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Saint Mary Elementary/Middle School  
Parent/Student Handbook  
2021-2022

## Contents

Introduction .....	2
COVID-19 Acknowledgement of Risks .....	2
Our Mission.....	3
Amendment Statement.....	3
A Catholic Education is A Privilege Open to All.....	3
Admission Policy .....	3
Attendance, Tardiness, and Absence.....	4
Policy for Virtual Classroom Activity.....	4
Discipline Policy .....	5
Student Behavior Off Campus and Outside School Hours .....	7
Bullying and Harassment.....	7
Student Health .....	7
Emergency Medical Authorization Forms.....	9
Drugs, Alcohol, Substance Abuse.....	9
Tobacco Policy.....	9
Tuition.....	9
Arrival and Dismissal: Daily Schedule.....	10
Closings and Delays .....	11
Crisis Plan/Emergency Drills .....	11
Cell Phones and Electronic Device Usage.....	11
Technology and Acceptable Use.....	12
Directory Information Notice .....	12
Personally Identifiable Information Notice.....	12
Child Custody Considerations .....	12
Background Checks and Protecting God’s Children .....	12
School Advisory Board.....	12
Reporting of Abuse and Neglect.....	13
Food Service.....	13
Student Dress Code and Uniform Policy.....	13
Grading/Evaluation Reports .....	17
Homework.....	18
Parent Communication/OneCall.....	18
Student Records.....	18
Internet Use Policy .....	18
School Family Social Media Use.....	18
Use of Name/Branding Policy.....	19

**Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;  
incline your ears to the words of my mouth!  
I will open my mouth in a parable;  
I will utter dark sayings from of old,  
things that we have heard and known,  
that our fathers have told us.  
We will not hide them from their children,  
but tell to the coming generation  
the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might,  
and the wonders which he has wrought. – Psalm 78:1-4**

## Introduction

Welcome to the family of St. Mary School! The quotation, above, from Psalm 78 explains why our school exists: to tell the next generation about our Lord and his marvelous plan for their lives. This handbook explains our policies, procedures, and rules. Please read it carefully and return the signature page to the school.

## COVID-19 Acknowledgement of Risks

We, the parent(s) and student who are signing this student handbook for St. Mary School, acknowledge and agree that, as a student at the School and as parent(s) of that student, entering into the School or being on the School premises or entering into the parish or being on the parish premises (as applicable), having personal contact with teachers, classmates, and other School/parish staff, involves a certain degree of risk, namely of student and/or parent(s) acquiring a communicable disease, including COVID-19, and then potentially passing it on to others, including family members. Due to the highly contagious nature of COVID-19, the characteristics of the virus, and the close proximity of students, teachers, and staff at the School, there is an elevated risk of student and parent(s) contracting the disease by being in the School/parish building, on the School/parish premises, or at any School/parish function.

By signing this School Handbook, we acknowledge and agree that after carefully considering the risks involved, and having the opportunity to discuss these risks with the healthcare professional(s) of our choosing, we voluntarily and willingly accept those risks and acknowledge that acceptance of these risks is the choice of each family, including ours. If student or parent(s) who visit the School/parish have underlying health concerns which may place them at greater risk of contracting any communicable disease, including COVID-19, we acknowledge and agree that we will consult with a health care professional before student or parent(s) return to the School/parish, attend any School/parish function, or visit the School/parish. Moreover, we acknowledge that while adherence to safety and precautionary measures (e.g., social distancing guidelines, facemasks, handwashing, etc., as applicable or appropriate) may reduce possible exposure to the risk of contracting a communicable disease, the possibility of serious illness and death remains. We do hereby accept and assume sole responsibility for any illness acquired by student or parent(s) while at the School/parish or at any School/parish function, including possible infection with COVID-19.

We further acknowledge, understand, and agree that we have obligations to the School/parish, their employees/staff members, other students, and others to take certain precautions and make certain disclosures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 as outlined by the state of Ohio and the applicable local public health department. Additionally, we agree that neither student nor parent(s) will come to the School/parish or any School/parish function if: (1) student or parent(s) has a suspected or diagnosed/confirmed case of COVID-19, or (2) student or parent(s) has had prolonged close contact with anyone, including a family member, diagnosed with or suspected of having COVID-19, or (3) if

student or parent(s) is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, including without limitation, fever, cough or shortness of breath. We further agree to immediately notify the School/parish if any of the foregoing access/use restrictions are applicable to student and/or parent(s). The foregoing does not apply to any parent who is employed in health care settings and wears medically protective equipment regarding possible contact with a person with a positive or confirmed case of COVID -19.

Furthermore, we the parent(s) and student acknowledge and agree that due to the uncertainties associated with COVID-19, the educational contract by and between the parent(s), student, and School, may be fulfilled by in-person classes, but also when required as determined by the appropriate governmental authorities or at the option of the School administration, fulfillment of the educational contract may be satisfied by alternate teaching methods including but not limited to, remote learning.

## Our Mission

The mission of St. Mary School is to provide our students a foundation in faith, academics, and service. We expect our students to be practicing critical thinkers and to demonstrate responsibility, compassion, and respect. St. Mary School is a fully accredited elementary school, meeting all requirements of the State of Ohio and the Ohio Catholic Commission on School Accreditation.

