

# **Vincent J. Maloney Catholic**

## **Junior High School**



### **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2019-2020**

**SIMPLY THE BEST FOR THE WORLD**

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### **Mission**

Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools is a welcoming learning community that awakens the hearts and minds of students while educating and nurturing each of them to learn, live fully and serve others.

### **International Baccalaureate Mission Statement**

**The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. This program encourages our students to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners.**

## **ADMINISTRATORS' MESSAGE**

Welcome to V.J.M.! We are happy that you have chosen our school. Each student is a precious gift from God and we are honored and excited to be able to learn and grow with your children. At Vincent J. Maloney Catholic Junior High School the staff have high expectations for student learning and work individually and collaboratively to create an atmosphere which promotes student success. We are committed to three main goals:

1. Success for every student.
2. Providing a safe and nurturing environment.
3. Ensuring that all students come to know Christ through us.

We encourage open communication between students, staff and parents and believe parental support is an integral part of the success of our students. Please review the following information and policies along with your child and contact us if you have questions or concerns. You may also check out our school website for more information. Your understanding and support of the school policies will help us work as a team to fulfill our mission and goals.

## **COUNSELLOR'S MESSAGE**

Welcome to all students and families to our V.J. Maloney Community. The junior high experience is a time of physical growth, growing independence and personal development. Our adolescents are faced with many choices as they navigate through this challenging time. The Counseling program at V.J.M., working in partnership with parents, students, teachers and community agencies, if necessary, will support, assist and provide opportunities that will aid in the development of essential skills necessary for a successful journey. Students and parents/ guardians are invited to contact the counselor if there are any questions or concerns through email, phone or by stopping by the office. Confidentiality is respected. Communication is essential for students to have a positive school experience. Proactive initiatives of the counseling program are grade level workshops and a monthly Connected Parent series for our parents in our school community.

## **Catholic Faith Dimension**

Our Catholic faith permeates our daily life and curriculum at Vincent J. Maloney Catholic Junior High School. Students are taught Religious Studies in Grades 7, 8, and 9. We provide regular religious celebrations, daily prayer and reflections, guest speakers, staff and student retreats and community service projects to complement our school program. We work closely with St. Albert Parish to provide meaningful experiences for our students at the church.

## VJM 2019/2020 SCHOOL BLOCK SCHEDULES

During the 2019/2020 School year VJM will run two schedules at various times throughout the year. Start and dismissal times are consistent throughout the year.

### Bell Schedule 2019-20

#### School Operating Schedule

2:30 pm Dismissal Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday

8:00 – 8:51 a.m.	Block 1
8:54 – 9:40 a.m.	Block 2
9:43 – 10:29 a.m.	Block 3
10:29 – 10:40 a.m.	LOCKER BREAK 11mins
10:40 – 11:26 a.m.	Block 4
11:29 – 12:15 p.m.	Block 5
12:15 – 12:55 p.m.	LUNCH BREAK
12:55 – 1:41 p.m.	Block 6
1:44 – 2:30 p.m.	Block 7

#### Excel Block Schedule - Wednesday

8:00 – 9:05 a.m.	Excel Block
9:08 – 9:44 a.m.	Block 1
9:47 – 10:23 a.m.	Block 2
10:26 – 11:02 a.m.	Block 3
11:02 – 11:14 a.m.	<b>Locker Break-</b> 12 mins
11:14 - 11:50a.m.	Block 4
11:53 – 12:29 p.m.	Block 5
12:29 - 1:10 p.m.	<b>Lunch Break -</b> 41 mins
1:10 - 1:48 p.m.	Block 6
1:52 - 2:30 p.m.	Block 7

#### Early Dismissal

In addition to these regular schedules students will have early dismissal days on Friday, November 8th, Friday, December 13th, Friday, February 14th, and Friday April 24th. On these days students will be dismissed at 11:01 am.

## ONE BINDER ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEM

Our staff believes that the majority of students at V.J.M. can organize successfully by implementing a one-binder system. When your child arrives on the first day of school, they receive an agenda. Students are expected to house all of their subjects, as well as the agenda book in one binder. This binder should go home daily with the student in order to allow parents/guardians to keep abreast of students' progress and encourage home study.

The students will periodically need to transfer completed work to a storage binder, housed in their lockers, or at home, to save completed materials in order to study for cumulative exams (final exams). With encouragement and support from home and school, this program will help our students remain organized. There are a few students that may require a different system for the organization of their books and subjects and this is done in consultation with classroom teachers and parents.

### I. SCHOOL PROGRAMS

#### Curriculum

Alberta Education establishes the Junior High Program of Studies. The program is divided into two areas:

- a) Core or compulsory
- b) Complementary courses or options

#### Core/Compulsory Programming

Religious Studies, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies (Humanities), Mathematics, Daily Physical Education, and Health are compulsory. These comprise approximately 70% of the instructional time.

#### Complementary Courses

#### Complimentary Course Menu - Options

Our Complimentary Option course menu includes course offerings from Communication & Technology Foundations (CTF) and prescribed Alberta Programs of Study in Fine Arts (music, drama and art) and French Language.

The CTF curriculum has five areas of possible study. ***Business, Communication, Human Services, Resources and Technology*** represent occupational groupings found within industry. These occupational clusters are aligned with the Career and Technology Studies (CTS) occupational clusters as well as the National Occupational Classification. An occupational area is a grouping of courses that focuses on attitudes, skills and knowledge related to specific work areas. The main goals of courses in the CTF cluster is:

#### CTF and the Cross-curricular Competencies

CTF emphasizes the development of cross-curricular competencies through an exposure to the occupational areas. A cross-curricular competency is an interrelated set of attitudes, skills and knowledge that is drawn upon and applied to a particular context for successful learning and living.

