

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Saint Nicholas Academy is a Catholic school created through the cooperation of the founding parishes in the South End of Louisville. The school was created to assure quality, affordable, Catholic education based on the values of Spiritual formation, Nourishment of Character and Academic Excellence (Saint Nicholas Academy).

## **VISION FOR ST. NICHOLAS ACADEMY**

After three years of successful operation we have a clear vision of how to continue the legacy that is now Saint Nicholas Academy. This vision is exemplified in these five core values:

**... Continuing the Legacy**

**Founded in Faith  
Embodied Through Service  
Committed to Achievement  
Empowered by Leadership  
Shared in Community**

**...Experience the Legacy**

## **PHILOSOPHY**

We believe that a Catholic school is an integral part of the supporting parishes' mission "To Teach As Jesus Did". We believe that a Catholic school assists parents, primary educators of their children, by instructing, complementing and intensifying the education and formation that has begun in the home.

We believe that we have a social responsibility to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, to develop the acquisition of knowledge, and to aid in the formulation of values and goals. We provide an atmosphere that challenges students intellectually, culturally, socially, spiritually, and physically. We encourage self-learning, critical thinking, and positive decision-making. We endeavor to give students an understanding of their place in today's global society and, through prayer, liturgy and service, teach our students to become responsible stewards as they live out their Gospel calling.

## **CERTIFICATION**

St. Nicholas Academy is fully accredited by the Kentucky Non-Public School Commission.

## **GOVERNANCE**

St. Nicholas is administered in conjunction with policies developed by the Archdiocese of Louisville Office of Lifelong Formation and Education, 1935 Lewiston Drive, Louisville, KY, 40216, (502) 448-8581. Any situation not specifically identified in this manual will be addressed by established Archdiocesan policy.

The St. Nicholas Academy Board of Directors was established to develop and define policies, which govern the school. The Board consists of the Pastors' Committee and the selected parish members. Scheduled meetings are noted in the school's calendar and will be noted in the newsletter. Those persons with agenda items must contact the Board Chair two weeks in advance to be scheduled.

### **SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS**

Mr. Bruce Kolb, Chairperson  
Mr. John Ruffra, Vice Chairperson  
Ms. Carol Nord, Executive Director  
Ms. Susan Johnson  
Mr. Greg Brotzge  
Mr. Rick Schneider  
Ms. Jean Hickey  
Ms. Laura Baker  
Ms. Sharon Blair  
Mr. Thomas Harris  
Ms. Mary Clay  
Ms. Donna Sansone  
Mr. Michael Oakley

### **PASTORS' COMMITTEE**

Fr. Philip Erickson  
Fr. Harry Gelthaus

### **ST. NICHOLAS ACADEMY ADMINISTRATION**

Carol Nord	Head of School
Kathy DeLozier	Site Principal, North
Kitty Schloemer	Site Principal, South

### **SCHOOL FACULTY & STAFF**

Ms. Georgette Adams	Secretary	<a href="mailto:gadams@sna-panthers.org">gadams@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Rebecca Ames	Grade 3	<a href="mailto:rames@sna-panthers.org">rames@sna-panthers.org</a>
Mr. Adam Blanding	Art	<a href="mailto:ablending@sna-panthers.org">ablending@sna-panthers.org</a>
Mr. Danny Blankenship	Music	<a href="mailto:dblankenship@sna-panthers.org">dblankenship@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Kristina Butcher	Library/Media	<a href="mailto:kbutcher@sna-panthers.org">kbutcher@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Yuri Chavez	Spanish	<a href="mailto:y Chavez@sna-panthers.org">ychavez@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Heather Cordaro	Grade 2	<a href="mailto:hcordaro@sna-panthers.org">hcordaro@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Sandy Crider	Assistant	<a href="mailto:scrider@sna-panthers.org">scrider@sna-panthers.org</a>
Mr. Tom Davidson	Grade 6	<a href="mailto:tdavidson@sna-panthers.org">tdavidson@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Karen DeNeve	Grade 7	<a href="mailto:kdeneve@sna-panthers.org">kdeneve@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Margaret DiPasquale	Grade 2	<a href="mailto:mdipasquale@sna-panthers.org">mdipasquale@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Martha Dodge	Math	<a href="mailto:mdodge@sna-panthers.org">mdodge@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Donna Gail Edwards	Grade 2	<a href="mailto:gedwards@sna-panthers.org">gedwards@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Joyce Edwards	Secretary	<a href="mailto:jedwards@sna-panthers.org">jedwards@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Erin Fahringer	Grade 1`	<a href="mailto:efahringer@sna-panthers.org">efahringer@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Hanna Faley	Counselor	<a href="mailto:hfaley@sna-panthers.org">hfaley@sna-panthers.org</a>
Mr. Steven Finch	Grade 8	<a href="mailto:sfinch@sna-panthers.org">sfinch@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Janet Fisch	Grade 6	<a href="mailto:jfisch@sna-panthers.org">jfisch@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Debbie Green	Grade 5	<a href="mailto:dgreen@sna-panthers.org">dgreen@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Maria Hatcher	Assistant	<a href="mailto:mhatcher@sna-panthers.org">mhatcher@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Sue Heitkemper	Secretary	<a href="mailto:sheitkemper@sna-panthers.org">sheitkemper@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Lisa Hendrickson	Assistant	<a href="mailto:lhendrickson@sna-panthers.org">lhendrickson@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Kristi Hoar	Assistant	<a href="mailto:khoar@sna-panthers.org">khoar@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Kathleen Hoon	Kindergarten	<a href="mailto:khoon@sna-panthers.org">khoon@sna-panthers.org</a>