## Amendment Statement

Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school principal will attempt to keep the school families informed of all changes as soon as practical. Some changes might have to be made immediately due to unforeseen circumstances.

## A Catholic Education is A Privilege Open to All

Catholic schools exist to collaborate with parents/guardians to foster spiritual growth and the educational development of each child. Catholic schools also serve the community, particularly the Catholic community of the Diocese of Columbus. Our school is open to the children of parents/guardians who seek the religiously oriented education which Catholic schools can provide. We recruit and admit students, regardless of race, color, gender or ethnicity to all our rights, privileges, programs, and activities. We do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, English proficiency, or disability (medical or academic) in the administration of our educational programs and extra-curricular activities.

In decisions concerning admissions, preference will be given to members of Catholic parishes. Others will be welcomed on the basis of availability of space at the discretion of the Pastor and/or Principal. The Pastor and Principal will exercise discretion in judging admission of pupils, and must refuse admittance to anyone who, in their judgment, seeks to enroll for the purpose of circumventing the law.

Catholic schools are schools of choice. Any parent who wishes to have a Catholic education for his/her child agrees that the parent and child will abide by the policies and regulations of the school. If the policies and/or regulations are not adhered to, and no commitment to improvement is present, a student may be asked by the Principal and/or Pastor to leave the school.

## Admission Policy

Kindergarten students must be 5 years of age on or before September 30 of the school year. New first grade students must be 6 years of age on or before August 1. According to Ohio Revised Code 3321.01, “no child shall be admitted to a first grade...in August or September unless he is six...years of age...by the 30th day of September of the year of admittance...” Any exceptions to this law must be in compliance with the Diocese of Columbus policies.

Students enrolling must have a birth certificate, immunization records, sacramental records if Catholic, and official academic and conduct records from any and all schools previously attended. Before admission becomes final, an enrollment packet must be complete, and the student and family must meet with the Principal.

Custodial parents must provide documentation of any child custody orders or decrees pertaining to the pupil. (Diocesan Policy 5119.2)

Admission to and continued enrollment in St. Mary Elementary-Middle School is contingent upon the family's support of the school's mission, policies, procedures, guidelines, staff, and administrative decisions. All students must participate in all generally required school and class activities unless there is a legitimate documented medical excuse.

Admission is contingent upon our school having the appropriate academic program/educational plan that fits the student. St. Mary Elementary-Middle School may or may not be equipped to service the educational needs of students with disabilities. Students with Individualized Educational Plans (Service Plans) require individualized review and approval for admission.

St. Mary School reserves the right to admit students on a trial basis.

Students who have been on probation and/or suspended from another school require individualized review and approval for admission and will be admitted on conditional status. All suspensions from other schools will be honored. Students expelled from another school will not be considered for admission.

Students may enroll and be admitted at any point during the school year, but no student will be enrolled on a temporary basis. A student/family questionnaire may be required of enrolling student/families.

## Attendance, Tardiness, and Absence

Attendance at all classes and school activities within normal hours is mandatory. Excused absences are limited to personal illness, death in family, or religious holiday. A written excuse must be provided to the parish office or the absence will be considered not excused. A written, signed note is required from the parent/guardian upon a child's return to school after an illness or any absence. If the absence was due to a medical appointment, a note from the medical office must be presented.

Any student arriving between 8:03 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. will be considered tardy and must report to the school office to receive a written tardy slip. An arrival between 9:00 and 11:30 a.m. will be counted as a half-day absence. A student arriving after 11:30 a.m. will be considered to have been absent one full day. A departure between 11:30 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. will be counted as a half-day absence. A departure between 1:15 p.m. and 2:15 p.m. will be considered an Early Dismissal.

**Five instances of tardiness/early dismissal within the same grading period will require a meeting between the principal and caregivers of the child to explore a solution.**

**A total seven days absent in one year will lead to a reminder letter sent to caregivers and a follow-up phone call. A total absence of fifteen days will lead to a required meeting at the school between the caregivers and the principal, as well as a requirement of a doctor's note for each subsequent absence. Any student who misses 27 or more days of school in one academic year may be retained.**

Medically excused absences and absences excused by the Principal will not count toward the above guidelines.

## Policy for Virtual Classroom Activity

In order to provide continuity of instruction as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Columbus may use a variety of teaching methods, including virtual classroom activities. Participation in virtual classroom activities and instruction should be under the

supervision of the parent/guardian and is subject to school and Diocesan policies and regulations, including but not limited to, student conduct/behavior and acceptable use of technology. Students should also keep their camera on so the teacher can view them and wear appropriate dress clothes and the background should be free of any inappropriate or distracting images or content. While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to exist and evolve, “remote” and/or “distance” learning (hereinafter referred to as “Remote Learning”) may at some point be required, either for the entire school or for a specific student or group of students. In such cases, the school may livestream and/or record a class to allow any student who is absent to continue to observe, and participate in, the class as much as reasonably practicable. Although the school will attempt to focus the camera and/or recording device on the respective teacher, aide, and/or instructional materials being utilized during instruction, there will be times when a specific student or students appears on the video.