#### CTF and the Learning Journey

CTF supports a learning journey where students explore interests and passions while developing skills and cross-curricular competencies and making connections to career possibilities and technologies within any combination of the CTS occupational areas. Students work toward a shared goal by creating a product, performance, completing a challenge or service.

#### Alignment with CTS

CTF supports the transition to the high school CTS program by developing the foundation for students to make reasonable choices as they consider CTS courses. CTF provides students with a strong foundation of attitudes, skills, knowledge and practical experiences related to occupational areas that will assist them in making informed decisions prior to entering the senior high school CTS program.

**CTF is NOT a prerequisite for high school CTS.**

## **IB –MYP (International Baccalaureate – Middle Years Program**

Vincent J Maloney is an official World School for the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (MYP). **The program provides a philosophy that is added to our Alberta Curriculum for all students that attend our school.** Thus all students benefit from the teaching philosophies and principles of the IB program. It is a program of international education designed to help students develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills to participate actively and responsibly in a changing world. It incorporates five areas of interaction, which provides an international focus to develop the best citizens **for** the world. Health and Social Education, Human Ingenuity, Community and Service, Environment, and Approaches to Learning. Upon completion of grade nine students who have completed the necessary language, fine arts and service requirements may qualify for an IB Certificate from VJM.

## **St. Albert Sports Academy**

Athletics, Academics, Advantage! The Greater St. Albert Sports Academy is based on the philosophy that students can learn through sport to maintain or improve academic standing and improve sports skills at the same time. The Academy currently offers any grade 4-9 boy or girl who has a desire to commit to the program, an outstanding opportunity to receive specialized skill and fitness training in hockey, soccer and a combined program of dance, cheer and gymnastics as well as an enhanced physical education program. The Academy provides all its students individual attention in a Christ-centered environment. Students at VJM who are registered in Academy have core subjects and options in the morning and take Academy classes in the afternoon from Tuesday – Thursday. Students registered in Sports Academy take their core subjects in the morning along with a full selection of options. Health and Religion occurs on Monday and Friday afternoon and Physical Education is integrated into the Sports Academy program. We will accept registrations from students outside of our District and attendance boundaries pending class enrollment. Administration will review any withdrawal from Sports Academy and can redirect students to their home school or District. Please contact Geoff Giaocobbo at 780-459-4478 for more information.



## **Technology**

Technology is integrated into all curriculum areas. We encourage students to bring a “Robust Device” such as a laptop, chrome book or tablet to school. Computers are available to students to help them achieve specific technology outcomes and complete assignments. GSACRD provides a robust wireless network that students may access. Students are expected to comply with the Appropriate Use Agreement found in the registration package. For more information and school policies surrounding the use of electronic devices read section IV of our this handbook.

## **Specialized Programs at VJM**

At Vincent J. Maloney we meet the needs of students within an inclusive classroom setting. For students with more significant learning needs an Individual Program Plan or a Learner Plan is developed in consultation with parents and the school learning support team. Depending on student need, financial and human resources we have also been able to offer some or all of the following specialized programs:

### **Gifted Program**

Some identified students need to be challenged beyond the regular curriculum. Identified students will be given an opportunity to extend their learning based on individual needs and interests.

### **Marauder Excel Block**

In order to provide students with more choice in their learning, support implementation of MYP and to implement a Pyramid of Support at VJM we run a schedule that includes an Excel Block for much of the school year. The Excel Block is designed to provide students with the following:

1. More opportunities during the school day for students to seek extra small group help from teachers and support staff, complete projects/homework and prepare for tests in a supervised setting.

2. Flexibility and choice for students to seek individual or small group support from staff, time to work with peers on projects or independent study time to complete work.
3. Staff advisement
4. Time to focus on school wide initiatives and further learning around the MYP IB

For more information please check our school website.

## **II. SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

### **Field Trips**

Some excursions may be arranged to enhance student learning with first hand experience, and are always related or linked to curriculum. The number and types of field trips vary from year to year and individual permission forms are sent to inform and obtain permission for your child to attend. These are a privilege and behavior and performance are used to determine attendance.

### **Guest Speakers**

The knowledge and expertise of people from various disciplines enhance the learning experiences of our students by visiting the school and sharing their expertise. An attempt is made to bring in resource people from the community and the world to enhance classroom and whole school activities.

### **Grade 9 Spring Farewell**

Spring Farewell takes place on June 4th to bid farewell to our grade nine students. There is a family mass and Farewell program at St. Albert Parish in the evening. Staff and students also discuss other activities in conjunction with the farewell evening which may or may not include an evening dance for graduates and a guest after the mass. The intent of Farewell is to reflect on the student's time spent at Vincent J. Maloney and to celebrate their continued educational journey to high school. If shopping for outfits for the event please ensure that they meet all the requirements of our school dress regulations. More information will be provided to parents of students in grade nine in the spring.

### **Intramurals**

Participation and fun are the focus of the intramural programs. During the lunch hour, students and teachers are encouraged to come out and enjoy a variety of activities: Wii, Volleyball, 3 on 3 Basketball, Badminton, Floor Hockey, Dance and Theme Days to name a few. Students compete as homerooms and accumulate points. Friendly competition and socialization are the benefits that make everyone a winner!

### **Student Diversity Groups**

Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools is committed to using its LIFE (Lived Inclusion for Everyone) Framework as a guideline for the creation and operation of student groups that are comprehensive in their approach to inclusion and open to the exploration, in a Catholic context, of a variety of issues including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity, justice, and respectful relationships and language. This Framework is a component of the District's Safe and Caring Learning Environment Administrative Procedure, and is the result of a provincial collaboration of Catholic school jurisdictions. Each of our schools may be organizing LIFE Framework / Diversity Groups. The school will keep you informed as these groups are established by placing notices within our ongoing news notifications.

