

# **ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

## **PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2024-2025**



**SCHOOL OFFICE  
903 W. MISSION AVE.  
BELLEVUE, NE 68005  
402-291-1694**

**[stmarysbellevue.com](http://stmarysbellevue.com)**

This Parent/Student Handbook is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contractual agreement between St. Mary's Catholic School and any student or parent. The information contained in the handbook provides a general description of rules and regulations. The school reserves the right to add to, modify, or abolish any of the handbook provisions without notice. Non-enforcement of any of the rules or regulations does not serve as a waiver of their future enforcement. This handbook does not create any restriction upon St. Mary's Catholic School's right to institute a course of disciplinary action which, at St. Mary's Catholic School's sole discretion, it believes is necessary and consistent with its Catholic educational mission.

**Updated August 2024**

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Thank you for choosing a Catholic School for the education of your child(ren). As such we teach and live the mission of the Gospels. Additionally, we expect and encourage parents to carefully reflect on the decision to send their children to a Catholic School knowing full well that we teach Catholic Doctrine, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and living in the world as a Catholic faith community and example of God's love to others.

It is the intention of St. Mary's School and the Educational Advisory Board that a current copy of the handbook be provided to each family enrolled at St. Mary's School as needed. This handbook is the most current copy, revised to follow policies of the Archdiocese of Omaha Catholic Schools. It replaces all other policies and procedures contained in previous handbooks distributed to families in the past. Please discard old copies and refer to this handbook when you have questions about the school.

This St. Mary's School Family Handbook is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contractual agreement between St. Mary's School and any students or any parent of any student. Changes may be made at the discretion of the administration and notification will be made to parents.

Please take time to read and discuss the handbook with your child (ren). Pages are provided for you and your child (ren) to sign and return to the classroom teachers. By signing the acknowledgement page you are indicating your support of our mission to nurture students' hearts and minds to be servant leaders.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia Wallinger".

Dr. Patricia A. Wallinger  
Principal

## **SCHOOL MISSION**

The specific mission of St. Mary's Catholic School is to provide a Catholic education that nurtures students' hearts and minds to become servant leaders in an ever-changing world.

## **SCHOOL VISION**

Keeping before us the teachings of Jesus, we accept God's invitation to create a spiritually nourishing Catholic environment. We welcome families of all faiths. We commit ourselves to educating every child by using a challenging, well-rounded, standards-based curriculum enhanced by open communication. Each student is recognized as a unique gift from God and is encouraged to become an integral part of the global community.

## **COMMUNITY**

St. Mary's Parish offers Catholic education through the parish school to assist parents in teaching the truths, skills, and ideals necessary for Christian living. We believe that community is at the heart of Catholic Christian education.

## **EXIT OUTCOMES UPON GRADUATION**

All graduates of St. Mary's Catholic School will demonstrate:

- Religious knowledge, virtues, and practices
- Knowing the core disciplines and fine arts
- Higher order thinking skills
- Effective communication skills
- Independent learning skills
- Skills essential to lifelong learning, building healthy relationships and citizenship

## **ADMISSIONS**

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The Omaha Archdiocesan Schools admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origins to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the schools. They do not discriminate based on race, color, national and ethnic origin and in the administration of their educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

### **Pre-Kindergarten**

A student must be four years of age on or before July 31st of the current school year before they can enter pre kindergarten. Parents will be asked to present the original birth certificate as verification of age for the child. Pre Kindergarten is a one-year program. We do not accept early entrance into the PK program.

### **Kindergarten**

Nebraska State law requires that a child must be five years of age on or before July 31st of the current school year before they can enter kindergarten. Parents will be asked to present the original birth certificate as verification of age for the child. We do not accept early entrance into the Kindergarten program.

### **Class Size**

As a general rule, once the class size reaches 25 students, a teacher assistant may be hired to work with the classroom teacher for a minimum of three to four hours per day. When the class size reaches 25 students, a waiting list will be created. When the waiting list reaches 18-20 students, the class will be split into two sections. Parishioners will be accepted before non-parishioners and all races will be accepted.

## **REGISTRATION RECORDS NEEDED FOR ADMISSION**

### **Birth Certificate**

All incoming pre-kindergarten students, kindergarten students, and transferring students from out of state must present the original birth certificate as verification of age for the child. All students must have a copy of their birth certificate in their file.

### **Baptismal Certificates**

All students who are baptized are required to have a copy of their baptismal certificate in their file. All students who are Catholic will need a record of their baptism before they can receive new sacraments.

### **Health Exams**

All kindergarteners, seventh graders, and out of state transfer students must have a physical exam prior to enrollment as required by Nebraska State Law. Kindergarteners and out of state transfers are also required to have a vision exam prior to enrollment. The vision exam must include documentation of amblyopia, strabismus, internal/external eye health, and visual acuity. Students may have exams six months prior to the beginning of school. State law does not allow the school to accept examinations completed by chiropractors. Forms are available in the school office or at your physician's office. The school office is required to maintain updated health files for each child.

### **Immunizations**

Each student must have a current and complete immunization record on file at school. Nebraska State law requires that each student must have all necessary immunizations before they can be admitted to class on the first day of school. Please check with your physician as to the immunizations needed for your child.

### **Release of Records**

Parents of students transferring from another school will be asked to sign a release of information form, so St. Mary's School can request records from the child's previous school.

### **Transfer Students and New Student Admission**

All transfer/new students shall complete a registration to be reviewed by the principal. An interview with the principal/pastor may be requested. The parent will be notified if the application cannot be accepted. Applicants who do not meet the admission requirements shall be informed of the reasons for non-acceptance.

An application which cannot be honored due to class size shall be placed on a waiting list and parents will be notified of their status in writing. Students who are determined to have special education needs shall follow the guidelines set forth by the Archdiocese.

## **Emergency Cards**

Information completed for on-line registration in Facts will be used to print emergency cards or checklists for the school office, classrooms, etc. Additionally, information will be used for the purpose of reunification or in the event of a crisis.

## **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **Tuition Payment Policy**

Recognizing that payment of school tuition is a requirement of each family and that the need to maintain a continuous and consistent cash flow is essential to a well-managed school, our School follows the following policy regarding tuition payment:

### **FACTS Tuition Management**

All families must create an account in the FACTS tuition management system before the start of the school year. Once students are enrolled in Facts, all student Tuition, Registration Fees, Hot Lunch and Extended Day charges will be processed through the FACTS account. The school office does not collect payments for tuition or any other charges.