Parent/Guardian hereby consents and agrees that: (1) such Remote Learning is permissible; and (2) his/her child may appear in videos being livestreamed and/or recorded as part of that Remote Learning. Furthermore, parent/guardian promises and agrees not to record, disseminate, publish, or share any livestreamed or recorded video of such Remote Learning to anyone outside of student’s immediate family. To the extent any Remote Learning videos are created and recorded, parent/guardian promises and agrees to permanently delete such recording following his/her child’s observation of, and/or participation in, that particular class session. These recordings will be stored, accessed, and disposed of according to guidelines that may be established by the parish or the Office of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Columbus.

If you have any questions or need assistance with virtual classroom instruction or activities, please contact your child’s classroom teacher or principal.

My signature in the handbook expresses my understanding, acknowledgment and agreement with the above terms and conditions and the potential for video and audio recording of my child during virtual classroom instructions and activities.

## Discipline Policy

*By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. - John 13:35.*

The word “discipline” is related to the word “disciple.” As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are taught to consider what is best for our neighbor, following Christ and His law of love. In the context of a school, all students consider the needs of their neighbor by observing school rules designed to help them put the needs of others first, thus ensuring a serene and safe learning environment where every student can achieve his or her full potential.

**The causes of problematic behavior can range from the carefree mindset of children to serious social, familial, or mental-emotional concerns. We at St. Mary School are committed to the formation of faithful, balanced, kind individuals in partnership with the children’s primary educators, their parents and caregivers. Responding to problematic behavior depends on the context of said behavior, as well as an adult’s knowledge of a particular child. We acknowledge that based on the relationship or rapport between a child and faculty member, interactions may differ.**

**Classroom Behavior.** At St. Mary School we believe in a well-maintained, orderly classroom, with students contributing to such an environment. We believe in polite, respectful interactions between adults and children, as well as children and other children. We believe in academic honesty and respect for each other’s abilities. Finally, we believe in the ability of each educator to set and enforce expectations for class activities.

**Academic Behavior.** Students are expected to complete and submit assignments on time. At St. Mary School we believe in the opportunity to make up missed work within a reasonable timeframe, with the possibility of lost privileges in order to put academics first. Students are required to follow expectations of academic honesty and submit work that reflects their own effort and ability, and that of no one else. Students are expected to make an effort to complete work in class according to the expectations of the teacher, and respect the needs of others.

**Playground, Bus, and Cafeteria Rules.** It is a necessity in these environments to adhere to a strict timeline, and students are expected to respect the expectations of the faculty. At all times, students must remain polite and follow the directions of the adult in charge. While in lunch, students receive their food and move as directed to their seat. After finishing their food, students should clean up their space appropriately. Students are expected to play in an inclusive fashion and avoid behaviors covered under the **Bullying and Harassment** section. Finally, students must follow the common sense rules below.

- i. No physical, one-on-one horseplay. Keep your hands to yourself.
- ii. Follow directions from the playground monitors.
- iii. Behave respectfully toward others and all equipment.
- iv. Remain quiet when necessary; behave in an orderly fashion when asked – standing in line, waiting in line, seated and eating, seated on bus.

**Consequences.** At St. Mary School, we are committed to addressing problematic behavior in a clear, straightforward way with a commitment to justice and forgiveness. The faculty believes in preventative policies, positive reinforcement, and the use of clear warnings before consequences. Consequences should be implemented as close to the behavior as possible and will typically take place within the school day. These include loss of privileges, such as recess. Other consequences could include restorative service in the classroom, office, or cafeteria. We believe in collaboration with parents and caregivers to provide consequences at home and support teachers in correcting behavior. We believe in effective communication with parents and caregivers as we work to form a safe, positive environment in every classroom. Lastly, beyond disciplinary measures, we believe that sustained patterns of problematic behavior constitute a need to collaborate with the family to address root causes.

**Serious Misconduct.** Serious misconduct is that which disrupts the academic atmosphere of the school; threatens the safety of or endangers fellow students, teachers, or school officials; damages property; or flagrantly or repeatedly violates regulations or policies of the diocese or school. Serious misconduct is cause for suspension and/or expulsion. The principal or administrator in charge may immediately suspend the student from school. The student may be sent home during the school day provided that the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) has been notified. In such cases, St. Mary School will follow the procedure, including appeals process, described in the Diocese of Columbus Catholic Schools policy #5114.0.

**Concerns that may constitute serious misconduct include but are not limited to:**

Assault/Fighting	Battery on staff	Possession of dangerous weapons
Drug Possession	Felony	Hazing
Harassment of others	Safety violation	Sale of narcotics
Theft	Tobacco violations	Violation of the law

## Student Behavior Off Campus and Outside School Hours

Conduct at school or away from school that contradicts Christian moral standards, conduct that is in violation of the law, conduct that is detrimental to the common good, threatening, harmful, or offensive to other students or staff, including on social media, or conduct that is of such nature as to jeopardize the good name of the school, may subject a student to discipline. Discipline for such conduct shall be at the sole discretion of the school.

## Bullying and Harassment

As a Catholic school, we require all in the school community to respect and promote the dignity of every human person. For this reason we do not tolerate any action that diminishes or attacks human dignity. Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated on school grounds or at any school activity that takes place elsewhere, whether such actions are committed in person, in writing, or by electronic means, including social media.

Under the heading of “bullying,” actions that will not be tolerated include a student being picked on, physical intimidation or assault, extortion, oral or written threats, teasing, name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation. School staff members who become aware of such acts will take immediate steps to intervene and report to the school principal. We expect all students, parents, and guardians who become aware of such acts, whether they take place on school property or at a school activity held elsewhere, to report it to the school Principal for further investigation. No retaliation against anyone who reports harassment will be tolerated.