### **Lunch Activities**

We strongly encourage students remain on campus so they can be supervised through the lunch break. We have a full-service cafeteria and a variety of activities (which may vary due to student interest) for student involvement.

Computers

Karaoke Club

Movie Room

Yearbook Club

Book Club

Intramurals

Library

Student Leadership

Games Room

Knitting Club

**\*Other Special Events and Activities Are Noted on the School Calendar as They Vary from Year to Year.**

### **III. SCHOOL SERVICES**

#### **Cafeteria -**

A full service cafeteria is available at lunch and during morning break. We endeavour to provide a NUT AWARE environment and appreciate your cooperation in sending NUT FREE products to the school to respect students that have SEVERE PEANUT ALLERGIES. We offer healthy food choices and do offer some treats to compete with the local convenience stores and encourage students to remain on campus. We appreciate your assistance in promoting nutritional choices, which we also do through the health curriculum. Food Cards can be purchased from the office. For more information about menu items and food cards visit our website.

#### **Medical Service**

Students who are ill may temporarily remain at the office until such time that parents are contacted and arrangements can be made. Students requiring immediate attention will be transported to the appropriate medical facility. **Cost** of this transportation is the responsibility of the parents/guardians according to board policy. Tylenol or aspirin may not be provided or administered by school personnel. Prescribed medication will be supplied and self administered by students and may be supervised by staff as requested. Parents must complete all necessary forms to allow for this. Capital Health works together with schools and community agencies to provide a range of coordinated health and support services for school children and their families. Our common goal is to build on the health and education potential of all students. Services include: transition support, case management and follow-up for students with complex and chronic health conditions, vision, hearing and dental screening, immunizations, speech and language services for Kindergarten to Grade Six, emotional/behavioral support and occupational therapy for Grade One students. If you have any concerns or questions about your child's health, please talk to the school principal or contact the school's community health nurse at the St. Albert Public Health Centre at 459-6671.

#### **Library/Learning Resource Centre**

Vincent J. Maloney has a spacious, well-utilized library serving both students and staff. The library contains a variety of fiction; non-fiction, leisure and research print materials. As well, we have a full compliment of computers and ipads. Teachers use the space during class time for research projects. Students are encouraged to access the space before school, at break and at lunchtime. Our Librarian Mrs. Locke hosts book fairs, contests, as well as class sessions called "readers advisory" in which students are in serviced on making full use of the library.

#### **Telephone/Wireless Devices**

Students have access to the office phone to contact parents throughout the day. Cellular phones and wireless devices are an ever-increasing part of our school culture and we appreciate their benefits. However, they can be disruptive and distracting during instructional time. Phone devices may be used before school, during nutrition break, at lunchtime and after school. ***Student cell phones must be kept in their locker prior to entering classrooms.*** Please do not contact your child during class time. Contact the office should you need to speak with your child during class hours. Violation of the policy will result in the device being confiscated and turned in to the Administration. For recommendations regarding the purchase of robust daily use devices please see our school supply list found on the School Website.

#### **Textbook Rental**

The system of textbook rental provides the necessary texts for all grades. Textbooks are checked out to students through the library. Students are responsible for returning the same book in the same condition as it was assigned. **Lost or misused texts must be paid for at the end of the school year.**

#### **Transportation**

Students outside of the walk boundary are provided with transportation. **Students are required to carry their bus pass with them at all times and provide it when asked by the driver.** Passenger regulations require that they remain seated and refrain from acting in any way that is distracting to the bus driver. School administration may suspend students involved in inappropriate behavior on the school bus or behavior that is deemed to jeopardize the safety of students and the driver. Questions regarding fees and bus routes may be directed to the transportation department at **459-7711**. Bike racks are provided. We would ask that bikes be locked up and seats removed and stored in the student's locker. Students

using long boards are expected to keep them in their lockers or homerooms. For the safety of all, students are not allowed to ride bikes, scooters or long board on or in-school property during regular school hours.

### **Lost and Found**

Students should ensure that all their personal belongings are clearly marked and locked up. A large box is provided in the front entrance for lost articles. Students should not wait too long to search for a missing article as this box is emptied periodically. Lost textbooks and notebooks are placed in the office and in the library. Watches, glasses, keys or jewellery items may be claimed at the front office. **We will make every effort to assist students in recovering lost articles, however we recommend students exercise caution if bringing valuables to school. We would also encourage students not to share their locker combination with other students.**

### **School Photos**

Individual photos are taken early in the school year and available for purchase using a proof system. All students must be photographed for the yearbook regardless of whether or not they are purchasing a package. Retakes are generally taken in early to mid October.

## **IV. POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

**Parents must contact the school to report an absence or illness. Our school uses the School Connects System. You can report a student late or absence by calling 1-844-818-9908 OR by downloading an app or logging into the School Connects Parent Portal - <https://parent.schoolconnectsweb.com/parentportal33/login/default.aspx?GSAIbertCD>**

Students are expected to attend classes regularly and punctually. It is impossible to benefit from classroom experience unless he/she is in class. Attendance is taken each class and entered on the computer. Students reporting to school late or leaving for an appointment must check in or out at the office. Students leaving the school must do the following:

***A. Parent contacts the school office prior to student departure***

***B. Office personnel must speak to either parent/guardian***

***C. Office personnel will then sign out the student***

Students are expected to make arrangements with a **Study Buddy or email teachers directly to obtain assignments missed due to absenteeism.** Teachers may choose to alter, omit or reschedule assignments or exams as a result of absenteeism. If a student is inexcusably absent, the parents/guardians will be contacted and students will be dealt with for skipping, making up equal time at lunch or after school hours.