### **Tuition Payment Plans**

FACTS provides several payment plan options for Tuition fees: one-time, bi-annual, quarterly, 9-month, 10-month and 12-month plans with a choice of the day of the month for payments to be processed on. The FACTS system automatically notifies families of payment reminders, creates past due invoices and charges a \$30 fee for each returned payment. Should a family have a situation arise when they know that a payment will be late; the responsible party can notify the School Financial office and request that a payment due date be changed. Most payment changes require two banking days' notice to update, so communication with the school finance office needs to occur at least 3 banking days prior to the original payment due date.

St. Mary's School Finance Office is available to assist families if financial difficulties should arise. Families need to communicate with the School Finance Office by email or phone call to provide information about their financial situation. The staff will work with the family to determine what assistance would be most appropriate.

If any tuition payments are past due over 90 days and families *have not communicated* with the school finance office, St. Mary's School reserves the right to remove the student(s) from the school and pursue additional collection methods. The school has the further right to refuse re-enrollment for the following school year until financial commitments have been met or arrangements have been made. Re-enrollment in the current year or enrollment for the following year will not be accepted until tuition and fees are paid in full. Additionally, families who have a past due balance are not eligible for future financial assistance until the balance is resolved. Final financial decisions rest with the Pastor after consultation with the administrator.

### **Registration**

All families will be required to pay an annual registration fee for each child before school begins. Registration money is used to pay for books, paper, and other materials needed to begin the school year. St. Mary's charges one fee for all materials, equipment or additional supplies used for the educational program rather than fees for each specific category. Registration fees will be billed through family FACTS accounts.

## ATTENDANCE

### Attendance Procedures/Tardiness

St. Mary's School complies with Nebraska State law which requires 1032 hours of instruction for students per year in grades one through eight. Kindergarten students are required to receive 400 hours of instruction each year.

Attendance is essential for school success. For the safety of the children, parents are asked to notify the school before 8:15 AM each day a student is absent. The preferred method is to Please click on "Report an Absence" on the school website and complete the "[Student Absence/Tardy Questions](#)" google form. You can also send an email to the office at [secretary@stmarysbellevue.com](mailto:secretary@stmarysbellevue.com) or call the office at 402-291-1694 to report absences. If we are not notified, the school will attempt to contact parents, at work if necessary, to determine the whereabouts of absent students. If no contact is made, the school office will reach out to emergency contacts and may call the authorities to verify the whereabouts of students, especially if more than one day goes by without parent contact.

Students who have frequent absences due to a chronic medical condition or illness may apply for a waiver from the attendance policy if the illness is substantiated in writing by the child's physician.

A student who is absent is required to make up all assignments as determined by the teacher. Parents may call the office and make arrangements for picking up their child's assignments. Teachers need to be notified in the morning, so they have time to get materials and the assignment list for the child. Make up assignments and tests are the student's responsibility.

Vacations and trips are discouraged when school is in session. However, when a parent knows a child will be absent, please notify the office ahead of time. A student may ask for assignments prior to the absence, but teachers may not be able to provide assignments for the child in advance.

All students must be signed in at the school office when coming to school after 7:50 AM. Students are tardy at 8am. All students must be signed out with the office if they are leaving before school dismissal time.

A written notice may be sent to the parents when a child has been absent five days unexcused.

A student may not miss more than five days per quarter or the hourly equivalent. The number of absences should not exceed twenty days cumulative or the hourly equivalent per year. After 20 unexcused absences, the school will report the student as truant.

The school should be notified when a student is to be picked up early from school.

Half day absence- a child is considered absent a half day if they leave between 10:30 AM and 1:30 PM. Hourly equivalents will be kept on children leaving after 2:30 PM.

All day absence-A child leaving before 9:00 AM is considered absent all day. Students arriving after 2:30 PM will be considered absent all day.

### Excessive Absence Procedure

In the event that a student has accumulated five absences within one quarter without a valid excuse, parents will receive written notification and the parents, student, teacher, and principal will develop a plan to decrease absences. If a student has ten absences, the parent will be notified in writing. A letter will be sent to the county attorney to inform them if the absences exceed 20 days. The parents will be informed that the student may be subject to loss of attendance at St. Mary's School.

# **ACADEMIC PROGRAM**

## **Academic Dimension**

St. Mary's School is accredited by the State of Nebraska and is further accredited through Cognia. All teachers are certified by the State of Nebraska. All Para-educators work under the direct supervision of a certified staff member.

## **Curriculum**

We believe all children can learn and succeed. The standards established by the Archdiocese of Omaha form the foundation of our curriculum. We are focused on all students mastering the standards as directed by the Catholic Schools Office.

## **Religion**

Formal religion classes are held four times each week in grades pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Religion is the primary focus of instruction as it permeates every facet of learning throughout the day. Instruction includes the study of Holy Scripture, the Mass, the life of Christ, and the doctrines and prayers of our Catholic faith. Moral and Christian behavior are also very important aspects of instruction.

All students regardless of denomination are expected to attend Mass and prayer services with their classes, as well as take part in religion class as an academic subject. Students who show disrespect for the beliefs of the Catholic Faith.

Students in second grade receive the sacraments of First Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. Sacramental preparation is provided by the school and the parish religious education program. Students in eighth grade receive the sacrament of Confirmation. Instruction is the joint effort of the school and the parish religious education program. All sacramental preparation is a collaboration between school and the parish office of Catechesis and Evangelization.

The Circle of Grace program is required by the Archdiocese of Omaha. Children in K-8 participate in this program. Students learn the importance of respect for their body and the importance of personal safety. As the primary teachers of their children, parents are expected to partner with the school in teaching children basic respect and appropriate social interactions with others.

The devotion to our Blessed Mother is exhibited through May Crowning, the rosary, and prayer services. Support for mission work is promoted and encouraged. Students are encouraged to participate in activities which will enable them to learn about diversity and service.

Boys and girls are trained to be altar servers during the second semester of fourth grade.