Ms. Margee Kapp	Grade 7	<a href="mailto:mkapp@sna-panthers.org">mkapp@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Julie Maschino	Grade 1	<a href="mailto:jmaschino@sna-panthers.org">jmaschino@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Debbie McMurray	Counselor	<a href="mailto:dmcmurray@sna-panthers.org">dmcmurray@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Diana Meyer	Grade 3	<a href="mailto:dmeyer@sna-panthers.org">dmeyer@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Margie Middleton	Library/Media	<a href="mailto:mmiddleton@sna-panthers.org">mmiddleton@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Shannon Miller	Grade 8	<a href="mailto:smiller@sna-panthers.org">smiller@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Jennifer Muller	Grade 7	<a href="mailto:jmuller@sna-panthers.org">jmuller@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Ellen Nord	Special Needs	<a href="mailto:enord@sna-panthers.org">enord@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Melissa Oakes	Grade 6	<a href="mailto:moakes@sna-panthers.org">moakes@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Carol Oyler	Special Needs	<a href="mailto:coyler@sna-panthers.org">coyler@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Carole Renfro	Assistant	<a href="mailto:crenfro@sna-panthers.org">crenfro@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Denise Ritchie	Grade 1	<a href="mailto:dritchie@sna-panthers.org">dritchie@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Erin Roberts	Grade 5	<a href="mailto:eroberts@sna-panthers.org">eroberts@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Julia Robertson	Assistant	<a href="mailto:jrobertson@sna-panthers.org">jrobertson@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Josephine Rosa	Grade 4	<a href="mailto:jrosa@sna-panthers.org">jrosa@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Katie Schervish	Grade 5	<a href="mailto:kschervish@sna-panthers.org">kschervish@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Faye Schum	Grade 3	<a href="mailto:fschum@sna-panthers.org">fschum@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Lisa Seidt	Kindergarten	<a href="mailto:lseidt@sna-panthers.org">lseidt@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Beth Strobel	Grade 8	<a href="mailto:bstrobel@sna-panthers.org">bstrobel@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Shannon Tanner	Grade 4	<a href="mailto:stanner@sna-panthers.org">stanner@sna-panthers.org</a>
Mr. Andrew Thuita	Art	<a href="mailto:athuita@sna-panthers.org">athuita@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Pat Voor	Grade 4	<a href="mailto:pvoor@sna-panthers.org">pvoor@sna-panthers.org</a>
Mr. Kai Walz	PE	<a href="mailto:kwalz@sna-panthers.org">kwalz@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Lynette Ward	Grade 7	<a href="mailto:lward@sna-panthers.org">lward@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Patricia Wheeler	Grade 4	<a href="mailto:pwheeler@sna-panthers.org">pwheeler@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Karen Woo	Grade 8	<a href="mailto:kwoo@sna-panthers.org">kwoo@sna-panthers.org</a>
Ms. Jan Wooldridge	Grade 3	<a href="mailto:jwooldridge@sna-panthers.org">jwooldridge@sna-panthers.org</a>

### **ATHLETIC BOARD**

The Athletic Board is an important school service organization whose primary objectives are:

- To promote and enhance the development of students outside the classroom by providing a sports program
- To work under the guidance of the Catholic Schools Athletic Association to develop programs, policies, schedules
- To teach and promote fairness, good sportsmanship and teamwork in a Catholic environment
- To provide funding so that all students will have the opportunity to participate

Scheduled meetings will be noted on the school's calendar.

### **2008-2009 Panther Athletic Association Members**

President:	Jerry Tubb	366-3542
Vice President:	Dan Robbins	376-9449
Treasurer:	Rogge Johnston	375-3932
Secretary:	Ed Pehlke	375-0172

### **Sports Coordinators:**

<b>Baseball:</b>	Dave Kellerman	609-4554
<b>Basketball:</b>	Ed Pehlke	375-0172

	Jerry Tubb	366-3542
<b>Boy's &amp; Girls Volleyball:</b>		
	Laura McCulloch	366-9332
<b>Cheerleading:</b>	Jeff Johnson	368-4431
<b>Cross Country:</b>	Ed Pehlke	375-0172
<b>Field Hockey:</b>	Marilyn Murphy	375-0172
<b>Football:</b>	Jeff Johnson	368-4431
	Dan Robbins	376-9449
<b>Golf:</b>	Eddie Pehlke	375-0172
<b>Soccer:</b>	Jerry Tubb	366-3542
<b>Softball:</b>	Ron Femi	368-5771
Swimming	Rogge Johnston	375-3932
<b>Track:</b>	Ron Femi	368-5771

## **ADMISSION TO ST. NICHOLAS ACADEMY**

### **Philosophy of Admission**

The mission of St. Nicholas Academy is to assure that quality, affordable Catholic education based on values of Spiritual formation, Nourishment of character, and Academic excellence is available to residents of South Louisville. All students participate fully in the religious program of the school, and SNA offers a variety of programs and opportunities for all students. SNA is committed to outreach efforts to attract culturally diverse student and teacher populations.

### **Non-discriminatory Policy**

St. Nicholas Academy will not discriminate against otherwise qualified applicants on the basis of sex, race, disability, color, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admission policies, or other school administered programs.

### **Ages of Admission**

Children must be five years old by October 1 of the current school year in order to be eligible to enter kindergarten.

Children must be six years old by October 1 of the current school year and must have attended a certified kindergarten or comparable preparatory program in order to be eligible to enter first grade.

### **Priority of Admission**

1. Children of Catholic families:
  - a. Children from the covenant parishes of Most Blessed Sacrament, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Sts. Simon and Jude and St. Thomas More whose parents are active members of the above parishes;
  - b. Children from the above whose family has membership at any of the covenant parishes;
  - c. Children from non-covenant parishes with students already enrolled in our program;

- d. Children of new parishioners who are transferring from another Catholic school or from an area where Catholic schools were not available, but who participated fully in the religious education programs offered.
2. Children of non-Catholic families:
    - a. Non-Catholic students may be admitted if, on the basis of personal interview, the school administration judges the intent and motivation to be in accord with the mission and philosophy of St. Nicholas Academy.

### **Admission of Special Needs Students**

Before admitting a student with a diagnosed disability, our school will consider the following:

1. severity and degree of the disability
2. level of support needed from special services
3. special equipment a child may require
4. class size and availability of resources.