### **Report Cards and Interviews**

Parent/Teacher Conferences take place two times during the school year. Conferences are booked via an online booking system.

- September - Parents/Guardians will receive their PowerSchool access IDs & passwords along with instructions for setting up their accounts. Reminders to check marks will be sent out.
- October 29 - Online Interview Bookings open 7:00pm
- November 5th and 7th, 2019 - Parent/teacher conferences, 5-8 pm.
- March TBA 2020 - Parent/teacher conferences, 5-8 pm.
- June 26, 2020 - Final report card, 8:30 - 11:30 am

At anytime during the school year a parent/guardian is welcome to contact any teacher for an update on their child's progress. We utilize **PowerSchool** for data management and parents can access their child's marks in real time online beginning about mid October. Please check the website for details on how to log in and access marks. Students are encouraged to record their ongoing progress in their student agenda, which parents/guardians can check weekly. A final report card and certificate are presented after successful completion of courses in June.

## Holidays During Non Scheduled Breaks

It is very difficult for teachers to plan in advance for students who will have extended absences due to personal/family vacations during instructional days. The context of teaching and learning is now done in the classroom through direct teacher instruction, hands on learning, discussion and group work. Through ongoing formative assessment the teacher then makes decisions about daily homework and/or assignments as well as the pace of the learning. Some teachers do provide daily or weekly homework updates through Google Classroom but in many cases prior discussion, direct teacher instruction and context are required for the student to complete assignments. Also, teaching entirely from textbooks is no longer the norm so a teacher cannot simply assign chapters to be read or assignments to be completed. It is important to check with the teacher to determine if any long-term assignments like essays or presentations are scheduled that could be completed prior to an extended holiday or during. In some cases teachers may be able to list some objectives that will be covered and some teachers do provide information on classroom websites. Parents can support their children by encouraging them to read during vacation, journal their experiences or review basic concepts in math or science.

Ultimately if the student is being pulled from school for a holiday then make it a holiday! If your family makes a decision to be away from school during instructional time then the onus would be on the student to catch up on key elements when they return.

## Dress Regulations

Vincent J. Maloney Catholic Junior High School has a proud history and a culture that emphasizes our faith values with good taste and modesty as a rule of thumb. The dress policy requires the appearance of students to be such that it does not offend those with whom they associate and respects the range and development of all students within the school. Our school Dress Policy is regularly reviewed and endorsed by our School Council.

- 1) Clothing should not expose any of the chest, belly, back and backside. Clothing is expected to be clean and in good repair with no undergarments visible.
- 2) **Skirts** should be no shorter than half way between the knee and the inseam. A good rule is that they should extend past the fingertips when arms are held at the side. **Shorts** must completely cover the buttocks both standing and sitting with an inseam minimum length of 8 cm or the width of a hand.
- 3) Halter tops or spaghetti strap tank tops are not appropriate for school. Shoulder straps must be a minimum of 10 cm. in width so that much of the shoulder is covered. Sleeveless shirts are acceptable as long as the seam is finished, (not cut off) and undergarments or the chest are not exposed. Muscle shirts, tank tops or cut off shirts are not acceptable.
- 4) Clothes carrying messages, whether written or in picture form, that are profane, demeaning, or in poor taste (by our standards) are not appropriate. Language or pictures involving drugs, alcohol, sexuality, weapons or violence are prohibited.



As fashion trends change regularly, school staff reserve the right to decide about the appropriateness of any student attire

at school. Students in violation of our dress regulations will be asked to change or arrange to have other clothing brought to school. We recognize and respect the wide variance in taste and acceptability that is part of our society outside of the school, but within the school we feel that it is our responsibility to balance individual freedom with our goal to maintain a culture that respects our Catholic/Christian values and morals. Please take into consideration that we can have students between the ages of 11 and 15. Upon entering the school, students must remove all headwear. Hats and jackets are to be left in lockers during instructional times. Hats worn to classes will be stored in the office and returned at the end of the day (or longer in the case of repeats). Students will face consequences for repeat offences. **A good rule of thumb regarding clothing is if you are not sure whether it would meet dress regulations please do not wear it.**

### **Prohibited Items**

Along with unlawful items such as vapour/e-cigarettes, alcohol, tobacco, weapons and drugs, students must not bring the following to school: Sunflower seeds, energy drinks, lighters, matches, laser pointers, air horns, nicotine spray/gum, labelled “0% alcohol” beverages and 2L pop bottles. These items can be unhealthy and/or dangerous and will be confiscated.

### **Changing for Physical Education Classes**

In order to promote good hygiene and school spirit VJM **requires all students to change for Physical Education for nearly all activities. Due to our School Modernization Phys. Ed staff may change requirements around changing before classes for certain activities.** Information about the purchase of school clothing and/or replacement in the event of loss can be found in the registration package or you may call the office. All clothing worn in Physical Education must meet Dress Code regulations listed above.

### **Student Lanyards**

A lanyard is a cord or strap that is used to hold identification, information, keys, or personal possessions. Lanyards that are designed to be worn around the neck are deemed to be potentially dangerous to the safety of students. Monitoring for the effectiveness of lanyards worn around student's necks cannot be appropriately controlled in the school environment. For this reason, **use of a lanyard of any kind that involves placing a cord or strap around the neck area of a student is prohibited.** Students are expected to use other approaches to manage their personal possessions while at school.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Schools in our District including V.J.M. regularly practice emergency procedures based upon the ***Incident Command System***. This system has a number of protocols for different emergency situations that could be encountered at a school level. Prior to any practice/drill staff and students will be notified and review procedures. More information about our school emergency procedures can be found on our school website at <https://www.vjm.gsacrd.ab.ca/about/district-school-emergency-plan>.

