO NOT** discipline students. Instead, provide “instruction” to students regarding behavior such as making good choices, etc. Report discipline problems to the teacher.
- Siblings or other non-students should **not** be brought to school when volunteering. This presents a liability issue and is especially disruptive if you are working in a classroom.
- Volunteers do not diagnose student weaknesses and strengths, prescribe activities for students, or evaluate student progress.
- Volunteers' discussions with teachers should not interrupt class time.
- Comparing and criticizing teachers and students is not acceptable behavior.
- Volunteers may not hold informal parent/teacher conferences or leisure conversations with staff members or other volunteers during volunteer time.
- Volunteer may not take photographs of students, unless permitted by a school administrator for a school project. Never post any student photographs or student information on social networks.

### ***Sign In/Out and Wear a Nametag***

When volunteering at school always:

- report to the school office;
- sign in using the volunteer sign-in book or computer;
- you will be given a Visitors badge;
- wear the Visitors badge while on duty;
- sign out when you complete your assignment and return the Visitors badge.

We require you to wear the Visitors badge so we may safeguard our students and maintain a record of who is on campus, in event of an emergency.

### ***Health Regulations***

*Please do not come to school if you are ill.* This includes a cold, sore throat, or cough. You may think you are leaving the teacher shorthanded, and you may want to volunteer even though you are not well, but doing so is

not good for you, the children, or the teacher. Please call the school and leave a message for the teacher when you have an unforeseen absence. Children learn by example, and we ask that you, as a role model, use good health habits when you are at school.

### ***Safety / Behavior Guidelines***

- Report any instances of bullying to a staff member
- Be aware of school and playground safety regulations (see Addendum for *Playground Rules*)
- Alert staff if students are engaged in unsafe behavior or disobeying regulations
- Playground and field are only open when there is enough staff to supervise and watch students.
- Supervise climbing activities carefully.
- If you are hurt or involved in an accident while serving in your volunteer capacity, you should immediately report the incident to the office and complete an accident report.

### ***Attendance***

Punctuality and reliability are expected since students, staff, and event coordinators are counting on you. Please inform teacher or event coordinator in advance of planned absences and call the office for unforeseen absences.

### ***Appearance and Manner***

Volunteers are considered non-paid employees but are expected to be well-groomed and dress appropriately. Short skirts, shorts, exposed midriffs, low cut blouses, and inappropriate graphics/language on t-shirts are not allowed. If you are not sure how you should dress, please ask the office. Volunteers should also set a good example to students by maintaining professional conduct and language.

### ***Confidentiality***

VOLUNTEERS MUST MAINTAIN STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY concerning information they see and hear about students and staff, *including student records, and abilities*. Keep information about students between yourself and the teacher. A misplaced comment can be devastating to a student, the family, and the volunteer program. If you have questions or concerns, talk with the teacher, counselor, or the Principal.

### ***Management of Injured or Ill Children***

- If an accident occurs, immediately notify a staff member.
- Never move an injured child. A member of the school staff will initiate proper procedure.
- Volunteers may not administer first aid.
- Volunteers may not administer medication of any kind (over the counter or prescription including inhalers)
- If a child reports that they are ill, bring them to a staff member.

### ***Emergency Protocol***

- In an emergency, please follow the directions of a staff member.
- For reference the following are important phone numbers:
  - 9-1-1 for emergencies
  - Pinole Police Department non-emergency number (510) 724-8950
  - Fire Department non-emergency number 510-724-8970
  - Fire Department emergency - 9-1-1
  - Contra Costa County Office of Emergency 925-228-5000
  - Diocese of Oakland office 510-893-4711



### **St. Joseph Catholic School**

1961 Plum Street | 510.724-0242  
Pinole, CA 94564 | [www.stjosephpinole.com](http://www.stjosephpinole.com)

## **VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

**As a volunteer I agree to:**

- abide by and support the philosophy, policy, and guidelines of the St. Joseph School
- act in the best interests of St. Joseph Catholic School
- maintain confidentiality
- abide by safety and risk management requirements
- attend on the agreed time and day or contact the Office 510-724-0242, if I am not able to fulfill my volunteer obligation
- participate in orientation, meetings, and training, if applicable.
- be responsible for signing-in and signing-out. If I fail to do so, I understand that I may not be given credit for time worked.
- raise any matters of concern with the Chairperson of the event or Office Manager.

Oldest Student's Name/Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: This volunteer (signed form) expires in 30 days**

Volunteer's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_