### **Policy Regarding Transfer Students to St. Nicholas Academy**

After a personal interview with school administration, a family wishing to transfer a child into St. Nicholas from another institution or from a home-schooling situation must provide the following pertinent information: copies of any psychological evaluations, copies of special needs accommodations made for the child at another school, copies of special medical needs, and an official transcripts from other previous school. Admission to St. Nicholas will be considered probationary until all information is reviewed.

### **AFTER SCHOOL CARE**

After school care will be provided at the SNA North campus by Sts. Simon and Jude Parish. They will be open after school until 6PM. They are open on early dismissal days as well. They are NOT open for snow days, in-service days, or during school breaks. To make arrangements contact Mrs. Mary Jo Paul at 367-7013.

After-school care is provided at the SNA South Campus and is administered through Johnson's Daycare. Johnson's Daycare opens immediately after school and remains open until 6:00 p.m. They are open on snow days, early dismissal days, and during all school breaks. They will accept any child from SNA North campus who might need care on any days that school is not in session. To make arrangements please call Tracy Johnson-Peery at 361-7832.

### **ARRIVAL**

For the safety of all, it is IMPERATIVE that parents follow the designated traffic pattern for their school. It is NOT safe for students to cross the moving traffic patterns. To best insure the safety of your children in the morning, please drop them off at the supervised doors rather than parking your car and walking them into school. See attached maps for the North and South campuses at the back of book.

Students may arrive as early as 7:00AM. They are to report to the designated area of each campus (North cafeteria and South gym) where they will be under supervision. Students arriving after

7:45AM will go to their homerooms. The school day begins at 8:00 AM. Those who arrive after 8:00AM must report to the office to obtain a tardy slip before being admitted to the classroom. THERE IS NO SUPERVISION FOR STUDENTS ARRIVING BEFORE 7:00 A.M.

## **ASSESSMENT**

Textbook and teacher-made tests are administered throughout the school year to determine mastery of skills and understanding of content. Teachers are encouraged to provide a variety of assessment methods and opportunities for students.

### **Standardized Testing Program**

The standardized testing program is designed to identify individual student academic strengths and weaknesses in addition to measuring the SNA curricular program. In conjunction with the testing program of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Grades 2 – 8 are tested each spring. Parents will be notified of the results.

### **Portfolios**

Writing portfolios are an integral part of the on-going assessment of student progress. While individual pieces in the portfolio may be teacher-assessed, the portfolio itself is evaluated and assembled by the student to whom it belongs.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Success in school requires regular attendance. A student who is absent misses valuable class instruction. A child should not attend class, however, when it might be detrimental to his/her health or that of others. When the child is absent, parents are to call the site campus office in the morning as early as possible. After any absence, a note, signed by the parent, is required for re-admission. Frequent, long-term or excessive absences may warrant a note from a physician. Absence for ANY reason disqualifies the student for a Perfect Attendance award.

Students are responsible for making up any missing assignments.

Punctuality is the key to success in the classroom. Students who are tardy more than three (3) times in a trimester will meet with the counselor and their parents to discuss plans to remedy this problem.

## **AWARDS**

Students are recognized annually for their achievements in the following categories: attendance, academics, overall performance and conduct.

Our most prestigious award is the Panther Pride award which honors one homeroom student in grades K-8 who exemplify the values stated in our St. Nicholas mission statement –Spiritual Formation, Nourishment of Character, and Academic Excellence.

There are two academic awards, the Honor Roll and the Principal's List. Students in grades 4-8 who earn all A's and B's cumulatively in all academic areas and satisfactory marks in conduct and effort will be named to the Honor Roll. In addition, students in grades 4-8 who earn all A's cumulatively and satisfactory marks in conduct and effort will be named to the Principal's List.

Perfect attendance awards are given to students in grades K-8 who are present everyday and have not been tardy more than four times all school year.

## **CAFETERIA**

SNA participates in the federal Child Nutrition Program. Families are encouraged to apply for federal free and reduced meals. Our program benefits greatly when a large number of families are approved. Applications may be filed at registration or at any time during the school year as a family's financial status changes. This program may be used for both breakfast and lunch.

Breakfast is available at both the North and South campuses beginning at 7:00AM. No breakfast will be served after 7:45AM. Students will be offered a variety of choices and will use the computerized system for payment. The breakfast price is \$1.45 and includes an entree and beverage.

For lunch, students will be offered a variety of choices daily. A computerized system will keep track of your child's account. Parents will be notified if their child's account is overdrawn. Students may not keep a negative balance. Please be attentive to keeping the balance in the positive.

The lunch prices are as follows: Full cost - \$2.00; Reduce cost - \$.40; Milk - \$.45; Extra entrees - \$1.25; a la carte items - \$.50-\$1.25. An adult guest price is \$3.50. Menus are included in the newsletter.

During the school year each grade will have a scheduled Parent Lunch Day. The dates for these events are listed in the school calendar.

The following Archdiocesan guidelines govern the cafeteria:

1. Only those students purchasing lunch may buy extra food items or a la carte items
2. Students are not allowed to bring carbonated beverages to lunch
3. Food from "fast food" restaurants and/or soft drinks cannot be brought into the cafeteria at lunchtime – even by parents on Parent Lunch Days.

Students are expected to use proper table manners and maintain a moderate level of conversation at all times. Students may be asked to sit at assigned tables and cannot save seats. Once seated, a student remains seated unless given permission by the presiding adult to get up. Students are expected to clean up after themselves and return trays and utensils to the designated area at the appropriate time.

## **CATHOLIC IDENTITY**

St. Nicholas Academy exists because the covenant parishes, parents, pastors, head of school, principals, teachers and all staff believe in the efficacy and necessity of Catholic education. We believe we have a social responsibility to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, to develop the acquisition of knowledge, and to aid in the formation of values and goals. We provide an atmosphere that challenges students intellectually, culturally, socially, spiritually, and physically. We encourage self-learning, critical thinking, and positive decision-making. We endeavor to give students an understanding of their place in today's global society. Through prayer, liturgy, and service, we teach our students to become responsible stewards as they live out their Gospel call.

