



ST. JOSEPH BY-THE-SEA HIGH SCHOOL

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September, 2025

Dear Parents:

Welcome back to what I hope will be a great year for you and your family here at Sea!

By tradition, the Catholic Church dedicates each month of the year to certain devotion. In September, it is Our Lady of Sorrows. The Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows takes place on September 15, the day after the Feast of the Triumph of the Cross. We remember the suffering of Mary as she stood at the foot of the Cross and witnessed the suffering and death of her Son.

Faculty and students will gather together as a school family on Wednesday, September 10th 8:15 A.M. for the Mass of the Holy Spirit with Bishop Peter J. Byrne to open the school year. Students will have an opportunity to go to confession prior to the mass. Our newly elected Student Council will be sworn in by Bishop Byrne at that time.

This year our students will return to a completed first floor renovation, with upgraded classrooms as well as a renovated Auditorium Lobby. We have expanded our dual enrollment program for students who are not taking any honors classes. This means that EVERY Sea student will be able to earn 30 college credits, which represents a full year of college. Please be diligent in making certain that your student registers for all these classes. In addition, students in the regular classes will have an opportunity to take Personal Finance (in place of Economics) and will get to use the Bloomberg Lab.

We are also taking a deep dive into Artificial Intelligence this year. All teachers will have the Gemini Suite and all students will have a product called Nectir AI. Nectir AI interfaces with Canvas and will allow each student to have an AI assistant for each class. Nectir AI is a closed sandbox, meaning it only knows what we program it to know, so the materials for each course will be uploaded into the AI assistant. It will be able to tutor them in the subject, generate sample questions for a test, guide them through the steps of writing an essay or a paper. We are also augmenting our College Advisement program by adding a College Athletic Advisor, Mr. Daniel McCarthy who will be available for students seeking assistance with college athletic opportunities.

We were able to take all these steps without significantly increasing tuition because of the efforts of our Family Association and our internal efforts to avoid wasteful spending. We also continue to offer a sibling discount to families paying tuition for more than one student. Please be assured that we will make every effort to keep Sea affordable for families of moderate income who seek a Catholic education for their children.

Let me also take this opportunity to renew my message regarding student attendance from last year – please review the fortified Comprehensive Attendance Policy in our Student Handbook. For your convenience, I am attaching a copy to this letter.

As I may have indicated, we are able to lower our total budget by not budgeting for uncollected tuition. This enables us to pass the savings along to families in the form of a lower tuition, but it does force us to collect all of the tuition in a timely manner. Please understand that if everyone pays tuition on time, we can pay our bills on time. Your cooperation in this matter is deeply appreciated.

As always, I am available and eager to address your concerns about these or any other matters. Please be assured that you and your family are in my daily prayers.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Fr. Michael Reilly
Principal

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ATTENDANCE

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

1. On the Day a Student is Absent
 - a. Phone Call: Since State regulations require the regular attendance of minors it is necessary for the school to be informed of a student's absence prior to 8 AM via telephone call.
 - b. Failure to call in an absence to the Main Office will result in detention.
 - c. A parent or guardian must have on file an e-mail address and cell phone number. When a student is absent an automated notification will be made by the school to the parent/guardian.
 - d. Students who are absent from school on a given day may not partake in any afternoon or evening activity sponsored by the school on that day including Driver Education and Athletics.
 - e. If the absence extends beyond 3 consecutive days, the parents must keep the school informed concerning the student's condition.
2. Return to School
 - a. Absent Note: Upon a student's return an official St. Joseph-by-the-Sea Absence Note signed by a parent is to be presented before Homeroom in the General Office. Absentee notes will be kept on file as required by the State.
 - b. Failure to present the Absent Note to the Main Office will result in detention.
 - c. A student who has been truant will not be permitted back to class until the Dean personally meets with a parent of the student.
3. Academic Responsibilities
 - a. It is the student's responsibility to make up class work and assignments missed because of absence.
 - b. Teachers are not obligated to give extensions on assignments. Students should check Canvas to stay current with assignments.
 - c. Make-up tests are given at the teacher's discretion.
4. Legitimate/Unexcused
 - a. An unexcused absence for vacations, reunions, parent or family business is not a legitimate absence and can be penalized academically.
 - b. Because an absence is legitimate that does not mean that it will not be counted as an absence. It means only that the absence is not a violation of the law. Every absence must be recorded on the permanent record and the report card.
 - c. In every case, the determination of the legitimacy of an absence is at the discretion of the Vice-Principal of Faculty and Students.
 - d. While health/doctor's notes are taken into account, it may still be determined that a student is unable to continue at Sea.
5. In every case, the final decision regarding penalties/dismissal for attendance is at the discretion of the Vice-Principal of Faculty and Students.

EARLY DISMISSAL

1. It is presumed that only very serious causes would necessitate the request to be dismissed early.
2. Parents who wish to arrange for early dismissal are encouraged to send a note to the Main Office in the morning so that it can be pre-authorized by the Vice-Principal of Faculty and Students. If parents arrive without the note, it will be necessary to get the Dean.

3. A student who gets sick during the day should come to the office and one of the deans or the principal will authorize early dismissal. Students are not to directly contact their parents without permission from a dean.
4. If the student returns to school before the end of the regular school day, the student must report to the General Office and sign in.
5. Students requesting early dismissal are marked completely or partially absent for that day.
6. Reasons for legal absences/latenesses do not include: road tests, baby-sitting, late buses, etc.
7. Students who leave early are responsible for all work missed.
8. A student with a cumulative record of 5 or more sign-outs (leaving early) over a four-year period will not be eligible for perfect attendance recognition at graduation.

LATENESS

1. To School
 - a. No student may report to Home Room class after the second bell has rung without a late slip.
 - b. Students who are late must report to the General Office for a late slip.
 - c. Students who are late will serve detention that day at the discretion of the Dean.
2. To Class
 - a. Chronic lateness will be addressed by the Deans.
 - b. A student entering the classroom late is subject to detention at the teacher's discretion.

PROBATION (ATTENDANCE)

1. For this section, any absence, lateness, or sign-out constitutes an **Attendance Event**
2. A student who accumulates either 7 Attendance Events in a single Marking Period or 12 Attendance Events in a year triggers a meeting with the Dean and Vice-Principal for Faculty and Students to place the student on Attendance Probation. At the meeting, the student may lose some or all of the following privileges:
 - a. Honor Roll
 - b. Athletics
 - c. Extra-Curricular Activities
 - d. Senior Dismissal following Seventh Period
 - e. Senior Privileges (Spirit Day, Christmas Party, Mardi Gras, Luncheon, BBQ, Prom)
3. A continuing pattern of Attendance Events will escalate the Probation and will culminate with the student being subject to dismissal.
4. All final decisions regarding Attendance Probation are at the discretion of the Vice-Principal of Faculty and Students in consultation with the Principal.