

# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the drop off procedure in the morning?

Drop off for the Before School Program starts at 7:00am. Students enter via the Cafeteria Entrance in Trilby St. lot. No student is allowed in the building before 7:00am.

No one is permitted to drive in the schoolyard after 8:00am.

Students may arrive in supervised schoolyards at 8:15am. The bell rings at 8:25am.

Please follow the flow of cars by arriving to school on Trilby Street and exiting on Percy Street. Note\* The first part of Trilby Street, before the Astroturf playground, is reserved for the buses. After the playground, kinder parents may park on Trilby St. These procedures are for the safety of the children, our neighbors and to alleviate traffic congestion on both Percy Street and Grattan Street, especially in the winter months.

Before School: Cafeteria Entrance 7AM - 8:15 AM Ring doorbell!

Kinder students are greeted by a staff member at the Trilby St. Door.

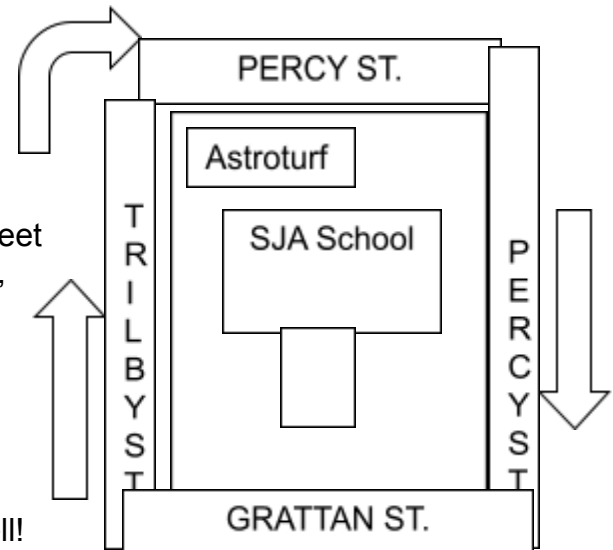
PreK: Students are dropped off to their Teacher's using the Visitors Entrance from 8:15 AM–8:30 AM

Grade K: Trilby Street Door near Astro Turf Yard 8:15 AM to 8:25 AM

Grade 1-4: Percy Street Lot from 8:15 AM to 8:25 AM

Grade 5-8: Trilby Street Lot from 8:15 AM to 8:25 AM

Late Arrivals: Percy Street Visitors Entrance after 8:25 AM Ring bell!



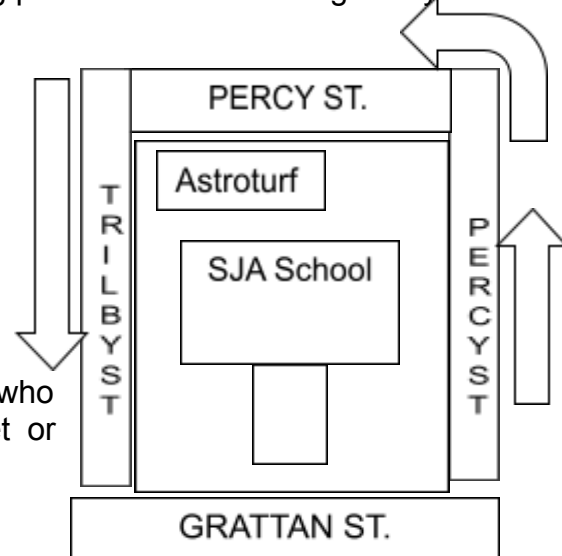
## What is the pickup procedure in the afternoon?

Dismissal is at 2:38pm. Parking is permitted in the Percy Street schoolyard, Grattan Street, Percy Street and Chapel Street. The flow of traffic is opposite the morning procedure. Enter using Percy Street and exit using Trilby Street.

Pre-Kinder students are picked up from the classroom or use the valet pickup in the Trilby Street lot. Pre-K parents utilizing the valet pickup arrive in the Trilby St. lot from 2pm-2:15pm. The gate is closed at 2:15pm.

All other students leave the classroom and line up in designated areas with a teacher and then are escorted out of the building. Students taking a bus exit from the Trilby St. door. Students being picked up in the parking lot exit from the Percy St. door. Students who are walking home or being picked up either on Grattan Street or Chapel Street will exit from the front of the school.