## **Computer/Technology**

Instruction in the use of electronic learning devices is taught at all grade levels. Emphasis is placed on proficiency in the use of computers for interdisciplinary applications and problem-solving skills. Each student is provided opportunities to improve his or her computer literacy through integrated practice in everyday instruction. Students have access to individual chrome books or iPads and are responsible for their appropriate use.

## **Code of Ethics/Internet Use**

Students who access the computer files of another student or teacher are in violation of computer ethics and will be

dealt with on an individual basis. The student will be prohibited from using computers at school until the administration has completed an investigation of the incident.

Students are prohibited from the following:

- \_ any unauthorized use or access of any computer at St. Mary's School
- \_ transmittal of unsolicited information which contains obscene, indecent, lewd, or lascivious materials or other material which explicitly or implicitly refers to sexual conduct
- \_ transmittal of unsolicited information which contains profane language, bigotry, sexism, or other forms of discrimination
- \_ communication of any information concerning confidential information without the permission of its owner
- \_ unauthorized creation, modification, execution, or retransmission of any computer program or unauthorized use of the computer facility software, licensed or otherwise
- \_ access or destruction of software or willful attempt to harm or destroy data or equipment including the uploading or creation of computer viruses
- \_ use of the computer facility in a manner inconsistent with the school's contractual obligations to suppliers or with any published school policy set

St. Mary's uses Go Guardian security software to monitor student activities on St. Mary's owned devices and the St. Mary's networks. All email accounts created by St. Mary's for student and employee use are the property of St. Mary's and may be monitored or accessed at any time for the purpose of safety and security.

#### **Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

All students and parents and employees are required to sign the Internet Acceptable Use Policy. Signature or eSignature indicates acceptance of this policy. Persons violating appropriate use policies will be dealt with according to the individual situation. Such activities may result in the loss of electronic device privileges or other appropriate action.

St. Mary's School reserves the right to provide alternate means of instruction when a student has been removed from electronic devices during the school day. This may include but is not limited to paper and pencil/pen or use of writing materials in lieu of electronic options.

#### **Pre-Kindergarten Program**

St. Mary's Pre-Kindergarten program is designed to provide growth experiences in all areas of child development. Children participate in learning activities which promote strong social skills, communication skills, religious awareness, and a love for learning. The Pre-Kindergarten program is a one-year program. Students who are not ready to move on to kindergarten may not repeat the Pre-K course.

#### **Language Arts**

Language Arts include study in the areas of reading, spelling, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and handwriting.

#### **Library**

Pre-K -5 students go to the library once a week. Students participate in library skill classes and can select library materials to read throughout the school week. Middle School students study research and media as part of their regular classroom instruction.

#### **Selection Policy for Library Materials**

1. Selection: Selection of library material will be based on the yearly evaluation of the media coordinator who will

receive input from teachers, students, and parents as well as review professional literature and recommendations.

2. Complaints: Parents have the right to request that their child not read certain materials in the library collection. However, they do not have the right to impose their restriction on all children.

- a. Concern about certain materials should be discussed with the principal. If the issue cannot be resolved, the parent will be asked to submit their concerns in writing for further consideration.
- b. The principal will then select a team consisting of the principal, media coordinator, classroom teacher, parent and a member of the Educational Advisory board. Members of the team will investigate the concern and write a report of their findings.
- c. The principal will notify the parent of the decision reached by the selection team.

### **Mathematics**

Mathematics includes basic computation skills, basic facts, problem solving, probability, and application of math concepts. Middle school students will be placed in basic math, pre-algebra, and algebra math classes based on teacher recommendation and the following criteria:

- a. Standardized test math scores
- b. Classroom teacher recommendations
- c. Mastery of required math standards at each grade level

### **Physical Education and Fine Arts**

Physical education and the fine arts play an important part in the school curriculum. Classes in P.E./health, art, and music are generally taught two times per week. Classes are taught by certified staff.

### **Science and Social Studies**

Science and social sciences focus on application of concepts and understandings to solve problems, develop research skills, and master curriculum standards. Students are encouraged to take a global view through the lens of our Catholic Faith and service to others.

### **Counselor**

Students may refer themselves to the school counselor as well as teachers and parents. Parents will be required to give written permission for a child to see the counselor. Counseling services are provided by a licensed mental health therapist contracted through Catholic Charities. Students in crisis may be seen without the formal referral in accordance with current laws pertaining to the Federal Educational Records Privacy Act.

### **Student Support Services**

Students may receive additional academic support from teachers assigned by the school. This may involve teachers providing additional instruction, tutoring, and/or monitoring assignments and homework.

### **Special Education Services**

St. Mary's School works in collaboration with Bellevue Public Schools in providing special education services for students who qualify. Bellevue Public Schools currently provides testing services, speech services, and special education services for children on individual education plans. In some instances, there is a limitation in support provided if the student resides outside Bellevue Public School district.

## **Multicultural Education**

St. Mary's School utilizes the resources of curriculum, instruction, in-service, and counseling to reflect the cultural heritage of the United States and the local community, historically and in the current environment. The following guidelines are observed:

- \_ to select materials and methods that will eliminate bias and stereotypes in our school
- \_ to conduct in-service programs for our faculty and staff that will assist them in understanding a multicultural approach to instruction and administration within the school
- \_ to encourage all students to grow in self-esteem as they develop their human and academic potential
- \_ to guard against grouping students and school personnel that reflects racial, ethnic, or cultural bias

## **Homework**

Homework is a part of the learning experience. Homework is assigned to reinforce subject matter, help students practice organization and time management skills, and have time for review of material for tests and quizzes. Students in grades three through eight are required to have an assignment notebook. The general guideline for homework is ten minutes per grade level per night and is given at the discretion of the teacher. This should be a time when the student is focused exclusively on the assignment. Parents are encouraged to communicate with the classroom teacher regarding questions about homework.

## **Academic Saturday School**

Assignments which are more than three days late may be completed and turned in at Academic Saturday School. Students may opt out, but late or missing assignments will not be counted after three days and will be given a grade of zero. Saturday School schedules will be distributed through the classroom teacher and or the school newsletter. Acceptance of late or missing work due to illness will be considered on a case by case basis and is not automatically granted

## **Homework Room**

Homework Room is a no cost resource available to any student in grades 4th - 8th who would like a quiet place to work on homework after school. The Homework Room is managed on a rotational basis of school teachers on Tuesday through Thursday afternoons from dismissal time until 4:00 pm.