Consequences for students who violate this rule may include but are not limited to counseling, parent conference, suspension, and/or expulsion depending on the results of the investigation.

St. Mary School maintains a working and academic environment, in all programs and activities, that is free of all forms of harassment and intimidation. Harassment is defined as verbal, physical, or digital conduct that embarrasses, denigrates, or shows hostility toward a person because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age or disability or other protected characteristics. Investigations of alleged harassment and intimidation will follow the Columbus Diocese Catholic Schools Policies # 5140.05 and # 5140.06.

## Student Health

Before entering school, all students not previously enrolled at St. Mary School must have a physical examination.

All students must provide a record of immunization compliance to their school by the 14th day from the first day of attendance. If no immunization record was provided when the student registered, a record must be submitted to the school showing compliance by the 14th day of school to avoid exclusion as required by Ohio law. Please see ORC 3313.671 for further information as to exceptions to immunization requirements. The complete schedule of required immunizations/vaccinations may be found at the Diocese of Columbus Office of Catholic Schools Policy # 5116.0



## **Prescription and over-the-counter medication**

If a student needs to bring medications to school for use during school hours, the school must first have on file a signed medical authorization form from the parent(s)/guardian(s), and a properly completed physician's statement. The authorization must include the following:

Physician's verification of:

- a. the necessity for the medication;
- b. name of medication;
- c. dosage;
- d. times or intervals at which it is to be taken;
- e. duration; and
- f. possible side effects;
- g. a statement releasing and holding school personnel harmless from any and all liability for damages or injury resulting directly or indirectly from the presence of the medication in the school or its use by the student.
- h. Medication must be in original containers and have affixed label including student's name.
- i. Accurate records of the medication given must be kept in the student file.

The possession or use of non-prescription, over-the-counter medication during school hours is discouraged. Administration of these medications (i.e. throat lozenges, acetaminophen drugs such as Tylenol and Datril) may be allowed if the school judges that adequate personnel are available, and provided that appropriate permission forms are on file in advance of need. The school will not administer aspirin to students because of its connection to Reye's Syndrome.

## **Illness and Attendance**

*A child will be sent home if he/she has:*

- \* A temperature of 100 degrees or greater
- \* Vomiting
- \* Diarrhea
- \* An undiagnosed rash
- \* A suspected contagious disease
- \* Pediculosis (head lice)

*A child may return if the following are true:*

- \* Fever free for 24 hours (NB suspected covid-19 cases may require a longer waiting period)
- \* Vomit free for 24 hours
- \* On medication, if prescribed, for 24 hours
- \* Has followed the pediculosis policy
- \* Free of contagious disease (a doctor's note may be required)
- \* Strep – students need to remain home until they have their strep culture results or any other culture results.
- \* If a rapid strep culture is negative the student must remain home until the results of the 24-hour test

**Pediculosis (Lice) Policy:** Any student found attending school with Pediculosis (lice) shall be excluded from school until the student has been treated with an effective pediculicide and all lice and/or nits (eggs or egg cases) have been removed. Parents are required to show proof of a pediculicide treatment. If the concern continues, a medical note will be required for the child to return to school. The Principal may exclude a student from school if it is determined that a family has not followed proper procedures to eradicate the infestation.

## School Nurse Duties and Screenings

St. Mary School families should expect our school nurse to complete the following duties throughout the year in addition to his or her typical duties on normal school days.

1. Immunization record review
2. Vision Screening
3. Hearing Screening
4. Postural Screening for grades 5 and 6
5. Kindergarten Screening
6. Temperature Screening

## Emergency Medical Authorization Forms

Every student is to turn in a medical authorization form each year. This form must be completed by a parent or guardian by the end of the first week of school. If you should change your address or work/home/cell phone number, you are responsible for notifying the school immediately to keep our records current.

## Drugs, Alcohol, Substance Abuse

For the purposes of this policy, “drugs” shall mean:

All dangerous controlled substances as so designated and prohibited by the Ohio statute (ORC §3719.011); all chemicals which release toxic vapors; all alcoholic beverages; any prescription or patent drug, except those for which permission to use in school has been granted; anabolic steroids; and any substance that is a “look-alike” to any of the above (ORC §2925.01-O).

St. Mary School prohibits the use, possession, concealment, or distribution of any drug or any drug-related paraphernalia as the term is defined by law on school grounds, in school vehicles (including buses provided by public school districts), or at any school-sponsored event. The term “drug paraphernalia” shall have the meaning set forth in the Ohio Revised Code. (§2925.14-A.)

In its teaching and other activities, St. Mary School emphasizes the prevention of drug use and age-appropriate, developmentally-based alcohol and other drug education and prevention.

## Tobacco Policy

No tobacco or associated products are allowed on the property of St. Mary School. The possession and use of E-cigarettes, vaping pipes, and related items are likewise prohibited.

## Tuition

Tuition Rates are reviewed in the spring of each year in consultation with the School Advisory Board, who recommend changes to the Pastor. School tuition rates fall into two categories: participating and non-participating. Participating families are households in which one or both parents is/are a practicing Catholic who is committed to raising their child(ren) in the Catholic faith, regularly attending Mass at St. Mary Church, and contributing to the support of their parish. All other families are categorized as non-participating.