## Mass

Each class celebrates Mass once a week at their site campus. The students, under the direction of their teacher, plan the liturgies in conjunction with the priests. Several times a year the entire student body of St. Nicholas gathers at either St. Thomas More or Most Blessed Sacrament for special Masses. These days and Holy Days are noted on the school calendar.

## Peacebuilders Program

The PeaceBuilders Program is a simple, child-friendly curriculum which helps students understand and claim responsibility for creating conditions conducive to peace in their classroom, school, and community environment. The program is firmly anchored in its adherence to Christ-centered values. It provides a structure, expectations, and common language for students and staff for the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere focused on non-violence, justice, peace, and compassion.

## Sacramental Program

In keeping with the philosophy of SNA, both parents and students are involved in the sacramental programs. The school works cooperatively with the home parishes to prepare students for reception of the sacraments. First Reconciliation for second graders takes place in early Advent. First Eucharist for second graders is celebrated during the Easter season. The Sacrament of Confirmation is administered to eighth graders during the second trimester. Other liturgies and prayer services are celebrated in the school community on a regular basis.

There will be no co-curricular, extra curricular or sporting events scheduled two (2) hours before or after the first time reception of a Sacrament, on Holy Days of Obligation, or during Holy Week celebrations in any of the four supporting parishes.

## Weekly Activities

The teachers at St. Nicholas Academy plan weekly religious activities during the Advent and Lenten liturgical seasons. All students attend Stations of the Cross during Lent.

## CLASSROOM PARTIES

Class parties should be kept to a minimum. Partner teachers at each grade level will determine the appropriate occasion and length of time for celebrations. All parties/celebrations must be cleared through the office. **NO INVITATIONS FOR ANY PARTIES MAY BE DISTRIBUTED AT SCHOOL.** St. Nicholas Academy welcomes parent participation in classroom celebrations.

## COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOL

Open communication between home and school is vital to the education progress of our students.

## Assignment Notebooks

Assignment books are required for all students in grades 2-8. SNA student assignment notebooks are available for purchase at registration or in the school office at both campuses. (see Homework) Students are required to have their assignment notebooks with them throughout each school day. Teachers and parents can use the assignment notebook to communicate their needs and concerns.

### **Conferences**

Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences are considered the primary source of communication between the parents and teachers regarding the student's progress. Students in Grades K-8 are required to be present at the conference. Conferences are counted as a day of attendance, and a student will be marked absent if he/she does not attend. Therefore, please avoid planning trips or vacations on these dates. The October, January, and May conference days are noted on the school calendar pages.

If extra communication is needed, please contact a teacher directly by phone or by email. Email addresses are located on p. 2 of this handbook.

### **Newsletters**

A St. Nicholas Academy newsletter will be sent home regularly with the oldest child in each school family. These contain vital information including calendar updates, menus, and reports of past and upcoming student activities. Inserts from the Athletic Committee, the PTO, or the Counseling Department may also be included. Please make sure to read each edition carefully. In addition some classroom teachers send home weekly class newsletters.

### **Notification of Change of Information**

Parent should notify the school office promptly of ANY CHANGE in name, address, telephone number, or marital status. Name changes for students require official court documentation before new names may be used at school. Promptness and accuracy of notification are essential in order to maintain school records and to facilitate communication with the home – especially in cases of emergency.

### **Orientation and Open House**

An orientation and open house will be scheduled early in the school year. This evening is designed to let you meet your child's teachers and learn the objectives, procedures and requirements of each class.

### **Phone Use**

Neither teachers nor students will be called to the phone during class hours. Important messages will be taken by the office staff and relayed to the person concerned. Students may not use the phone to contact parents for missing homework, clothing, permission slips, or changes of plans unless initiated by the school.

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing cell phones to school. If parents want their children to have a cell phone for use after school, the student must leave the phone in the school office until the end of the school day. Students who fail to leave their phones in the office will have their phone confiscated until a parent can pick it up. St. Nicholas Academy is not responsible for lost or damaged phones.

### **Progress Reports**

Electronically produced progress reports are distributed three times a year as designated on the school calendar. Grades on progress reports reflect all aspects of the child's achievement for the entire trimester. However, teachers post online grades on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of each month, and both parents and students are encouraged to check grades frequently.

A code for accessing our on line PowerSchool will be available to all parents at the beginning of the school year and at anytime in the school office on either campus.

## **CURRICULUM**

The St. Nicholas Academy curriculum is designed to attain the educational objectives set forth in our philosophy and in accordance with the regulations set by the Office of Lifelong Formation and Education of the Archdiocese of Louisville. Students study religion, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, physical education, library, technology skills and Spanish.

### **Counseling Program**

The counseling program at SNA consists of individual counseling, small group counseling and whole class instruction. The main objective of the counseling program is to foster a strong sense of self-esteem and emotional well-being.

Parents, teachers and school administrators may refer students for individual counseling. Counseling is provided for educational purposes and all standards of confidentiality are maintained.

Though all on-going counseling services require parent permission, it is understood that the counselor may meet with a student individually on an as-needed basis for minor student needs in the areas pertaining to health, learning, or peer relations. These meetings will be documented and reported to the parent or guardian, but will not require prior written permission.

If you have a counseling emergency or require immediate assistance, contact the Seven Counties Services 24-Hour Crisis and Information Line at (502) 589-4313.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips enhance the educational experience. Since field trips have an educational purpose, they are not an optional experience for students. However, students may be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements.

A permission slip will be sent home prior to the planned trip. The approved form **MUST** be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to school by the specified date. **NO STUDENT WILL BE PERMITTED TO GO ON ANY FIELD TRIP WITHOUT THE PROPERLY SIGNED, APPROVED PERMISSION SLIP.** (For your convenience field trip forms are attached to this handbook in the appendix and are also available to download from our website.)

Students will be assessed a fee to cover transportation and any entrance cost involved. Should a student be absent/unable to attend, there will be **NO** refunds given for any costs which must be covered by the school.