Students can receive help if needed or just enjoy a calm environment to get work done before going home. Each student attending the Homework room must be engaged in homework activities. All students must either go to Extended Day at 4:00pm or be picked up through Extended Day at or before 4:00 pm. There is no homework room on days immediately before a school holiday.

## **Honor Roll**

Honor Roll recognizes academic achievement of students in grades sixth through eighth grade. Students are recognized at the end of each quarter. Highest Honors will be awarded to students who attain an overall grade percentage of 95.5 with no individual subject grade below an A. First Honors are awarded to a student who attains an overall grade percentage of 92.5-95.4 with no individual subject grade lower than B. Second Honors will be awarded to students who attain an overall grade percentage of 85.5-92.4 with no individual subject grade lower than a C. Subject areas are listed below with the weighted value.

Religion (weighted twice) Science (weighted twice)  
Social Studies (weighted twice) Math (weighted twice)  
Literature (weighted twice) Language Arts (weighted twice)

Spanish (weighted once) Music (weighted once)  
Technology (weighted once) Art (weighted once)  
Physical Education (weighted once)

**Percentage Honor Roll**

95.5-100 Highest

92.5-95.4 First Honors

86.0-92.4 Second Honors

Any student who receives an in or out of school suspension is ineligible for Honor Roll that quarter. Students who are assigned to a behavioral Saturday School may not be eligible for Honor Roll.

**Most Improved Student Award**

The Most Improved Student award recognizes students who have shown great growth and achievement in academics. This award will be given at the teachers' discretion at the end of each quarter. The award will be presented to one child in each grade, K-8 as warranted.

**Spirit of Mary Award (Grades 4-8)**

The Spirit of Mary Award will be presented to students who exemplify the traits and qualities of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the patroness of our school. At the end of each semester, the classroom teacher will select the student who most modeled the traits and qualities of Mary in the classroom and in school activities.

**Christian Witness Award (Grades 4-8)**

This award is presented to one boy and one girl in each grade who exemplifies the traits and qualities of a Catholic Christian throughout the year. At the end of the school year, each homeroom teacher will select two of their homeroom students who have modeled Catholic Christian traits and qualities.

**Progress Reports**

Progress reports are sent to parents in grades pre-kindergarten through eighth grade. Progress reports inform parents of student progress about half way through the quarter. Parents are encouraged to review the reports with their children and contact teachers about any questions or concerns they may have regarding their child's progress. Parents are also encouraged to review periodically to monitor academic, missing work or absence status.

**Report Cards**

Report cards are designed to share information about student learning and progress with parents and students. Information on report cards should be used to help parents and students set educational goals for learning and achievement.

**Grading Scale**

<b>Primary Scale:</b>	<b>Intermediate Scale:</b>	<b>Middle School Scale:</b>
E = Excellent	E = 100-93 Excellent	A = 100-96
S = Satisfactory	S+ = 92-88 Above Average	A- = 95-93
N = Needs Improvement	S = 87-80 Average	B+ = 92-90
U = Unsatisfactory	S- = 79-77 Below Average	B = 89-87
	N = 76-7 Needs Improvement	B- = 86-85
	U = 69 or Below Unsatisfactory	C+ = 84-83
		C = 82-79
		C- = 78-77
		D+ = 76-75
		D = 72-70
		F = 69 or below

**Parent – Teacher Conferences**

Parent – Teacher conferences are held at the end of the first quarter and mid-way through the third quarter. Conferences provide the opportunity for parents and teachers to meet and discuss the growth and achievement each child is making throughout the school year. A conference midway through the first quarter is required. Conferences during the third quarter are encouraged but not required.

**Standardized Tests**

Star Assessments are administered to students in grades K-8 three times per year. Testing will provide needed information on academic growth. Parents will receive the results of the test and will be given feedback on the child's strengths and information on how to help their child continue to grow in all subject areas.

**Catholic High School Placement Exams**

The Catholic High School Placement Exams are held in January. All students planning to attend Catholic High School will need to take the exam. Parents are encouraged to contact the Catholic high school of your choice for more information about the exams.

**Archdiocesan Performance Assessments**

Each year, St. Mary's School will administer the archdiocesan performance assessments as directed by the Catholic Schools Office. These assessments help create a picture of academic performance across the Archdiocese. Students will be assessed in the areas of religion, language arts, math, science, social studies, and world languages.

### **School Level Assessments**

Student growth will be monitored frequently throughout the school year using a balanced system of assessment, these include a variety of strategies. Students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade will be monitored using math unit tests and year end tests. Reading skills will be assessed in grades kindergarten through sixth grade using a variety of assessments, both formative (throughout the year or course) as well as summative (at the conclusion of the year or course.).

### **Academic Difficulties**

Teachers may ask students to stay after school for additional instruction and to monitor homework assignments if they feel additional support is needed. A teacher may assign a student to Academic Support or Homework Room after school where it will be necessary for the student to complete work.

An academic intervention team may be formed to establish a contract for a student who is having difficulties with academics. The contract will outline expectations for the student and establish learning goals. The academic intervention team will monitor the contract for a short period of time. If the student is completing work and showing adequate progress, the student may be released from the contract. If the student is not meeting the conditions of the contract and the student is not making adequate progress, further consequences may be considered.

### **Retention**

Under the conditions that it is believed necessary to retain a child in a grade for an additional year, parents will be notified before the end of the third quarter. A conference with parents, teacher, and principal will be held to discuss the child's progress. A decision will be made based on academic achievement and the child's maturity level. If the parent decides to send the child on to the next grade level despite the school's recommendation for retention, the parent will be asked to sign a waiver.

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks are selected by the school and approved by the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office in collaboration with the school. Students are responsible for the care of their books. Students will be assessed fines for unreasonable wear and tear of their books. Students will be asked to pay for any books that are lost throughout the school year. St. Mary's School participates in the Nebraska Textbook Loan Program. This program enables us to request books on loan from the Bellevue Public Schools. Parents may call the school office for more information about the textbook loan program.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are to reinforce learning in the classroom and to enhance the school curriculum. Plans for field trips will be coordinated with the principal and the school office and occur throughout the year.