**Participating families with more than one child enrolled in St. Mary School receive a discounted rate.**

St. Mary parish and school wish to make a Catholic education available to all who desire it. For this reason, financial aid is available to families who can demonstrate financial need, as determined by a third-party system known as FACTS. Families who are eligible to receive an EdChoice or EdChoice Expansion scholarship from the State of Ohio must apply. Families paying their own children’s tuition must enroll in FACTS (payment system) unless tuition is paid in full sixty days before the first day of

school. **Those paying in full before the beginning of the school year may also receive a discount as determined by the School Advisory Board and Pastor.**

If a family fails to honor their tuition payment agreement, this will lead to consequences including withholding of grade cards, or termination of enrollment. If a tuition account is delinquent for more than three months and no payment plan has been arranged, the school reserves the right to make a claim through the court system. Student records can be provided to the child’s new school only upon satisfaction of the tuition obligation.

**Tuition Refunds**

If written notice of withdrawal is received by the school on or before August 15, the entire tuition obligation will be waived, and any payments made will be refunded upon written request to the school.

If written notice of withdrawal is received by the school after August 15 and the student does NOT attend, 90% of the annual tuition will be forgiven. The family is obligated to pay the remaining balance of 10% of the annual tuition as billed. If payments were made in excess of 10% of the annual tuition, a refund for that amount will be issued upon written request to the school.

If a family chooses to withdraw their child(ren) from the school once they begin attending, the family tuition obligation will be calculated as follows:

Withdrawal Date	Annual Tuition Obligation
September	80% of tuition forgiven; family obligation 20%
October	70% of tuition forgiven; family obligation 30%
November	60% of tuition forgiven; family obligation 40%
December	50% of tuition forgiven; family obligation 50%
January	40% of tuition forgiven; family obligation 60%
February	30% of tuition forgiven; family obligation 70%
March	20% of tuition forgiven; family obligation 80%
April	10% of tuition forgiven; family obligation 90%
May	No adjustment; family obligation 100%

Calculations will be based on the last month in which the child(ren) attended one or more days of school. If payment has been made in excess of the family obligation, a refund will be granted upon written request to the school.

Student records can be provided to the child’s new school only upon satisfaction of the tuition obligation.

**Arrival and Dismissal: Daily Schedule**

**Doors open at 7:40 a.m. Dismissal is at 2:15 p.m. each day.**

**Students Traveling by Car:** Must enter through the South gymnasium doors. Car riders getting breakfast in the cafeteria will walk through the gym, out the North door, enter the South cafeteria door for breakfast, and return to the main school building by the East door. Parents arriving to pick up their child after school must park in the South lot and wait for their student(s) to exit the gymnasium.

**Students Traveling by Bus:** Must enter through the North cafeteria door, then proceed through the cafeteria, exiting by the South door, and entering the main school building by the East door. Bus riders will be dismissed to the North parking lot after school, and buses load at 2:20 p.m.

**Students Walking to School:** With written permission from parent/guardian, students in grades 5 through 8 may walk to school by themselves and walk home at the end of the school day. Younger children may walk to/from school only if accompanied by an adult family member previously authorized, in writing, by a parent/guardian.

All children must be picked up no later than 2:45 p.m. unless prior arrangements have been authorized by the Principal.

## Closings and Delays

St. Mary School will follow the major decisions made by the Marion City Schools when it comes to weather closings and delays. In some cases, St. Mary School will adjust its decision to take into account students riding the buses of other districts.

These decisions will be communicated to you by our school One Call system. Bus riders, please be aware that if your public school district cancels school and St. Mary does not, you will have no bus service to or from our school that day.

## Crisis Plan/Emergency Drills

Fire, tornado and crisis situation drills are held regularly during the school year as required by state law. These drills are designed to give the students practice evacuating the area in the case of a real disaster.

In the event of a lockdown situation, school buildings will be secured and students will be kept at school until regular dismissal time unless otherwise advised by the Marion Police Department. Parents will be informed of any lockdown via the OneCall system. Students will be sent home by normal transportation means or released to parents pursuant to school policy.

The school's emergency plan is on file with the Ohio Department of Education as required by state law.

## Cell Phones and Electronic Device Usage

**Students are permitted to bring cell phones to school; however, they may not be turned on or used during school hours, and must be kept in book bags, not on the student's person. Teachers and staff are not responsible for the security of cell phones owned by students or families. A student found with a cell phone on their person during school hours will have it taken away and stored in the office until the end of the school day, and repeated problems may lead to more negative consequences as described in the discipline policy.**

**The same policy applies to other electronic devices due to the problematic distractions or content that they bring with them. Devices such as digital music players, cameras, phones, recording devices, and video game devices are not to be on the student's person during the school day. The school will not accept responsibility for the loss of personal property.**

**Smartwatches or fitness watches are permitted, but must be removed during assessments and not used during class.**

## Technology and Acceptable Use

All students and their parents/guardians must sign the diocesan Technology and Acceptable Use Policy (Policy 6140) at the beginning of each school year. The full policy is reproduced as an appendix to this handbook.