### **Leaving the School at Lunch Time**

Some of our students have been given permission by their parents to leave the school and go for lunch at local food establishments. Parents will be notified immediately if students are late returning for lunch or if there have been any problems reported to the school by the restaurant. These privileges can be suspended and/or removed.

### **Rescheduling of Final Exams**

On occasion, there may be good reason for students to be away during a final exam in June. If this is the case, please contact school administration regarding the possibility of rescheduling exams. Please be aware that Alberta Learning does have rules and regulations that must be followed in regards to the rescheduling of final exams. Students must write final exams to be considered for Honor Roll standing.

### **Guide/Service Dog**

Please be advised that a Guide/Service Dog may accompany a student(s) at VJM. A Guide Dog team consists of a dog and a person. The dog has been specially trained to assist the mobility of a person who is blind. The dog is trained to lead,

obey commands, avoid distractions, and disobey a command if it would put the team in danger.

In our school, all students and staff will facilitate the successful mobility of student and dog by:

By being respectful and responsible. The dog is responsible for leading someone who cannot see. A person's safety may depend on their dog's alertness and concentration. If the dog has on a harness it means the dog is working. It must not be distracted.

-Never petting or touching the dog while it is working and only doing so when the owner gives permission.

-Never feeding the dog.

-Ensuring that backpacks or equipment are not left in hallways or classroom floors.

**Please contact school administration if there are any concerns.**

### **Severe Allergens**

Part of our mission to provide a safe and caring school for all of our students and staff involves cooperation from all of our families. Our school has students and staff with severe life threatening food allergies (anaphylaxis) to peanut and nut products and latex products. These are medical conditions that cause a severe reaction to specific foods or products and can result in death or serious side effects within minutes. Although this may or may not affect your child directly, we endeavour to provide an environment that is fully AWARE of these products, but many factors make it impossible to be a completely NUT FREE environment. Parents can help us by ensuring that they do not send foods that contain peanut or nut products. In addition we currently have an individual that has a severe allergy to latex products. Balloons and elastics can be quite harmful to this individual.

We appreciate your cooperation in regards to this matter. Please remember that allergies can affect a person at any time.

There may come a time where you or a family member will require the same assistance and cooperation.

All parents are required to notify the school regarding any severe allergens of their child or children by filling out the proper medical forms. Students who have severe allergies that require the use of an epi-pen must carry it all times on their person. There may be rare instances where this is not possible. If so, this must be discussed with administration. Parents may provide a secondary epi-pen that can be stored at the office. **Please contact school administration if there are any concerns.**

### **Physical Education Classes Taking Place in SACHS Gym**

Please be advised that students from our school will travel to SACHS on a regular basis to take part in Physical Education classes. During the first semester of the 2019/20 school year this will occur on a regular basis. This is to make use of the small gymnasium and fitness equipment. Students change for Phys. Ed. in the main change rooms at VJM and then walk over to participate in class activities. During the winter time students do walk outside for brief times on cold days.

Students are encouraged to have a hoodie during these periods of time. On occasion conditions can be slippery. Staff does remind students to be careful when walking between buildings during poor weather.

### **Creation of Class Lists**

The creation of class lists for a school year is a lengthy process. At Vincent J. Maloney Catholic Junior High School it involves input from all members of our staff. At the end of the process our goal is to create homeroom classes that are balanced. The balancing of classes takes into consideration student need, gender, size of the class, supports that can be offered (Educational Assistants) and other factors. In order to ensure the integrity of this process it must be made clear that students and parents do not select classes or teachers. The development of classes begins in early April.

Teachers provide information to the leadership team regarding student needs and learning styles. This information is used to create preliminary drafts of class lists, which are then provided to staff for feedback. This process goes on until the end of June. Many changes occur with the confirmation of enrollment throughout the spring and summer. In some

*extenuating circumstances* requests and feedback from parents may be considered. **These must be submitted in writing and clearly indicate the reason for the request by May 15, 2020 for the 2020/21 school year.**

Usually staff has already anticipated these special circumstances when classes have been created. Classes are posted on the first day of school and all classes run as is for one week. The admin team monitors balance and size of classes that may change due to new registrations or students that have registered but move. At the end of the week administration will finalize classes and may take into consideration any extenuating circumstances that may be brought to their attention.

### **Option Changes**

We do our very best to ensure that each student receives two or three of their top option choices. On occasion, students may not receive all of their top choices. **Option availability can change due to staff or monetary budget resources.**

**Program option offerings and availability may also change due to factors related to our school modernization.**

Option changes can be requested in writing by filling out an **Option Change Form** during the first week of the first or second semester but sometimes the ability to change is limited due to enrollment in requested options. If requests can be facilitated these will take place at the end of the first week of a term for that option.

### **Student Agenda**

All students have access to either an electronic(VJM App) or paper agenda. It is used to record homework assignments and contains a school calendar for the year. All parents and students can download the agenda app at any time for either i-devices or android devices. For students who want and will consistently use a paper agenda, they can be obtained at the front office.

### **Using Personal Electronic Devices at Vincent J. Maloney**

Our school policy is based on the foundations of GSACRD's Responsible Use Agreement and FOIP policy that must be signed by all students and parent(s)/guardian(s) in Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools. Our goal is to support and inform students and parents/guardians about the expectations and responsibilities that come with digital citizenship at Vincent J. Maloney Catholic Junior High School.

### **Definitions**

***Bring your own Device*** (BYOD) refers to technology models where students bring a personally owned device to school for the purpose of learning. A personally owned device is any technology device brought into the school and owned by a student (or the student's family), staff member or guest.

***Cloud Computing*** is Internet-based computing whereby shared resources, software and information are provided to computers and other devices on demand.

Most laptops and personal communication devices are equipped with Wi-Fi. VJM provides full Wifi coverage for its own devices as well as student-owned tools.