Parents will receive a parent permission form. This form will include information about the means of transportation, any cost (no child will be denied for inability to pay), departure and return times, and purpose of the trip. Most trips are subsidized by Home and School funding. Parents must sign the permission form prior to the trip in order for their child to participate. We cannot accept emails or verbal permission over the phone except in extreme cases. Generally, students will wear their uniforms on field trips (dress of the day is indicated on the form). Field trips are a privilege and a student may be exempt from participation at the discretion of the teacher and principal based on academic and disciplinary reasons.

## **Graduation Requirements**

To graduate and be awarded a diploma, a student must have a passing semester grade in all subjects for all semesters from 7-8 grades. Remediation of failing semester grades will be accepted only through a program and instructor approved by the principal. When a student has been diagnosed as having a learning disability or debilitating medical condition, the principal may adapt the school's grading requirements as is deemed appropriate and necessary. If a student does not earn a diploma, he/she is not permitted to participate in graduation activities, including but not limited to the banquet, Graduation Mass, Graduation Ceremony and liturgical ministries of graduation Mass.

## **Discipline Philosophy**

Discipline is jointly shared by the student, parents, teachers, school personnel, and administration as well as the St. Mary's school community. Parents are expected to teach their children appropriate behavior expectations and model Christian behavior for their children.

### **A Philosophy of Instructing the Whole Child**

In keeping with St. Mary's tradition, our Christian community strives to be respectful and faithful servants. As members of this team, we exhibit honesty and responsibility in all we do.

*Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.* Romans 12:10

### **St. Mary's School community believes that RESPECT means:**

- accepting differences
- using positive and affirming language
- dealing peacefully with anger, insults, and disagreements
- honoring everyone's Circle of Grace

*God has given each of us a gift from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.* 1 Peter 4:10  
(CCC: 1880)

*Give your hands to serve and your hearts to love.* Mother Teresa

### **St. Mary's School community, as the eyes and hands of Christ, demonstrates SERVICE by**

- compassion for others
- responsibility for accomplishing tasks
- assisting those in need
- problem solving within our communities

*And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, but encouraging one another.* Hebrews 10:24-25 (CCC: 852)

*Behold, how good and pleasant it is when all dwell in unity.* Psalm 133:1

**St. Mary's School community believes that TEAMWORK means:**

- being patient and open-minded
- dealing peacefully with disagreements
- being a self-starter
- persevering

*I will walk by faith even when I cannot see.* 2 Corinthians 5:7 (CCC: 1924-26)

**St. Mary's School community demonstrates its FAITH by living as Jesus taught and reflecting his love**

**in:**

- words and actions
- full and active participation in the Mass and other prayer experiences

CCC: 2472, 1083, 2659-60

**General Conduct**

Positive discipline will be used and encouraged. Appropriate consequences for specific misbehavior will be determined by the teachers, principal, and pastor. (See the sections below for grade specific consequences.) No parent will be offered details of consequences given to any child other than their own. Each issue regarding misbehavior will be dealt with on an individual basis. Police and other legal authorities will be contacted when a violation of local, state or federal law occurs. Behavior and consequences are in effect when the students are in attendance during school days and while attending school sponsored events and activities. Please note that students are expected to have basic knowledge of appropriate conduct in a school community even before they attend school at St. Mary's.

General behavior expectations include but are not limited to:

- being courteous to everyone in our school and school community
- respecting the authority of school staff and personnel
- following the directions of school staff and personnel
- adhering to school safety rules
- being a witness to our Catholic faith by respecting the dignity of each individual and the teachings of the Catholic Church
- respectful speech and actions

Examples of inappropriate or irresponsible behaviors include but are not limited to:

- minor violations (tardiness, uniform violations, littering, being in unauthorized areas, running in the halls, disrespectful use of school materials).
- disrespect for authority
- misbehavior at Mass
- tampering with someone's locker or personal belongings
- fighting
- physical assault
- verbal assault
- harassment (written, verbal or physical gestures) note: if student behavior reaches the legal definition, law enforcement will be called
- obscene, vulgar, or suggestive language or gestures
- cheating, tampering with report cards, grades, teacher notes, or tests
- vandalism
- defacing or destroying property

- leaving school without permission
- truancy
- possession, or use of, or distribution of tobacco, drugs, or controlled substances
- possession, or use of, or threat of a weapon
- any involvement or association with gangs or gang related activity
- any unchristian behavior that is disrespectful or irresponsible, inappropriate, or behavior not mentioned above

### **Expectations and Consequences**

All students in grades Pre-K through grade 8 are expected to follow the Discipline Philosophy as explained in the introduction. This includes both at school, and any after school programs or activities. At times, there may be a need for consequences for behavior choices outside the expectations.

In the primary grades consequences will include:

- Teacher & student will discuss behavior
- Student will practice correct behavior
- Teacher may contact parent regarding behavior
- If further action is necessary, parent(s) may be asked to meet with the teacher and/or principal

In Grades 4-5 consequences will include:

- Heart to heart visit with student (tell me what happened, what were you thinking, what were your options, make a plan, and make a signal)
- 2nd time - student will write a note with teacher that will be sent home; staple to agenda- do not tear off agenda
- 3rd time- conference with parent, student, and teacher
- Student will lead conference
- If this continues, next step will be a conference with the student, parent, teacher and the principal
- Further disciplinary action is at the discretion of the principal and pastor. This may include:

In-school suspension

Out of school suspension

Voluntary withdrawal of the student or expulsion

In the Middle School (Grades 6-8) consequences will include:

- Discussion with the teacher to problem solve and strategize
- Note home to parents or guardians
- Service Opportunity/ Required Service
- Saturday School (7 am on one Saturday during the month)
- Parent meeting with the teacher and principal
- In School Suspension
- Out of School Suspension
- Behavior Adaptation Contract to be signed by the student and parents
- Voluntary withdrawal of the student
- Expulsion- voluntary withdrawal of the student may be offered at any point in the process.

All disciplinary action and consequences and the application of consequences regarding a student or family WILL NOT be shared with any third party unless required by law. All student records, student disciplinary records and their oversight are covered under the Federal Educational Records Privacy Act. (FERPA) The principal, staff and other St. Mary's employees are not obligated or authorized to share any student related information with other parents or students.