Students in the After School Program gather in the cafeteria for attendance and snacks. Parents may pick up child/children from the cafeteria entrance in the Trilby Street schoolyard. Please ring the cafeteria doorbell. Note\* Parents cannot enter the school using the visitor's door after 3:00pm. In the event of inclement weather, the Afterschool Program will be indoors in the cafeteria.



### **Is there an Extended Care Program?**

The Before School Program, B.S.P., is in the school cafeteria. Children may attend from 7:00 am until 8:15 am. At that time, the children are brought outside until the bell rings. Cost is \$3.00 per day.

The After School Program, A.S.P., runs every day with the exception of half days. On nice days the children will be outside. In cold or inclement weather, students will stay indoors. The program runs from directly after school until 5:00 pm. Cost is \$5.00 an hour or \$2.50 for half hour increments.

\*Hours are subject to change if school hours change.

A.S.P. Late Pickup Fee: \$5.00 per every 5 minutes per child. After 15 minutes, your emergency contact person will be called and will be asked to pick up your child/children. In the event of an emergency, parents are asked to call the program's cell phone 530- 5810.

Families must pre-register and may sign up year round. Download registration forms @ <https://www.sjachicopee.org/BeforeAfterCare.html>. Preferred payment is check. In the memo section indicate Before School or After School Program.

### **What is the school website?**

[www.sjachicopee.org](http://www.sjachicopee.org)

### **Where can I find information regarding the Dress Code Policy?**

The dress code is posted on the school's website. Click on the About tab and click on the Handbook tab.

### **Is the school website updated regularly?**

The school website is maintained by our computer consultant Mrs. Mary Marra. It is a great resource for families. On a monthly basis, she posts, under the Student tab, the monthly calendar and lunch menu. Special events/photos and videos are on the home page. Posted under the Parent tab, you will find the monthly SJA News, School Handbook, Dine Out Coupons and much more.

### **What is FACTS SIS?**

FACTS SIS is the school's student information system utilized for student grades and assignments, communication, school calendar, announcements, newsletters, attendance and family demographics.

### **What is the FACTS Family Portal?**

The FACTS family portal keeps you in touch with your student's progress during the school year. It can be accessed from the school website [www.sjachicopee.org](http://www.sjachicopee.org) by clicking the white rectangle located above the church photo. It is also where the school will post family webforms and surveys. The school code is SJA-MA. Returning Families your Username and Password will be the same as last year. New Families need to create an account. It is a 3 step process. #1 Enter the District Code SJA-MA in the first box. #2 Scroll down to the end and click the Create New Family Portal Account. This will take you to another screen. #3 Enter your email address. FACTS will send you a link to create your username and password.

### **Does SJA School have an automated call system?**

Yes. The school uses FACTS. It is a mass notification phone system which enables the school to reach each parent/guardian for every child in the building within just a few minutes with only one call. Whether it is to inform you of no school because of inclement weather, early release because of inclement weather, maybe an emergent situation that is happening at school or just to remind you about an upcoming event, it has proven to be an excellent form of communication between home and school. It is important to keep the school informed of any phone number changes.

### **What is Parent Info Night (P.I.N.)?**

Parent Info Night is held in September. Parents are invited to meet the faculty and staff, to visit their child's/children's classroom, and to review the classroom objectives. Parents arrive in the Big Hall for a greeting from the Principal and invited speakers. Afterwards, parents disburse to the classrooms. Conferences are not held on this night, but can be arranged for another time.

### **How do I become a Homeroom Parent?**

Homeroom Parents are volunteers who mentor new classroom families and assist their child's teacher during the school year. If interested in acting as a Homeroom Parent, please sign up at the Parent Info Night. Generally, parents introduce themselves to new families and assist with class parties, art projects, cover books etc. Class mailing lists/phone lists are available from the teacher or the Business Office. Homeroom Parents must complete a CORI Form and VIRTUS Training.