***Digital Citizenship*** - In order to be a digital citizen, students must know how to use technology appropriately. Digital Citizenship is more than just a teaching tool; it is the foundation upon which students learn to use technology in an ethical and responsible way within society. All students will receive this training through their Health classes early in the school year.

***Digital literacy*** or the ability to understand and fully participate in the digital world is fundamental to digital citizenship. It is the combination of technical and social skills that enable a person to be productive, successful and safe in the information age. Like literacy and numeracy initiatives which provide people with the skills to participate in the workforce, digital literacy has become an essential skill to be a confident, connected and actively involved lifelong learner.

### **Students who demonstrate ethical and responsible use of technology:**

- keep their GSACRD login ID's and passwords confidential;
- password-protect their personal devices;

- ensure the security and safety of their own electronic devices;
- ensure the security and safety of school - owned electronic devices;
- use & manage devices in a lawful manner;
- manage the content contained on their own personal electronic devices;
- ensure that they access acceptable materials for educational purposes;
- respect and abide by the copyright laws (text, photos, music, video, etc.);
- ensure that their personal device does not disrupt the learning of others;
- maintain one's own device such as having it fully charged & functional.

**Misuses that disrupt learning and/or contravenes VJM/District policy include but are not limited to the following:**

- using audio and/or video devices to record others without permission;
- using audio and/or video devices in inappropriate settings such as locker rooms and washrooms;
- using an electronic device to intimidate, threaten and/or slander others (cyber-bullying);
- sharing district IDs and passwords
- using devices during instructional time for non-instructional purposes such as making personal phone calls, text messaging or social networking;
- using devices to cheat on assignments and/or tests;
- downloading, viewing and/or sharing inappropriate and/or offensive content;
- trying to bypass district security filtering system;
- posting/sending of pictures, videos or audio recordings taken at school on any social media or personal sites.

**Students will work from the cloud and follow the same Internet safety precautions and sites as if they were wired in a lab.**

Devices must be fully powered prior to using them at school to avoid loss of time, management issues and overloading of electrical outlets.

No technical support will be given to resolve a technical issue with a personally owned device.

**Vincent J. Maloney Catholic Jr. High is not responsible for the loss, theft or damage of student-owned devices.**

Students who do not meet expectations or responsibly use the technology can be subject to loss of privilege, confiscation, suspension/expulsion. Where necessary, the RCMP can and will be contacted.

All students are required to leave their phones in their lockers. Students will be allowed the use of their phones during Nutrition Break and Lunch.

## **HOME AND SCHOOL**

### **Communication**

We encourage open communication between students, staff and parents and believe parental support is an integral part of the success of our students. Our school website has upcoming event information, as well as a monthly calendar. In addition we use an automated phone system and a mass email system with a 'Week at a Glance' to stay in contact with parents.

### **School Council**

Vincent J. Maloney Catholic Junior High School has a very supportive and involved School Council. Meetings occur once a month and usually last about one hour. The Council has three executive positions including Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary. It also has a number of committees that work actively to support students and staff within the school. These include: Communications, Compassionate Friends, Grant Research, Partners in Prayer, Staff Appreciation and Volunteer Coordination. Please feel welcome to attend our meetings.

## **V. VJM Code of Conduct**

### Safe and Caring Schools

At VJM our mission is to build a safe and caring culture through the example of Jesus Christ. It is based upon the belief that every member of our school community will foster dignity, respect and service through their actions, and that every individual is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect. Core values are responsibility and reconciliation. An attempt will always be made to implement logical consequences and restorative justice practices that encourage and maintain the God given dignity of every student. Teachers use effective teaching strategies and classroom management skills to minimize off task behaviour. Where required teachers and/or administration will notify parents and implement strategies to address concerns or inappropriate behaviors. A school-wide approach to positive behavior supports effectively promotes a safe, orderly and predictable environment for learning and teaching.

Any forms of physical aggression, harassment and/or bullying will be addressed immediately. Students and parents have a responsibility to contact school administration or advise a teacher if there have been issues that the school may not be aware of.

VJM STUDENTS are...

SAFE

RESPONSIBLE

RESPECTFUL

We are on time, prepared and we contribute

Bullying is deemed to have taken place within our school when:

Repeated and hostile or demeaning behaviour by a student is intended by the student to cause harm, fear or distress to another individual in the school community, including psychological harm or harm to the individual's reputation.

In order to assure that students will not be bullied in schools, The School and District supports Section 45.1 of the Alberta School Act, which states that our school has a responsibility to ensure that each student enrolled is provided with a welcoming, caring, respectful, and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging. Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools has clarified its intention to provide such an environment in all schools through its Safe and Caring Learning Environments for Students Administrative Procedure.

The school will establish a culture of respect for the God given dignity of all who participate within it and pursue the common good of everyone, as we build a community of faith, hope, and love through the example of Jesus Christ.

However, in order to assure that this culture will prevail, our school maintains the following expectations with respect to bullying:

- No action toward another person, regardless of the intent of that action will cause harm, fear, or distress to that student or staff member.
- No action toward another person within the school community will diminish the student or staff member's reputation within the school community.
- Any action that contributes to a perception of bullying, whether it occurs during school time, or after school hours, or whether by electronic or other means, will be addressed by the school if it is determined that the actions impact the well-being of the alleged victim within the school community.
- Any action that humiliates or contributes to diminishing the reputation of a person because of race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, place of origin, marital status of parents, source of income of parents, family circumstances, or sexual orientation of a student is deemed to be an act of bullying.
- No report by a person that he / or she is being "bullied" will be ignored by a school official. The official will respond as if an incident has happened and report the incident to a teacher or principal.