### **Saturday School**

Saturday School will be held as necessary on one Saturday during the month. The student may be asked to complete a Saturday School assignment that includes a description of the problem, a plan to solve further problems, and a course of action to follow on returning to school. Students will focus on solutions that work within the philosophy of being respectful followers of Jesus.

### **Parent/ Teacher/ Principal Meeting**

It is essential that parents and school personnel work together to resolve behavior problems. A meeting will be held after the student has had an opportunity to correct misbehavior through discussion with the teacher, notes home, service opportunities, and Saturday School. In the event a parent declines the invitation to meet, an in-school suspension will be warranted.

### **In-School Suspension**

A student who earns an in-school suspension (ISS) will report to school but will be isolated from his/her peers. The student will be responsible for all class work assigned for the day he or she has in-school suspension (ISS). The student may also be asked to complete a discipline assignment while he or she is in ISS. The student will be supervised in the ISS room across from the Library away from his/her peers. The student must leave immediately after dismissal. The student may not participate in any school sponsored extracurricular events or activities on the day of in-school suspension. The parent will be notified in writing by the principal before ISS is implemented.

### **Out of School Suspension**

Out of school suspension is a temporary exclusion of a student from school and school sponsored activities and events. In serious situations, it may be necessary to discipline by using out of school suspension (OSS). No out of school suspension will be given without a conference with parents and consultation with the pastor.

When an out of school suspension is warranted, the following procedures will be followed:

The student will be immediately removed from the classroom and the principal will escort him or her to the office. The principal will investigate the situation by meeting with the person or persons making the complaint and the student accused of the behavior. The parents, teacher, and principal will meet to discuss and establish the conditions under which the student may return to school. During the out of school suspension, the student will be responsible for completing all work missed during the out of school suspension.

All out of school suspensions longer than three (3) days must be reported to the Nebraska State Department of Education.

### **Behavior Adaptation Contract**

A behavior contract will be drawn up explaining the conditions under which the student may attend school at St. Mary's. The contract will detail the actions a student will take to learn new behaviors or more appropriate behavior, or the steps needed to improve self-discipline skills. A behavior contract must be signed by the student, parent(s), and a school representative. The pastor will be informed of any Behavior Adaptation Contract.

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion is the permanent exclusion of a student from the school and school activities. Expulsion will be used only

when all other means of discipline have failed.

Reasons for expulsion may include but are not limited to:

- Behavior of the student which presents a moral danger to other students.
- Behavior that is incorrigible\* (\*incorrigible means the student has been corrected several times, and been through the list of consequences, but his/her behavior has not changed).

It is the responsibility of the administration to notify the public-school authorities and the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools whenever a student is expelled. A record of evidence justifying the expulsion of the student must be available to the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools.

Emergency suspension may be recommended for as long as the student's presence may be a danger to himself/herself and/or others or until all the facts are obtained and verified.

### **Offensive Conduct and Harassment**

Offensive conduct or harassment based on a person's gender, sexual orientation, race, color, age, religion, appearance, ethnicity, culture, or disability is prohibited. Please note that the age of a student is taken into consideration when determining if the examples below fit the legal definition of sexual harassment.

Examples of offensive conduct or harassment may include but are not limited to:

- explicit and offensive sexual references or gestures
- unwelcome physical contact or unwelcome sexual advances (physical or verbal)
- language, of any kind, including graffiti, epithets, vulgar or profane jokes, or teasing which is demeaning or disparaging to others.

A person who has a complaint of offensive behavior should report such behavior to the teacher, who will inform the principal. If uncomfortable reporting to the teacher or principal, the person should inform the pastor.

All complaints will be thoroughly investigated. Based on the results of the investigation, appropriate corrections will be taken, up to and including dismissal or expulsion.

Under no circumstances will the school tolerate retaliation against a person who complains in good faith of offensive conduct or harassment.

The school will assist those who have been falsely accused of offensive conduct or harassment by making the false complaint known to appropriate parties. Disciplinary action will be taken if evidence indicates a person purposely filed a false complaint.

All disciplinary action and consequences and the application of consequences regarding a student or family WILL NOT be shared with any third party unless required by law. All student records, student disciplinary records and their oversight are covered under the Federal Educational Records Privacy Act. (FERPA) The principal, staff and other St. Mary's employees are not obligated or authorized to share any student related information with other parents or students.

### **Anti-Bullying Policy**

To maintain a safe and secure learning environment, the administration and staff will implement strategies and practices to encourage respect, cooperation, understanding and acceptance of others as we are taught in the teachings of Jesus and the Catholic Church.

To be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

(stopbullying.gov, 2015)

Behavior that infringes on the dignity and safety of a student will not be tolerated. A student shall not intimidate another student through behaviors which may include but are not limited to: hitting, shoving, tripping, teasing, name calling, social isolation, and manipulation.

Any student who believes they are a current victim of bullying should report the incident(s) to a staff member as soon as possible. The principal, counselor, and teachers are expected to intervene immediately when they see a bullying incident. Each complaint of bullying will be promptly investigated. This applies to students on school grounds, at school sponsored events, or being transported to or from school sponsored events.

After an investigation, students who are engaging in bullying practices may be subject to such forms of disciplinary actions but not limited to:

- An apology
- Note to parent
- Saturday School
- In-school suspension
- Out of school suspension
- Expulsion
- Turning the case over to legal authorities

Disciplinary actions for bullying will be dealt with on an individual basis. The disciplinary actions listed above may or may not be administered in the order as listed. Students may receive disciplinary action in either a single form or combination of forms.

The complainant will be notified of the findings of the investigation and that appropriate action has been taken.

Retaliation against a person who reports, is thought to report, files a complaint, or participates in the investigation is prohibited. Suspected retaliation should be reported to a staff member and the principal. Making intentionally false reports about bullying incidents is also prohibited. Retaliation and intentionally false reports may result in disciplinary actions.

#### **Cooperation with Law Enforcement and Other Governmental Agencies**

Administrators will grant access in accord with the expressed wishes of the student's parents or legal guardians. Exceptions to parental wishes must be made in cases of warrants for arrest and in the cases of suspected child abuse as defined by Nebraska statute. Teachers and staff are mandatory reporters in the case of child abuse or neglect under penalty of law, St. Mary's staff will report to the proper agency or authorities when a disclosure is made.