### **Homework**

The purpose of homework is to develop habits of independent useful study. Homework assignments supplement the daily work of the classroom. Homework strengthens and reinforces skills learned in class. Homework may broaden experience, introduce new questions and interests and extend knowledge. It is the responsibility of the student to complete all homework assignments on time. The amount of time spent on homework each evening should be approximately:

- Grades K-2                      10-20 minutes

- Grades 3-4                      40-50 minutes
- Grades 5-6                      60-75 minutes
- Grades 7-8                      75-90 minutes

Consideration must be given to the fact that children work at different paces and may take longer to complete their work. Also, long-term assignments may require children to spend some extra time.

Students in grades 2-8 are required to have an assignment notebook (purchased from the school) and write down assignments daily. This standard book will be used by ALL students daily and signed by parents each night. Failure to turn in assignments may result in a lowering of the grade.

### **Learning Differences**

St. Nicholas Academy promotes a model of inclusion for children with mild disabilities. Our school staff will work to provide appropriate learning opportunities for students who may need special attention and guidance.

We believe that children with mild disabilities can be successful within the regular classroom setting when strategic methods are utilized and appropriate accommodations are implemented. Schedules and classes may be designed for flexibility to meet such special needs.

St. Nicholas is guided by the archdiocesan special needs protocol, which includes developing school strategy plans and Section 504 plans. The development of these plans involves any and all members of the student's learning community. Contact is maintained with a parent throughout the school year to assess the plan. More information regarding these plans is available from the counseling office.

If a guardian is concerned that a student has special learning needs and would like to pursue assessment options, inquiries about referrals for formalized testing can be directed to the SNA counseling office.

The policy regarding admission of special needs students is listed on p.7 of this handbook.

### **Mass**

Each class celebrates Mass once a week at their site campus. The students, under the direction of their teacher, plan the liturgies in conjunction with the priests. Several times a year the entire student body of St. Nicholas gathers at either St. Thomas More or Most Blessed Sacrament for special Masses. These days and Holy Days are noted on the school calendar.

### **Portfolios**

Writing portfolios are an integral part of the on-going assessment of student progress. While individual pieces in the portfolio may be teacher-assessed, the portfolio itself is evaluated and assembled by the student to whom it belongs.

### **Promotion Policy**

A student who has completed the grade level work satisfactorily will be promoted to the next grade. If the required levels of achievement for a grade are not satisfactory, a student may be transferred to the following grade or be retained in the present grade. Decisions regarding retention will be made by the parents, teacher and administrator. Conditional promotion may be used in some cases. Some

conditions that may be specified are required attendance at summer school or individual tutoring during the summer.

The possibility of retention should be discussed during the second trimester PTS Conference. Final decisions regarding retention should be based on a total evaluation of the student's growth in all areas of development, especially emotional, psychological and academic.

### **Sacramental Program**

In keeping with the philosophy of SNA, both parents and students are involved in the sacramental programs. The school works cooperatively with the home parishes to prepare students for reception of the sacraments. First Reconciliation for second graders takes place in early Advent. First Eucharist for second graders is celebrated during the Easter season. The Sacrament of Confirmation is administered to eighth graders during the second trimester. Other liturgies and prayer services are celebrated in the school community on a regular basis.

There will be no co-curricular, extra curricular or sporting events scheduled two (2) hours before or after the first time reception of a Sacrament, on Holy Days of Obligation, or during Holy Week celebrations in any of the four supporting parishes.

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks used at SNA are approved by the Archdiocese and state, and they are reviewed and updated according to an established adoption cycle.

SNA uses a book rental system, and this fee is covered by the book bill at registration. The students are responsible for the use of the rented books. If a book is lost or damaged, it must be replaced by the student/parent. Books are required to have book covers and be neat and presentable throughout the year.

### **DISCIPLINE**

The essence of Christian discipline is self-discipline. The code of discipline at SNA is to be a positive means of helping each student recognize appropriate behavior and growth in self-discipline. The student is free to choose one form of behavior over another, but he or she must learn to accept the consequences of that choice.

SNA students are expected to conduct themselves properly at all times. Good conduct is expected on field trips, school activities held off campus, athletic events, assemblies, etc. – wherever students are representatives of the school. We also expect parents to serve as positive examples of fair play, sportsmanship and respectfulness toward their own children and others.

Parents will be contacted by teachers or the administration concerning unsatisfactory conduct. It is imperative that parents and teachers work together in this respect to assure student success.

### **Care of Property & Grounds**

Vandalism of any kind shows a lack of responsibility and pride. Children need to be taught to care for and respect property. Whenever school property is defaced or damaged by a student – either willfully or by accident – a financial assessment of damage will be made against the student. In case of serious destruction the child is subject to disciplinary action as determined by the administrator.

## **Suspension**

Suspension will be used ONLY when other corrective measures have failed or when a serious offense is committed. When a student is suspended the parents will be notified and the reasons for the actions given.

## **Expulsion**

Continual, willful disobedience, open and persistent defiance of authority or any other extremely serious offense may result in expulsion. The SNA administration will make the final decision, and archdiocesan officials will be informed.

## **DRESS CODE**

**The Administrator/Teacher has the authority to have any student remove or correct any clothing/uniform/grooming item that is deemed inappropriate for school. Parents will be notified if prompt compliance has not been obtained. Students may be kept out of class until in compliance with uniform expectations.**

### **Boys Uniform**

- Solid black twill pants or Bermuda shorts (must be uniform in appearance – no knit or denim fabric or jeans)
- Solid white uniform shirt, turtleneck or polo free of writing, design or insignia (tucked in) or purple polo with SNA insignia (available only at Shaheen's or Coffman's). All shirts must have collar and buttons.
- Plain white undershirts with no logos may be worn under the uniform shirt
- Solid black or white socks must be worn and visible
- Purple SNA uniform sweatshirt
- Eighth grade students may wear the official 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Sweatshirt
- Earrings may NOT be worn
- Plain black or brown belts must be worn with the uniform pants or Bermuda shorts (for grades 6-8)