## Directory Information Notice

Directory information regarding students will be released in various formats, including websites, unless the parent/guardian informs the school that information regarding his/child is not to be released. Forms for this purpose are distributed to all parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year. **Directory information includes the names of students, grade level, homeroom, home address, phone number, etc.**

## Personally Identifiable Information Notice

**A consent signed and dated by the parent(s) of a student must be obtained to release personally identifiable information. Personally identifiable information is information that makes the identity of a student more traceable. Personally identifiable information includes pictures with and without names, addresses, social security numbers, ID numbers, personal characteristics (height, weight, etc.), and education records (Policy 5126.2)**

## Child Custody Considerations

Parents have an obligation to inform the school immediately of any changes in the custody status of a student. School officials will require a copy of the court-ordered document for the child's permanent record. Both the custodial and the non-custodial parent are entitled to access to their child's records and to conferences with the teacher, unless the court has ruled otherwise. However, the non-custodial parent may not visit the child at school or remove the child from the premises without the expressed written and verbal permission of the custodial parent. Step-parents have no legal rights to records, reports, or conferences without permission from the custodial parent.

## Background Checks and Protecting God's Children

At St. Mary Church and School all clergy and employees, regardless of their level of contact with children and youth, all volunteers in a program or ministry for children or youth, regardless of their level of contact with children or youth, all volunteers for other parish programs or ministries who have been delegated care, custody, or control of children or youth, any volunteer who has the possibility of working alongside, being delegated care, custody, or control of children and youth, while acting on behalf of St. Mary Church or School, and who is 18 years of age or above, is required to complete a civilian criminal background check, through BCI & FBI, and participate in a "Protecting God's Children" training session prior to beginning service. By definition **this requirement applies to all paid school staff and volunteers.**

## School Advisory Board

The School Advisory Board is comprised of the principal, pastor, teacher representative, Home and School President, Parish Finance Committee member, up to two (2) parents and up to two (2) registered parishioners, who discuss issues related to the school and offer input to the Pastor. Tuition increases require a vote of the Board.

The Board will schedule all meeting dates for the upcoming school year each September. All meetings are open to the public. If you require action by the board, a written request must be given to the board president and/or principal at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

## Reporting of Abuse and Neglect

In compliance with state law (ORC 2151.421), any teacher, counselor, administrator, or other school employee, having reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected shall immediately contact the county Child Protection Services or law enforcement and inform the agency contacted of the facts and circumstances which led to the filing of a report. The employee will immediately report the case to the school administrator. The school administrator will immediately report the case to the diocesan superintendent. If the suspected child abuse involves a school employee, the school administrator shall also immediately notify the Office of Educator Conduct within the Ohio Department of Education.

## Food Service

Our cafeteria is located in Moira Hall (lower level of the church building). Lunch prices are announced at the beginning of the year. St. Mary School also participates in the free/reduced lunch program. Paperwork for those programs will be sent home the first week of school.

St. Mary also offers a breakfast program which begins each morning at 7:40 a.m. There is no breakfast on Two Hour Delay Days.

**2021-2022 School Year Special Notice: Due to current concerns about covid-19, the number of food choices may be reduced to facilitate social distancing and efficient movement in the cafeteria.**

## Student Dress Code and Uniform Policy

In order to promote intellectual and spiritual growth in a noncompetitive environment, St. Mary School pupils will wear uniforms as specified below. Uniforms must be clean and in good repair in order to be in compliance with the dress code. Students are to be in full uniform on all school days unless the principal designates otherwise. It is expected that parents/guardians will support the uniform code, which is enforced by the principal, faculty, and staff. See handbook for complete guidelines. There are two uniform standards: K-5 and Middle School.

### K-Grade 5 Girls

*Warm Weather Attire (allowed during months of August, September, October and April, May, and June):*

**Blouse:** Plain oxford collar polo shirt; pale blue or white. An undershirt or turtleneck may be worn under the blouse as long as it is white or navy.

**Shorts:** Navy blue walking/chino shorts that come down to the top of the knee. **No** cargo style shorts.

*Normal Attire (allowed at all times, but required during the months of November-March):*

**Jumper:** Plaid or navy blue drop waist; jumper available from Educational Apparel; must wear shorts underneath that do not show below the jumper.

**Blouse:** Plain oxford collar polo shirt; pale blue or white. An undershirt or turtleneck may be worn under the blouse as long as it is white or navy.

**Sweater: Cardigan or vest in dark navy only, may be either crewneck or v-neck.** Uniform shirt must be worn under a sweater.

**Slacks:** Dark navy only; classic tailored (Dockers) style; belt (black or navy) is optional but recommended; no knit pants.

**Socks:** Plain ankle, knee socks or tights; navy or white only; socks may be worn over tights in cold weather. Socks must be visible above the shoe. **Leggings** (white or navy) may be worn in place of shorts in cold weather, **only under a jumper** and never by themselves. **Leggings must not be worn as pants.**

**Shoes:** Athletic shoes or closed toe/closed heel flat dress shoes; **no clogs, sandals, crocs, or boots.**

**Hair:** Accessories used to keep hair off of the face and neck may be worn, as long as they do not display inappropriate text or graphics.

**Jewelry:** Post-earrings only. Religious medals may be worn as long as it is tucked under the uniform shirt. The only other allowed jewelry is a watch and/or identification bracelet.