Police Department procedures indicate that schools will be notified prior to arrival of police being in their buildings, of the intentions of the police visit to the school, and to request access to a student.

Upon notification of the police visit, the administration will determine the purpose of the visit. **Please Note;** if police officers have a warrant for a student, the administration must grant access to the student regardless of parental wishes. If police officers wish access to a student for investigative purposes related to suspected child abuse, or child neglect, the administrator must grant access to the student without the custodial parent or legal guardian's permission or without prior notification by the law enforcement agency.

## COMMUNICATION

### Newsletter

Monthly: Monthly calendar and monthly lunch/breakfast menu will be sent home in the weekly electronic communication the last week of the month for the upcoming month or emailed to families as indicated by families preferred method of communication. Families may request paper copies of these communications.

Weekly: The weekly newsletter with upcoming events, updated calendar, and other information will be sent home in the communication envelope or emailed to parents as indicated in parents preferred communication method.

Please sign and return the communication envelope the next day. The youngest child enrolled in the school will bring the envelope home from the school. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to review the information in the communication envelope.

### Classroom Visitation

Parents are welcome to visit the classrooms to better understand the classroom environment. Such visits must be pre arranged with the teacher. All visitors must sign in at the school office. All visitors must have a visitor's badge before proceeding to the classroom. Parents may drop off lunches and other items in the school office. School personnel will call students to the office to pick-up the items so that instructional time is not disrupted in the classroom.

### Confidentiality

Parents are asked to inform the school of personal situations which may have an impact on a child's learning by sending an email, note, phone call, or conference with the teacher and/or principal. School personnel will only share sensitive information about a student with faculty and staff who need to know with consent from the parent.

Personal information shared by a student with teacher or other school personnel through any means (written or verbal) will be treated in a confidential manner unless, in the professional judgment of the teacher or school personnel, disclosing the information is necessary to protect the student's health and safety. The teacher or school personnel will report concerns to the principal, who will act as warranted by the situation. This policy includes information shared in a student's journal, writings, assignments, and class discussion.

### Teacher Involvement

Teacher involvement roles include:

- Initiating positive contacts with parents through notes, e-mails, and phone calls about a child
- Providing parent-teacher conferences
- Nurturing parents' involvement through newsletters, conversations, and meetings

- Informing and consulting with parents about their child's progress, acknowledging teacher and learner limitations; including parents in formulating goals, strategies, and follow-up
- Encouraging parents' teaching activities at-home which promote their child's educational growth

### **Parent/Teacher Communication**

Parents who wish to speak with their student's teacher may telephone the school office and leave a voicemail for the teacher or email the teacher at school. Teachers will respond to parent contacts within 24 hours during the school week. If you do not receive a return contact, please call again as the teacher may not have received your voicemail/email (teacher was out ill, voicemail/email system not functioning properly, etc.).

On instructional days, teachers are required to be in their classrooms at 7:45 a.m. for supervision of students. Teachers are also assigned supervision duties from 3:15 to 3:30 p.m. each day. If you need to speak with a teacher in person regarding your student or a classroom situation, please call and make an appointment to speak with him or her. Please do not drop in and expect the teacher to meet with you during the time that he or she is responsible for supervising students. The teacher will be unable to give you or the situation his or her full attention or leave the classroom for a private discussion at that time.

Parents who wish to speak with the principal may telephone the school office or e-mail the principal directly. The principal will respond to parent contacts by the next business day. Parents who wish to speak with the principal in person are asked to schedule an appointment.

### **Resolution of Problems**

Communication and collaboration between parents/guardians and teachers/school personnel is essential for a student's achievement. If at any time a problem arises, the parent/guardian must first go to the teacher or school personnel to discuss the problem. If a resolution to the problem cannot be reached, the principal should be contacted. A meeting of the principal, teacher/school personnel, and parents/guardians will be arranged to discuss and resolve the matter. The principal may arrange a meeting with the pastor, teacher/school personnel, and parents/guardians.

When parents are seriously dissatisfied with an aspect of the school's program or operations, which the administration deems as integral to or in the best interest of the school, they should exercise their option of choosing another school. When the dissatisfaction results in continued agitation on the part of the parents, the administration may exercise the school's right to withdraw permission for enrollment of the child or children.

Parents are encouraged to be trusting of the teacher's professional competence and supportive of the teacher's role as an authority essential to the effective instruction of groups of students.

Parents who have a grievance about the school program, student performance, teacher expectations or classroom related decisions:

- Are asked to contact the teacher in writing regarding classroom issues and the administration of non-classroom issues.
- The teacher and/or principal will respond within one business day to answer any questions (the home telephone numbers of teachers and staff members will not be given out by school personnel).
- The principal will, at his or her discretion, meet with both parents to assist in resolution of the concern if their concerns are not resolved through discussion with the teacher.

The principal is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school, and in accord with that responsibility, has the

authority to make final decisions regarding the resolutions of concerns. The principal, with the approval of the pastor, may pursue legal means to protect faculty, staff or other employees from verbal threats or harassment.

## **SCHOOL AND FAMILY**

### **Student Records**

The student's cumulative record is kept on file in the school office. Parents/guardians and authorized school personnel may view the cumulative files.

The following guidelines will be used to access and disclose information in the cumulative file:

- Parents may view the file one day after submitting a written request to view the file. An administrator must be present when a parent/guardian views a student's record.
- The school will consider a written request to amend the records. The records will be amended as approved by the principal.
  
- Parents must provide a written consent for release of records except for disclosure to other schools' personnel with "the need to know", or disclosure upon legal requirements to provide student information. ▪ St. Mary's School will release student records of eighth grade students enrolling in high school upon the request of the enrolling high school without parental consent.