- In establishing consequences for bullying, teachers and principals will use corrective interventions that consider the context of the circumstance, the behavioural history of the students involved, and the age / stage of development of the student.
- If in the opinion of the teacher or principal an act of bullying has occurred, interventions will be applied dedicated to stopping the behaviour in the future, and educating the person victimized about how to address the issue in the future.
- Those disciplined for their involvement in bullying will be communicated what to “stop” doing, and “start” doing in order to further a safe and caring culture within the school.
- Parents play a primary role in assisting with the resolution of matters pertaining to bullying. Apprising them of issues in this area as they have impacted their children should occur at the earliest opportunity.
- A principal may use a Restorative Discipline or Positive Behavioural Support model to address matters of discipline. 2.10.
- Incidences of Bullying that adversely impact the safety of individuals or are an affront to the common good of the school community may be addressed through the application of Sections 24 or 25 of the School Act.

A specific Code of Conduct for Students to support these expectations is as follows:

Students are expected to show respect for themselves and others. The students are accountable for their actions and shall conduct him/herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct: (2007 School Act - Part 1 Section 12)

A student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

- be diligent in pursuing their studies,
- attend school regularly and punctually,
- cooperate fully with everyone authorized by the board to provide education programs and other services,
- comply with the rules of the school,
- account to the teachers for the student’s conduct, and
- respect the rights of others.
- ensure that the student’s conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging,
- refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means
- positively contribute to the student’s school and community.

Students, in other words, your responsibility is:

- to try your best in all your courses
- to attend school and always be on time for classes
- to do as you are asked by any employee of the school board (principal, teacher, E.A., secretary, custodian, bus driver, etc...)
- to follow the school rules
- to be respectful to everyone (even the people you don’t know or like)
- to do the right thing, and report bullying if you see it
- to be a positive force in your school

Grounds for suspension/expulsion include behaviors such as:

- actions which threaten the safety of yourself or others
- possession/selling of illegal drugs, alcohol, or inhalants
- going against district-wide policies about harassment, smoking, attendance, and

- student responsibilities
- open defiance of authority
- interference with the orderly conduct of the school
- going against the student code of conduct as per the School Act

This code will be reviewed annually for its effectiveness in meeting district expectations.

The school will establish a culture of respect for the God given dignity of all who participate within it and pursue the common good of everyone, as we build a community of faith, hope, and love through the example of Jesus Christ.

The school values parent collaboration in supporting the safety, well-being, and success of all students. “ A parent of a student has the responsibility

- to take an active role in the student’s educational success, including assisting the student in complying with the legislated expectations for students (Section 12),
- to ensure that the parent’s conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment,
- to cooperate and collaborate with school staff to support the delivery of specialized supports and services to the student,
- to encourage, foster and advance collaborative, positive and respectful relationships with teachers, principals, other school staff and professionals providing supports and services in the school, and to engage in the student’s school community.” (School Act - Section 16.2)

### **Common Statement on Frothing and Protocol Respecting Drug Free Schools**

Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools, St. Albert Protestant Schools and the local detachment of the RCMP are working together to ensure that St. Albert students feel safe in their schools. Together we have developed this common statement to remind parents and students of zero-tolerance policies regarding frothing and drug use in schools.

### **Hazing**

All students have a right to feel and be safe in their schools. To ensure that this is true in St. Albert, both school jurisdictions and all schools are working together to send out an important message. Many other groups are supporting this message, including the City of St. Albert, the RCMP, Alberta Justice, the St. Albert SAIF Society, the St. Albert Association for People with Disabilities, and the St. Albert Youth Centre. The message is very clear. **Hazing is not acceptable behaviour.** It is, in fact, an assault. Any student involved in such an activity will face suspension and possible legal charges or expulsion. **We will refer any hazing activities (intimidating, demeaning and degrading rites of initiation) to the RCMP.**

### **Protocol Respecting Drug Free Schools**

Be advised that all junior and senior high schools in St. Albert are committed to implementing the Protocol Respecting Drug Free Schools. It states:

- Possession of or trafficking in illegal drugs in any form is an act utterly incompatible with the School Act, which states that students are to comply with the rules of the school and respect the rights of others.
- Being under the influence of illegal drugs in any form is an act utterly incompatible with the School Act, which states that students are to comply with the rules of the school and respect the rights of others.
- In all cases, parents or legal guardians will be notified.

### **Lockers**

**Please remember that the locker belongs to the school, not the student.** This means that when the locker license is signed there is an understanding that the locker is subject to search at any time without notification by personnel associated with the school or by persons representing other authorities, including the police.

Lockers with combination locks are supplied to each student at the beginning of the school year. Only locks supplied by the school are allowed on lockers. Students are expected to keep the combination of their lock confidential. Students are responsible for returning their original lock at the end of the year. Replacement locks cost \$6.00. **Please remember to lock up all valuables in the student hallway locker before going to PE class.** Along with parents our aim is to help students be responsible for their personal belongings.

### **Student Behaviour Expectations**

**Our goal is to make this school as SAFE as possible**

A school-wide approach to positive behavior supports effectively promotes a **safe, orderly and predictable** environment for learning and teaching. This approach has significant effects within the school community: it creates a positive school culture that students, parents and staff perceive as safe and caring.

VJM Positive Behavior Supports focus on a **school-wide** set of behavior expectations that is corrective, not punitive in which positive dialogue is key.

VJM STUDENTS are...  
SAFE  
RESPONSIBLE  
RESPECTFUL  
We are **on time, prepared** and we **contribute**

Research identifies ten key elements of universal school-wide behavior support systems. These elements are interrelated and overlapping, and may have differing degrees of importance, depending on the needs, strengths and priorities of a particular school community.