**Not allowed: Tattoos, body piercings, make-up, artificial fingernails/nail polish, hair coloring.**

### **K-Grade 5 Boys**

*Warm Weather Attire (allowed during months of August, September, October and April, May, and June):*

**Shirt:** Polo shirt with collar, pale blue or white. Undershirt must be white or navy.

**Shorts:** Navy blue walking/chino shorts that come down to the top of the knee. **No** cargo style shorts.

*Normal Attire (allowed at all times, but required during the months of November-March):*

**Shirt:** Polo shirt with collar, pale blue or white. Undershirt must be white or navy.

**Sweater:** Dark navy only, crew neck, V-neck, vest or cardigan. Uniform shirt must be worn under a sweater.

**Slacks:** Dark navy only; classic tailored (Dockers) style; belt (black or navy) is optional but recommended; **no** jeans or pants with rivets or cargo style pants.

**Socks:** Plain white or navy visible above the shoe.

**Hair:** Moderate hair styles, short hair for boys: hair must not touch uniform collar or eyebrows.

**Jewelry:** Religious medals may be worn as long as it is tucked under the uniform shirt. The only other allowed jewelry is a watch and/or identification bracelet.

**Not allowed: Tattoos, body piercings, artificial fingernails/nail polish, hair coloring.**

## **Middle School Girls**

*Warm Weather Attire (allowed during months of August, September, October and April, May, and June):*

**Shirts:** White or dark green polo shirt

**Shorts:** Grey walking shorts to top of the knee.

*Normal Attire (allowed at all times, but required during the months of November-March):*

**Shirts:** White or dark green polo shirt or white dress shirt.

**Sweater:** Dark green cardigan or pullover sweater or vest; dark green crew neck sweatshirt or fleece jacket with uniform shirt underneath.

**Skirts:** Grey or plaid skirt or skorts (top of the knee), shorts must be worn under skirt at all times.

**Pants:** Grey dress slacks.

**Socks:** White or green knee socks.

**Shoes:** Black dress shoes; athletic shoes.

**Hair:** Moderate hair styles. Accessories used to keep hair off of the face and neck may be worn, as long as they do not display inappropriate text or graphics.

**Jewelry:** Post-earrings only. Religious medals may be worn as long as it is tucked under the uniform shirt. The only other allowed jewelry is a watch and/or identification bracelet.

**Not allowed:** hair coloring, tattoos, body piercings, artificial fingernails, nail polish, make-up.

**Gym attire:** School uniform with athletic shoes; no jewelry.

## **Middle School Boys**

*Warm Weather Attire (allowed during months of August, September, October and April, May, and June):*

**Shirts:** White or dark green polo shirt.

**Shorts:** Grey walking shorts to top of the knee. No cargo style shorts.

**Belts:** Black belts

*Normal Attire (allowed at all times, but required during the months of November-March):*

**Shirts:** White or dark green polo shirt or white dress shirt.



**Sweater:** Dark green cardigan or pullover sweater or vest; dark green crew neck sweatshirt or fleece jacket with uniform shirt underneath.

**Pants:** Grey chino pants or dress slacks.

**Socks:** Black socks visible above the shoe.

**Shoes:** Athletic shoes or dress shoes; no clogs, sandals, crocs, or boots.

**Hair:** Moderate hair styles, short hair for boys (must not touch shirt collar or eyebrows); boys must be clean-shaven.

**Jewelry:** Religious medals may be worn as long as it is tucked under the uniform shirt. The only other allowed jewelry is a watch and/or identification bracelet. No earrings allowed for boys.

**Not allowed: hair coloring, tattoos, body piercings, artificial fingernails, nail polish, make-up.**

**Gym attire:** School uniform with athletic shoes; no jewelry.

### **Gym Attire for All Students**

On days when students take physical education classes, the school uniform should be worn with athletic shoes.

### **Dress Down Day Policy**

Dress Down days are announced in advance by the principal, and are special opportunities when students may wear clothes other than their uniforms. Students may not dress down on days other than those announced by the principal.

**Sweatshirts and T-Shirts:** Allowed as long as they do not display inappropriate, disrespectful, or offensive words or images. May not display signs or symbols related to drug and alcohol use.

**Shirts and Tops:** Must completely cover the stomach, back, and shoulders.

**Shorts:** May only be worn in August, September, October, April, May or June. The hem of the shorts must touch the top of the knee. Baggy or sagging shorts are not allowed.

**Pants:** All pants must be clean, not ripped or torn, and not low-rise. Jeans or sweatpants are allowed as long as they are not baggy, sagging, ripped, or displaying inappropriate text or graphics.

**Shoes: Athletic shoes only, no boots, flip flops, open toed shoes, sandals, or crocs.**

**Not allowed for any student: pajama-style and flannel trousers, compression shorts, camouflage pants, leggings as pants, or compression shirts.**

## Vendors for Middle School Uniform

Educationalapparel.com  
School #110  
(most items)

schoolbelles.com  
school code S2876

**Dress Code Violations.** Violations of the dress code will result in a phone call to parents/caregivers to explain the violation and establish a timeline for correction. Egregious or repeated violations can result in the school asking the child to change into a uniform from the uniform closet at the school.