### **Can parents volunteer?**

Yes. K-8 families are required to fulfill 10 service hours annually. All volunteers and chaperones must complete a CORI Check and VIRTUS Training every 3 years. Plan ahead so you do not miss out! The CORI Check is required. Forms are available in the main office or online @ <https://diospringfield.org/wp-content/uploads/CORI-JULY-2022.pdf>. While completing the CORI form please pay close attention to Volunteer Signature, Date, and also last 6 digits of Social Security #. A copy of your ID is required, in order to complete the CORI request. Return the form and ID to the school office. The CORI Check is done every three years. VIRTUS Training must be completed. The two courses that are required are Protecting God's Children and Code of Conduct. Instructions to VIRTUS are in the main office and online @ [https://diospringfield.org/wp-content/uploads/Virtus-Instructions\\_201810231021-2.pdf](https://diospringfield.org/wp-content/uploads/Virtus-Instructions_201810231021-2.pdf). Upon completion of the training, please print and turn in a copy of the training certificate to the school office. If you have any questions, contact the school office.

### **How are volunteer hours tracked?**

Volunteer Slips will be available in the School Office and online <https://www.sjachicopee.org/PDF/Volunteer%20Hours%20Form.pdf>. Volunteers are responsible for completing and submitting forms to the Business Office. If you are unable to volunteer, send in a note & the \$100.00 buyout fee. If you do not meet the required hours, you are invoiced for the deficit.

### **What is the "Apple Giving Tree"?**

The "Apple Giving Tree" is the theme of the September & October bulletin board located outside the principal's office. The board is coordinated by the SJA P.T.O. Apples are handed out to the teachers in August. They fill out the apples with wish list items for the classroom. Parents are invited to pull off apples and donate items to the teacher. P.I.N. is the perfect opportunity to visit the "Apple Giving Tree".

### **What is Birthday Day?**

Once a month, SJA School recognizes students and staff celebrating a birthday. This day is indicated on the school calendar. Birthday honorees are given a free dress down for the day.

### **What is Dollar Dress Down Day?**

Students may purchase for \$1.00 the privilege of a dress down on the designated Friday. Dollar Dress Down Days are indicated on the school monthly calendar. Proceeds benefit student activities and local charities.

### **How do I get involved in the SJA P.T.O.?**

The P.T.O. is SJA School's parent/teacher organization. The group is the social arm of the SJA School Advisory Board. Parents or guardians meet once a month to plan extra-curricular events for students, parents and teachers to meet on a social level to have fun and develop a sense of community. Meetings are held in the Big Hall, September thru June, on the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Meetings start at 6:00pm. New members, volunteers, sponsors and donations are always welcome. Pre-registration is not required. P.T.O. minutes are posted on the school website and on the P.T.O Board located at the Visitors' entrance. Attendance does count toward family volunteer hours.

### **Where is Lost and Found?**

The school has a Lost and Found table in the school hall. Items are placed on the table. Ask your child to check it periodically if they are missing items. Please be sure to label all clothing, backpacks, lunchboxes etc. Labeled items can be returned to the classroom.

### **What is the Honor's Breakfast?**

The Honors Breakfast is a P.T.O. sponsored event. It is held in November, January and April. Students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and up are eligible to attend. They must maintain A's and B's on their report card with all 1's, 2's and 3's for conduct and effort. If the student meets the guidelines, a special stamp is on the report card inviting them and their parents/guardians to the breakfast. Please make alternate arrangements for siblings (Before School Program is available). If you are interested in sponsoring a breakfast, contact a member of the P.T.O. or the school office.

### **Is there a Parent and Teacher Conference Day?**

Yes. In November, SJA School hosts an afternoon and evening for Parent Teacher Conferences. Students have an early dismissal on that day. Prior to that day, teachers send home an appointment schedule. Report cards are given out at that time.

### **What is Reading Counts?**

The school library participates in the Scholastic Reading Counts program. It is a reading incentive program. Students take computerized quizzes on selected books to earn points for a special end of the year raffle. Also, classes compete for the highest cumulative points. To celebrate their accomplishments, the school hosts a beach party. Raffle donations are accepted year round.