- . Positive relationships: valuing each individual's contribution to the school community, promoting a sense of belonging for all students and staff, and promoting positive relationships between home, school and community.
- . Modification of the school environment: ensuring that the physical environment and school routines are organized proactively to support positive behavior and reduce problem behavior
- . Differentiated instruction: responding to student diversity and creating opportunities for all students to learn in a way that responds to their varying abilities, strengths, learning preferences, interests and needs
- . School-wide behavioral expectations: clearly articulating expectations and having all staff consistently reinforce expectations in all areas of the school throughout the school day
- . Social skills instruction that demonstrates and supports the school-wide behavioral expectations
- . Positive reinforcement of individual students and groups who consistently demonstrate positive behavior
- . Fair and predictable consequences for negative behavior that adversely affects others and the school community
- . Collaborative leadership: committing to building and maintaining a positive school culture, and providing the resources necessary for developing positive behavior supports for all students
- . Data-driven decision making: clearly identifying the strengths and needs of the school community, identifying areas where improvement is needed and measuring behavior change over time

Action plan for school change: developing, implementing and monitoring a school-wide approach to positive behavior supports

OFFENCE	CONSEQUENCES
<b>LATES</b>  Students with Chronic absences will have consequences implemented.	- Noon hour or after school detention - Repeated lates will be monitored - Administration Discretion.
<b>Cheating/Plagiarism</b>	- Parent meeting/communication with teacher to determine follow-up assessment procedures and rewrite of exam or assignment.. - Consequences for cheating/plagiarism can include in or out of school suspension.
<b>THEFT/VANDALISM</b>  1 <sup>st</sup> Offence 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offence	- Will result in an in or out of school suspension - Out of school suspension - length of time to be determined <b>INVOLVEMENT OF RCMP AT ADMINISTRATION DISCRETION</b> <b>Replacement or replacement value of stolen/vandalised item.</b>
<b>Conflict</b>  1 <sup>st</sup> Offence 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offence 3 <sup>rd</sup> Offence	- Students will be seen by the school counsellor or administration - Will result in a 1 day in-school suspension - Will result in an out of school suspension, length to be determined
<b>VAPING/CIGARETTES/ DRUGS/ALCOHOL or related paraphernalia</b>	- A 1 to 5 day out of school suspension. Students will be picked up from the school by a parent or guardian. Also see Drug-Free Schools Drug Protocol. - RCMP may be involved. - Expulsion can be recommended to the Board.
<b>FIGHTING</b>  <b>Inciting or encouraging a fight will be treated in the same manner as fighting.</b>	- Can result in up to a 5-day suspension at the discretion of Administration. - RCMP may be involved - Expulsion can be recommended to the Board.

## VI. Annual V.J.M. Awards

While student success is celebrated throughout the year, an awards celebration is held at year-end or early in September depending upon Alberta Education's scheduling of Provincial Achievement exams. At the awards night in June or the following September students are recognized for their achievement in the following areas:

### **Spirit of VJM Award** (1 student)

Presented to the student that has been exemplary in modeling the virtues of enthusiasm, helpfulness, and service throughout the school year. They have made a significant impact to the life and spirit of the school for students and staff.

### **Citizenship Award** (1 student per grade level)

Presented to the student that has consistently demonstrated the virtues of caring, helpfulness, and service throughout the school year.

### **French Award** (1 student)

Presented to the student who has shown passion for and proficiency in our French option.

### **Religion Award** (1 student)

Presented to the student that has consistently demonstrated the virtues of faith and charity and has maintained high

academic achievement in Religious studies.

**Most Improved Student** (1 student per grade level)

Presented to a student that has demonstrated significant growth in academic achievement or personal growth.

**Male and Female Athlete of the Year** (1 male and 1 female student athlete)

Presented to one male and one female athlete who have participated and excelled on variety of school teams. They have consistently demonstrated respect, sportsmanship, enthusiasm and hard work on the court and throughout the school.

**Male and Female Coaches Award** (1 male and 1 female student athlete)

Presented to one male and one female athlete who have participated and excelled on variety of school teams. The student is coachable: demonstrating leadership, positive attitude, willingness to learn. They have been key to their teams success and have been positive role models to their team-mates.

**5 Star Sports Award** (awarded to any students meeting the following criteria)

Presented to any student that has participated on five or more school sports teams

**Sports Academy Award** (awarded to one student in hockey, soccer or Cheer/Dance/Gymnastics)

Presented to the student that has consistently demonstrated maximum effort, growth and positive attitude in their sport.

**CTF Award** (awarded to one student each in grade nine in Foods and Fashion, and Construction)

Presented to a student who has demonstrated hard work, positive attitude, creativity and skill in their area of work.

**Fine Arts Award** (awarded to one student each in Art, Drama, Drama Production, Band, Guitar and Writers Ink).

Presented to a student who has demonstrated hard work, positive attitude, creativity and skill in their area of work. They have been involved in projects in and out of the classroom and have shared their talents with others in the school or community.

**Academic Achievement – Honours Certificate** (awarded to any student in grade 7 – 12 that meets the criteria that is outlined in District Administrative Procedure 368 to recognize students for academic achievement. This certificate is modeled after the professionally recognized criteria of the Alberta Rutherford High School Achievement Scholarship.)

Presented annually to Grade 7, 8 and 9 students in GSACRD meeting the following criteria:

- a combined final course mark average of at least 80% in core courses (English language arts/French language arts, social studies, science, math)
- a final course mark of 70% or better in each of health, religion and physical education.
- must have passed all other courses.
- must write all final year end exams unless a student is excused by documentation listed in an Individual Program Plan or documentation provided by a doctor.

The student information system will choose and track these courses automatically and shall be verified by the Principal or designate. In order to be eligible a student must write the Final year end exam unless they are excused for medical reasons verified