## Grading/Evaluation Reports

Schools within the Diocese of Columbus believe that grades should communicate exactly what a student knows, understands, and can do. The emphasis is on both the academic content and the process a student takes to mastery. The intent is to present information regarding a student's progress so that intervention or enrichment strategies can be applied to help a child learn. The Diocese of Columbus has adopted a standards-based progress report system. Progress reports reflect academic achievement in relation to diocesan curricula and content standards. Using a diocesan-wide system means that all Diocesan schools are using the same grading criteria. Students are evaluated using the following terms:

### **E - Exceeds Essential Standard**

The student exceeds the essential standard by consistently demonstrating an advanced level of understanding and/or the ability to apply knowledge at a higher level. For example, the student synthesizes information and makes connections between concepts to apply the knowledge in new and unique ways or to apply the concepts to solve real world problems

### **M - Consistently Meets Essential Standard**

The student has consistently met the essential standard taught.

### **W - Working toward Meeting (or Inconsistent)**

The student is working toward mastery of the essential standard or is inconsistent in his/her demonstration of mastery when assessed.

### **N - Not Meeting**

Student has not demonstrated mastery of the essential standard. This is usually given to students who are at the beginning stages in learning a new concept or who are working below grade-level.

### **INS - Insufficient Evidence**

There was insufficient evidence provided for demonstration of mastery when assessed, usually because of lack of attendance or effort. There should be corresponding documentation on other parts of the report card. Students will be given the opportunity to provide sufficient evidence by the end of the next grading period.

## Homework

At St. Mary School, we believe that reasonable homework at each grade level is an integral part of the learning process. Each teacher sets his or her own homework policy and enforces it with the support of the principal.

Missing assignments will be handled by each teacher as he or she sees fit. Our belief is that making up major assignments and assessments is critical for student learning and teacher instruction. Some assignments may be handled differently by the teacher if the tasks are seen as redundant or if an alternative assignment is developed. While we do not believe in punishing a student for missing work, a student may lose privileges in order to prioritize missed learning opportunities.

Chronically missing assignments will result in a meeting with parents/caregivers to explore additional options for support.

## Parent Communication/OneCall

Saint Mary School will be in regular communication with parents and guardians by means of printed information sent home with the students. Because it is sometimes necessary to communicate important information to school families on short notice, we also ask that all parents and guardians participate in the OneCall system, which allows the school to update the school community in real time by text, email, voice message, or a combination of all three. All school parents/guardians will be enrolled in the OneCall system at the beginning of the school year.

## Student Records

No data shall be released about students without the written consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student under 18 years of age. Records are kept under lock and key. The following are permitted to view an individual student's record: school personnel, parent(s)/guardian(s) of a minor student, non-custodial parent of an individual minor student unless denied access by court order, Officials of other schools to which the student may transfer.

## Internet Use Policy

No school, school personnel or school volunteer may:

- 1) use social networking tools to communicate with individuals under 18 other than family members
- 2) use social networking tools to release personally identifiable information for individuals under 18 unless written permission has been obtained from the parent or guardian
- 3) use the school internet for online gambling or bidding
- 4) use anything other than an authorized email or a learning management system to communicate with students
- 5) use for sale ads that are contrary to acceptable Catholic Guidelines
- 6) permit web hosted advertisements unless a disclaimer is also posted

## School Family Social Media Use

St. Mary School has found that social media is a useful tool to let the community know the good news about Catholic Education. We ask school families to keep their posts about St. Mary School positive and consistent with our Catholic mission. Parents or other members of the St. Mary School community who post, whether in public or private groups, defamatory, threatening, or offensive statements will be asked to remove the offensive material immediately and/or withdraw his or her child from the school. This includes the use of social media for purposes that may prove detrimental to the common good, messages that may be threatening, harmful or offensive to other parents, students, staff and administration, or posts that may harm the good name of the school. Parents/guardians who have

a complaint or inquiry about any school-related matter should please speak directly to the school about the matter rather than discussing it in a public forum.

## Use of Name/Branding Policy

Attaching the school's name, logo, or other insignia to an event, activity, or publication implies a close connection with the school, usually sponsorship or endorsement. However, involvement by individual faculty, staff, students, or parents is not, by itself, sufficient basis to title an activity, program, or event as "school" sponsored. Rather the activity, program, or event must be one for which the school takes institutional responsibility. Faculty members, staff, students, parents, and parish members may use or authorize the use of the school name, logo, or insignia (alone or in conjunction with the name of a specified organization or activity) only with the written approval of the Pastor and Principal. No individual, company, or organization may seek to use the school name, logo, or insignia for any commercial benefit without the written approval of the Pastor and Principal. In appropriate cases determined by the Pastor/Principal, permission for ongoing events, activities, or publications requiring approval under this policy may be given.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT AND AGREEMENT FORM

I have read and agree to abide by the policies contained in the Saint Mary Parent/Student Handbook including appendices. I acknowledge that the information contained herein is subject to modification, change, interpretation, and elimination at any time by the School in its sole discretion, without notice.

The specific diocesan policies identified in this Handbook are summaries only. For complete copies of the policies referenced, refer to the Office of Catholic Schools Administrator's Manual. In the event of any conflict between the summary and the complete policy, it is the Administrator's Manual that governs.

This agreement form must be signed by the parents/guardians and students in all grades and returned to the School Office no later than September 1.

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parent/guardian

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parent/guardian

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student

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student

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student