### **Girls Uniform**

- Purple/Black jumper or skirt (hem must measure 3 inches above knee)
- Solid black twill pants, skorts or Bermuda shorts (must be uniform in appearance – no knit or denim fabric or jeans)
- Solid white polo shirt, blouse, or turtleneck free of writing, design or insignia (tucked in) or purple polo with SNA insignia (available only at Shaheen's or Coffman's). All shirts must have collar and buttons.
- Plain white undershirts with no logos may be worn under the uniform shirt
- Solid black or white socks must be worn and be visible
- Purple SNA uniform sweatshirt
- Eighth grade students may wear the official 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Sweatshirt
- Pants and/or sweats may NOT be worn under uniform skirt or jumper during the school day
- Wearing make-up, including fingernail polish, is not permitted
- Girls may wear plain, small, single post earrings (not below the earlobe)

- Plain black or brown belts must be worn with the uniform pants or Bermuda shorts (for grades 6-8)

### **Hair**

Hair should be neat, non-distracting and of natural color. Boy's hair should be cut in a style that keeps hair out of the eyes, off the face, and off the shirt collar. Girl's hair should be out of the eyes and off the face. **Cuts or styles deemed by the administration to be extreme are not allowed.**

### **Jackets/Sweatshirts**

Jackets or sweatshirts OTHER THAN the purple SNA uniform sweatshirt may NOT be worn over regular uniform in the classroom unless deemed necessary by the teacher or principal.

### **Out-of-Uniform Dress Code**

On certain occasions, students will be allowed to be out of their normal uniform clothes. Students and parents are asked to comply with a few sensible guidelines in determining what clothes and shoes to wear on these days. Such cooperation is essential for these days to be successful.

Students MUST wear clothes that are appropriate for school and church. Jeans are permitted (no raveled edges, holes, or patches allowed). Shirts, tops and blouses must cover shoulders. No tank tops, spaghetti straps or bare midriffs are allowed. T-shirts with inappropriate slogans or sayings are not allowed. Shorts of appropriate material may be worn. All clothing must be of modest length.

If a student comes to school dressed inappropriately, then he/she will be asked to call his/her parents to bring the regular school uniform or other suitable clothing.

**BEST RULE TO FOLLOW: WHEN IN DOUBT, DON'T WEAR IT!**

### **P.E. Uniform**

On the student's designated P.E. day, he/she must wear the SNA P.E. uniform (grey sweatpants or shorts, grey sweatshirt with the purple SNA logo or white P.E. shirt, and athletic shoes). No other t-shirts are allowed. The P.E. uniforms may be ordered in the spring for pick-up at registration. Another order will be placed shortly after registration.

### **Shoes**

Any color closed-toe and closed-heel shoes may be worn. If shoes have laces they must be laced up and tied. No shoes with wheels or boots are allowed at any time on school property. Tennis shoes are the preferred shoe model for both comfort and safety. Shoe regulations apply even on dress-down days.

### **END OF DAY DISMISSAL**

The end-of-the-day homeroom period gives students time to gather items and prepare for dismissal.

If a student needs to leave early, parents must sign the child out in the school office. At NO time should a parent go directly to the classroom. No student may be signed out after 2:30.

A student shall not be released from school into the custody of any person other than those listed on the Emergency Information Form. Office staff may ask for identification before releasing a child.

If a child needs to go home by an alternate method (other than the way listed on the registration form) he/she must bring a signed note from his/her parent. This must be presented to the teacher during morning homeroom period.

Students may remain after school for co-curricular or athletic activities that begin immediately after school. All others must leave and return at the specified time. Siblings of participants may NOT remain without parent supervision.

All students should be picked up by 3:20 PM. Students who remain after 3:20 will be charged for after-school care.

### **ENROLLMENT POLICIES (see Admission Policy)**

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

SNA provides a variety of after school activities for students.

Examples of teacher-sponsored co-curricular activities include, but are not limited to: Student Council, Y-Club, Young Authors, Newspaper, Spelling Bee, KUNA, KYA, Safety Patrol, Book Bee, Math-A-Thon, CSAL (Quick Recall), Chorus, Guitar Club, Archeology Club and Chess. There are also extensive opportunities for children to participate in sports through involvement with the St. Nicholas Athletic Association.

All qualified students may try out for membership on sports and/or academic teams or other activities. The school is committed to providing everyone a fair chance to participate.

No co-curricular, extra-curricular or sporting event may be scheduled two hours before or after the first time reception of a Sacrament, on Holy Days of Obligation or during the Holy Week celebration in any of the four supporting parishes.

NOTE: If school is cancelled due to bad weather, ALL extra-curricular activities are cancelled for the day.

### **FACULTY MEETINGS**

Faculty meetings are held regularly once a week immediately after dismissal. Teachers are not available on these days to give additional help to students or meet with parents. NO children are to remain after dismissal on these days.

There are several faculty meetings which necessitate an early dismissal for students. These dates are listed on the school calendar pages. Early dismissal time is 11:00 A.M.

### **FAMILY VACATIONS**

Parents who take vacations which require a student's absence from school are asked to discuss the matter with the teacher in advance of the date of absence. While no assignments prepared by the

teacher can substitute adequately for actual instruction, the school will assist the parent and student in whatever way possible. Make-up work may be provided after the student's return to class. We **STRONGLY DISCOURAGE** vacations that keep students from attending school.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

At times, disagreements may occur between parties regarding school matters. The Grievance Procedure is as follows: Step 1) discuss the matter directly with the staff member (teacher) involved. If the situation is not resolved at that level, proceed to Step 2) schedule appointment with site principal. Again, if the problem is not resolved there, go to Step 3) schedule appointment to discuss with Head of School. If there is still no resolution, Step 4) requires that a written grievance should be sent to the Executive Board of the school board where it will be reviewed to determine whether the item should be brought before the entire SNA board or whether it should be referred directly to the Archdiocese.

### **HEALTH & SAFETY**

#### **Asbestos**

In keeping with federal and state regulations about asbestos in the school buildings, SNA is hereby advising parents of the presence of some asbestos in our facilities. These areas are inspected regularly to be sure they pose no health hazards. The complete inspection report and laboratory analysis for each location is available to examine. Each year we are required to inform our parents of asbestos presence.