### **What is Catholic Schools' Week (C.S.W.)?**

C.S.W. is an annual national celebration held at the end of January to honor Catholic school's excellence and highlight its mission and traditions. It is also a time to invite prospective families to consider Catholic education at our school. At the local level, SJA School kicks off the week with a Children's liturgy at Ste. Rose de Lima Church followed by an Open House at the school. During the week, the students participate in numerous activities and a community service project. Itineraries and permission slips are sent home in advance to assist with your planning. Some of the events have a small fee.

### **What is the SJA Academic Achievement Award?**

The SJA Academic Achievement Award program was established in 2007 with the Foundation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield by Donald (Class of 1956) & Michele D'Amour to promote Catholic Education at the school, through an annual Academic Award Scholarship.

Each year, the academically top five students in each of grades 5, 6, & 7 will receive a \$500.00 scholarship to aid in their tuition at SJA. The academically top five eighth grade students\* will each receive a \$500.00 scholarship to be paid toward tuition at the Catholic high school of their choice.

Students are awarded a certificate/voucher for their award. Monies will be directly distributed from the endowment to the school and credited to the student's tuition. Determination of the winning students in each grade will be made solely by overall academic performance and not by financial need. \*Grade average of 90 or better or at the discretion of Principal

### **When do you apply for Financial Aid?**

Applications for the Springfield Diocese Financial Aid program are available on-line beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>. A new application must be completed each year. Applicants must apply on-line at FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment ([www.factsmgt.com](http://www.factsmgt.com)). There are **NO** paper applications. Tuition aid is **not available for Pre-K students**. Completed applications will be accepted until October 31<sup>st</sup> or until funds are depleted. Awards are processed monthly on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month starting March 15<sup>th</sup> until funds are depleted. There is a non-refundable \$30.00 application fee to apply. Be sure to mail, fax (1-866-315-9264) or upload FACTS your 1040 Income Tax form. Applications will not be processed until tax forms have been submitted and application fees have been paid. Upon receipt of the supporting documents, the application is forwarded to the Springfield Diocese. The process involves consulting the pastor. After pastor consultation, letters are sent to families and notices are sent to the schools. Questions? Call FACTS Customer Service at 1-866-441-4637.

### **What is a Dine Out Night?**

Several times a year, the school organizes a Dine Out Night at a local restaurant or family event venue. A portion of the restaurant's proceeds are donated back to the school and are used to fund projects. Families are provided with a coupon to present to their server. All families and friends of SJA are invited to participate. In the past, we have used the donations to buy school desks, help pave the school yard and purchase AstroTurf. We have hosted these nights at local restaurants such as Pizzeria Uno, Friendly's, Red Robin, Frontera Grille, and Outback Steakhouse.

### **What is the School Store?**

The school store is open for business once a month for students Grades K-8. It is located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor at the end of the Junior High Hallway. The store features school supply items that were on the summer supply lists. The school store date will be posted on the monthly calendar. On the designated day, a volunteer or staff member greets each class. Students can make cash only purchases on that day.

### **Which programs does SJA School participate in year round?**

- Labels for Education
- Box Tops for Education
- Coke Rewards
- Amazon Smile

### **How can I make a donation to the school?**

Donations can be made online safely and securely via the school website using PayPal. You do not need to have a PayPal account to utilize the online link. Click the [Gift Giving](#) tab and follow the user friendly instructions. Donations can also be dropped off or mailed to the school.

### **Are there fundraisers?**

Yes. The school holds 2-3 fundraisers a school year to fund the school budget and maintain affordable tuition. If a family does not wish to participate, they are given the option to pay a \$250.00 opt out fee.

**Will my child attend church?**

Yes. Students attend 9am Mass once a month at Ste. Rose de Lima Church. Mass, prepared by the students, is held the first Friday of each month. They also attend on all holy days of obligation. Families are welcome to attend. Students are required to follow the Mass Dress Code.

**Do you offer a meal program?**

SJA School offers free breakfast and lunch to all students. Sodexo, a worldwide food services company with a facility in Springfield MA is the school's foodservice provider. All students arrive in their classrooms at 8:25am and are given the option of a hot or cold breakfast. Students enjoy lunch in the school cafeteria. The menu includes a choice of hot or cold lunch. Students will continue to have the choice to bring their own lunches from home. Breakfast, lunch and snack menus can be found @ <https://schools.mealviewer.com/school/StJoanofArchSchool>.