#### **Disaster Drills**

Disaster drills (earthquake, fire and tornado) are held periodically to ensure proper safety procedures. Such drills are necessary for the safety of the students and mandated by public officials.

#### **Emergency Protocols**

Under the direction of the Kentucky Center for School Safety, Metro Louisville Emergency Management Association, and the Archdiocese of Louisville, SNA has established and will regularly practice emergency protocols in the event of a natural, civil, medical or other emergency.

#### **Illegal Drugs & Tobacco**

Student possession and/or use of intoxicants, controlled substances, alcohol, tobacco products or inhalants are not permitted. Any student who chooses to disregard this rule is subject to suspension and/or dismissal.

#### **Illness**

It is recommended that students who show signs of illness, fever, or rash be kept at home. Parents should notify the school office as soon as possible to report any contagious disease.

If a child becomes ill or sustains an injury at school, the parent/guardian will be notified. The school will call EMS if the situation requires emergency care.

### **Internet & Electronic Mail User Agreement**

As a user of St. Nicholas Academy's computer network, students hereby agree to comply with its Internet and Electronic Mail rules and to communicate over the network in a responsible manner while abiding by all relevant laws and restrictions. Internet and electronic mail student user agreement are in the registration packet and are also available on the school website.

The school may use student/classroom photographs or work on its web site. At no time will individuals be identified by name. If you choose to have your child and/or his/her work excluded, please inform the school in writing.

### **Items Brought from Home**

The school and its personnel cannot be held responsible for items brought from home that are misplaced, lost, stolen, or broken during the school day.

Students may not have pagers, or electronic games in the school building.

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing cell phones to school. If parents want their child to have a cell phone for use after school, the student must leave the phone in the office until the end of the school day. Students who fail to leave their phone in the office will have their phone confiscated until a parent can pick it up. SNA is not responsible for lost or damaged phones.

### **Medical Examination Requirements**

State law requires a medical examination form be completed by the family physician for students new to SNA. All immunization certificates must be kept up-to-date. All students entering the sixth grade are required to have a physical before entering that grade; an MMR booster shot is also required at that time

### **Medication**

The school will administer first aid, but will not administer medication of any kind without parent direction. All prescription medication must be sent to school in its original container with the prescription label, which includes the physician's directions for dispensing, attached. Non-prescription medications should also be sent in the original container with the student's name on the container. An authorization form signed by the parent is required to give any medication to a student. The information on the form includes the name of student, the type of medication, the dosage amount and the time the medication was given. A log is in the school office each time a student is given medication. An authorization form to allow the school office to dispense medication is located in the back of this handbook.

Students are NOT allowed to carry medication – prescription or non-prescription - with them during the day. There is only one exception: upon physician recommendation, students may keep an inhaler in their possession. Permission for this must be in writing and on file in the school office.

### **Pesticide Regulations**

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture has implemented regulations governing the use of pesticides in schools. These new regulations took effect July 1, 2002. In addition to requiring that those applying pesticides for us are trained and certified, the state requires that the school to provide notice to those who request it twenty-four hours prior to pesticide application. If you would like to be included in the pesticide registry and receive advance notice of our pesticide applications, please contact the school office.

### **School Safety Patrol**

Students are chosen from the Junior High to serve as patrol guards. It is their task to help students in school, on the bus and to assume other duties as assigned. When patrols are on duty students and parents should follow their direction. The patrols are under the supervision of a faculty member. Please encourage your children to respect and obey the patrol. Any problems or complaints should be reported to the administration.

### **Screenings**

Vision, hearing and scoliosis tests are administered each year to designated grades. Height and weight checks are done annually. These services are supplied under the guidance of the SNA PVO. Health screening permission slips are distributed at registration and kept on file in the office.

### **Search & Seizure**

The school is a co-tenant of lockers and desks and reserves the right to search them at any time without notice.

There may be reasonable cause to search the personal items (jackets, bags, purses, etc.) of a student if a student is suspected of bringing items to school that are not permitted or that might be dangerous to him/her or others.

### **Soft Drink Machines**

In order to promote the health of our students, children are expressly forbidden from use of the soft drink machines on the school campus. Students who choose to disregard this rule may be issued a detention.

### **Unsafe & Threatening Behaviors**

Any behavior deemed threatening is inappropriate and may result in immediate suspension and/or dismissal from school. Threatening behavior is defined as statements, gestures or actions intended to intimidate or cause harm to another and/or damage to property.

The schools of the Archdiocese do not condone any form of harassment. All individuals are to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment in any form – sexual, verbal, physical, and visual – is prohibited. The prohibition against acts of harassment applies to all individuals involved in the school.

- **Sexual harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1)

submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis of decisions affecting such individual, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment.

- **Verbal harassment** includes derogatory comments, jokes, or slurs; can include belligerent or threatening words spoken to another individual.
- **Physical harassment** includes unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.
- **Visual harassment** includes derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, novelties, or gestures.

### **Visiting the Classroom**

For the safety of everyone and to insure the least amount of interruption of instructional time, NO ONE may go to the classroom without the permission of the school administrator. Parents are welcome to visit classes after making the necessary advance arrangement with the administrator. Children who are not of school age are not permitted to visit classes. Open visitation is allowed ONLY during the annually scheduled Open House date.

### **Weapons**

Unlawful possession of a weapon on school proper in Kentucky is punishable by a maximum of five years in prison and a ten thousand-dollar fine.

Kentucky Penal Code Section 500.080 states that:

“Unlawful possession of a weapon on school property in Kentucky is a felony punishable by a maximum of five (5) years in prison and a ten thousand dollar (\$10,000) fine.

This section of the Kentucky Penal Code also states that “deadly weapon” means:

- a) Any weapon from which a shot, readily capable of producing death or other serious physical injury, may be discharged; or
- b) Any knife other than an ordinary pocket knife or hunting knife; or
- c) Billy, nightstick, or club; or
- d) Blackjack or slapjack; or
- e) Nunchaku Karate sticks; or
- f) Shuriken or death star; or
- g) Artificial knuckles made from metal, plastic or other similar hard material.”

POCKET OR HUNTING KNIVES ARE NOT ALLOWED AT ST. NICHOLAS ACADEMY.

If a homicidal threat is made, parents and the appropriate law enforcement authorities are contacted. The student(s) who have been threatened and their parents will be notified as soon as possible.

Any student FALSELY reporting threatening behavior is subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension and/or dismissal from school.

### **HIGH SCHOOL “SHADOWING”**

Students in grades 7 and 8 are encouraged to “shadow” at our local Catholic high schools. Eighth graders shadow in the fall semester and 7<sup>th</sup> graders in the spring semester. There are several days (i.e. PTS Conference Thursdays and Fridays) for shadowing. Students are encouraged to shadow on days off.

### **HOMEROOM ASSIGNMENT**

Students are assigned to homerooms according to a random mix. Therefore, we ask that parents not make special assignment requests.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES**

When weather conditions cause school openings to be questionable, one of the following announcements will be made for Catholic Elementary Schools in Jefferson County:

- All Catholic Elementary Schools in Jefferson County are OPEN – SNA will be OPEN on the regular schedule
- Catholic Elementary Schools in Jefferson County will be open, but on a DELAYED schedule – SNA will open at 10:00 a.m. and dismiss at the regular time
- If a DELAYED schedule is announced for an early dismissal day, SNA will cancel the 11:00 AM dismissal and dismiss at the regular 3:00 PM time.
- School begins as usual, but Jefferson County Public Schools announce an early dismissal – **SNA will dismiss at 3:00 PM.**
- All Catholic Elementary Schools in Jefferson County are CLOSED – SNA will be CLOSED
- If school is cancelled due to bad weather all extra-curricular activities are cancelled.

There is no provision for early dismissal due to bad weather. The regular 3:00 PM dismissal time will be observed. If a parent deems it necessary to pick up their children earlier than our regular 3:00 PM dismissal time, they must come to the office and sign out each student.

### **INVITATIONS**

Invitations of any sort should not be distributed at school. Please adhere strictly to this policy in fairness and consideration to all. No correspondence or literature of any kind will be allowed to be distributed without specific permission of the administration.

Students may celebrate their birthdays with a simple treat brought for all members of the student’s homeroom.

### **TUITION AND FEES**

#### **Tuition**

Tuition at St. Nicholas Academy is divided into two categories, discount and regular. The four supporting parishes supplement the Saint Nicholas families with a percentage of their contributions. Members of these four supporting parishes, defined as being formally registered in one of the parishes, demonstrating regular worship at one of the parishes, and participating in stewardship at one of the parishes, are eligible for the discounted rate. All other families will be charged the regular rate of tuition.

The SNA school board approved two new tuition proposals to benefit both current and new families. They are as follows:

- **Recruitment Incentive**

Existing families may earn \$1000 tuition discount when they recruit a new family to Saint Nicholas Academy. The new family must remain enrolled and in attendance for the entire year, paying full tuition at the Welcome Rate. The recruiting family will receive the \$1000 deduction from the next year's tuition up to the point that the tuition is realized. This money may only be paid as a discounted tuition. No cash may exchange hands at any time.

- **Welcome Rate**

St. Nicholas Academy offers a one-time temporary tuition "Welcome Rate" for all new families at the discounted family rate. At the end of the first year, the family's status will be reviewed to determine if the family has met the above criteria for remaining at the discounted rate or if they shall be charged the regular rate.

Tuition is payable for the school year from July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 1<sup>st</sup>. All families are required to enroll in ACH (auto withdraw) for submission of payments. The only exception is payment made in full. The Tuition Agreement form, completed at pre-registration, will state the options for the payment cycle: monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, bi-annually and annually. All payment options are due on the dates specified on the Tuition Agreement Form. If the ACH debit is returned, a charge of \$30.00 will be assessed. Second occurrence will result in a mandated meeting with the Head of School. If the ACH debit is blocked your child(ren) will not be allowed to return to St. Nicholas Academy until the account is current.

### **Fees**

The pre-registration process occurs every year in January. The process includes completion of the pre-registration form, a signed Tuition/Agreement Form (ACH debit) and payment of the pre-registration/book fee. All forms and payment are due by the end of January. Students whose pre-registration forms and/or payment are received after the end of January risk having no guaranteed placement for the coming school year and will be assessed a late payment fee.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

A school that runs smoothly and assures a good learning environment for the students requires the cooperation of many people. Volunteers are needed in many areas. SNA volunteers are mindful to guard *as sacred and private* any/all information attained while in service that references a student's behaviors, grades or abilities. The confidentiality of the student must be strictly respected.

All who can volunteer in our various programs are encouraged to do so through our **Parent Volunteer Organization (PVO)**. The PVO provides a framework which enables parents to support and share in the social, intellectual and spiritual education of the children at St. Nicholas. Volunteers support the PVO with gifts of time and talent offered to the following committees:





## WITHDRAWALS

Parents transferring children to other schools are required to notify the school as soon as possible. Parents are asked to give the name and address of the school that the child will attend. Students will return all non-consumable books to their teachers before leaving school. NO RECORDS or transcripts will be released until ALL financial responsibilities have been satisfied. Pre-registration, Registration, book fees and/or tuition will not be refunded. These fees are kept in the budget for services rendered. A fee of \$2.00 will be assessed to cover the cost of copying and/or mailing records to high schools during the course of the year.

Please note that the SNA Tuition Policy Agreement signed at pre-registration states “*We also understand that if we choose to leave St. Nicholas Academy for any reason other than expulsion, we will be responsible for the full tuition amount for this entire 12-month period*”. Anyone wishing a release from their tuition contract/agreement due to extenuating circumstances must submit a written request to the SNA Board.

### In Praise of Children

Lord, you have made children  
as varied as the flowers of a garden.  
You have blessed each one uniquely,  
and each fragile, growing child  
is infinitely precious in Your sight.  
You have trusted us to nurture them,  
and blessed us with the joy of seeing them grow.  
Lord, we teach in reverence.

*Elsbeth Campbell Murphy*

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