### **Custody-Parent**

It is assumed that both parents have equal rights until and unless we receive a copy of the official court documents stating otherwise. These will be kept in the student's permanent file. If a child is living with someone other than his/her legal parents, copies of the legal papers are to be on file in the student's file. If a parent has visiting privileges, it will be assumed that both parents will receive copies of the report card, parent/teacher conferences and other pertinent school communications unless specifically ordered not to do so by the custodial parent. **We cannot enforce any provision unless we have the legal documentation.**

### **Rights of the Non-Custodial Parents to School Information**

With respect to non-custodial parents, in the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to academic records and other school related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that no information be given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

The school will not release a child to a non-custodial parent unless asked to do so in writing by the custodial parent. If custody has been decided, the student may leave with either parent unless a court order to the contrary is provided.

All divorced parents are to furnish the school with a copy of the divorce decree pertaining to custody of the child. Court orders may be presented to the principal by either or both parents.

### **Faculty**

The teaching staff of St. Mary's School is certified by the Nebraska State Department of Education. The school is within the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese of Omaha and is accredited by the State of Nebraska and Cognia. Faculty members attend regular monthly staff meetings. All staff members attend in-service training throughout the year.

### **Educational Advisory Board**

The St. Mary's Educational Advisory Board (EAB) is appointed by the principal with the pastor's approval. The EAB reviews and makes recommendations regarding all aspects of formal education subject to the guidance from the Archdiocesan Educational Advisory Board. The Board serves in an advisory role.

### **Home and School Association**

The Home and School Association consists of all parents and school teachers. The purpose is to promote a better understanding, collaboration, and community building between the school and home. It is not a policy making organization. All parents are highly encouraged to attend meetings and participate in Home and School family activities.

### **Volunteers**

Volunteers are always welcomed and needed in the school environment. Volunteers who are interested in helping are encouraged to call the school office or the Home and School officers. All volunteers are required to attend Safe Environment training, as mandated by the Archdiocese of Omaha. No adult may work in the building or participate in field trips and other activities until they have received their Safe Environment certification and passed a background check. Volunteers are required to check in at the office when school is in session and they must wear a visitor's badge while in the building. All St. Mary's families are required to have 20 volunteer hours for the year towards school projects, events, classroom activities, etc. (10 for single parent families). See the Volunteer Program Handbook for unfulfilled service hour buyout and additional information on volunteer opportunities.

Beginning in January 2024, any unfulfilled service hours will be billed at an hourly rate and added to your Facts account as a service fee.

## **UNIFORMS**

All students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade are required to wear uniforms. Dennis Uniform Company is the preferred provider as they meet all the uniform requirements. However, Target, JCPenney, Kohl's, and a variety of other stores may also have uniform requirements that meet the below specifications. Parents may purchase uniform pieces at any store. The school has the right to require all pieces to meet uniform requirements.

### **Girls**

- A. White or navy blouses (no lace) with a lay down collar and buttons, white or navy or hunter green polo shirt (long or short sleeve). All tops must be tucked into where the waistband or belt is visible. A solid white T-shirt may be worn under the blouse.
- B. Girls in grades 4-8 may wear blue/green plaid skirts. Navy skorts may be worn in 4 & 5 and Khaki skirts may be worn in middle school. All skirts must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee. Students will be asked to change skirts that are too short.
- C. Girls in grades K-3 may wear blue/green plaid jumpers. They may also wear blue/green plaid or navy blue skorts. All jumpers and skorts must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee. Students will be asked to change skorts or jumpers that are too short. K-3 cannot wear skirts.
- D. Slacks: Girls in grades K-5 may wear navy blue slacks or cords. Girls in grades 6-8 may wear khaki slacks.

Jeggings or leggings may not be worn.

- E. Slacks must be plain tailored – (see Dennis Uniform pants). Slacks must be straight legged, no flared legs, solid color, no excessive stitching or embroidery or beads, no leg loops, cargo pants, patch pockets, no more than 2 standard pockets in the front and back, no hip huggers or lowriders. Pants must be comfortable for school activities. No leggings are permitted. Belts must be worn when pants have belt loops. Belts must be solid brown or black leather or leather look.
- F. Girls may wear solid navy, black, hunter green or white cardigan sweaters. Girls may wear St. Mary’s sweatshirts or solid blue navy sweatshirts. Girls must wear the uniform blouse or polo under their sweatshirt. No hoodies can be worn in the classrooms. **Sweater length is at the discretion of the parents with permission from the administration.**
- G. Girls must wear solid white or navy-blue socks. No show socks are permitted but must be of the same color. White or navy opaque tights may be worn in the colder months under a skirt/jumper. Tights and leggings must be a solid color with no prints or decorations. Please, no burn-out or mesh insert leggings.
- H. Jewelry is not encouraged as it is easily broken and lost. Girls may wear the following types of earrings: studs, small hoops or post earrings. Earrings that hang off the ear more than ¼” are not permitted. Multiple earrings are not encouraged. Watches, small religious or medical bracelets, medals or necklaces are permitted. Jewelry of family significance or for mental health purposes may be allowed with permission from the administration. Administration reserves the right to make accommodations for jewelry that does not comply with these policies.
- I. Haircuts must be appropriate and neatly styled. No eccentric styles, cuts, or colors are permitted. Headbands and bows must be uniform colors or solid black or brown. Exemptions or deviation from the hair guidelines must be approved by the principal and pastor.
- J. Make-up is not permitted, unless for a special event or special activity. Students may wear clear nail polish. Students will be asked to remove colored nail polish or make-up.
- K. Shoes may be multicolored, but parents are asked to strive for conservative coloring. They may not have graphics or words on the shoes. Shoes must not leave black marks on the floor. Shoes with flashing lights or rollers are not permitted. Sandals and crocs and other open heel or toe shoes are not permitted for safety reasons. Socks must be worn at all times. Shoes are expected to be tied at all times.
- L. **Pajama bottoms may not be worn at any time.**

## Boys

- A. White or navy-blue shirt with a lay down collar, white, navy or hunter green polo shirt (long or short sleeved). Undershirts must be solid white and must not be visible under the shirt. All shirts must be tucked in so that the belt may be seen.
- B. Pants for boys: Grades K -5 wear navy blue dress slacks. Grade 6, 7, 8 wear khaki dress slacks. Pants must be straight legged, no flares. Pants must be in solid colors with no excessive stitching, no leg loops, patch pockets, or cargo pants or low riders or baggy pants. Belts must be worn with pants that have belt loops. Belts must be solid brown or black leather or leather look.
- C. Cardigan sweaters may be solid navy blue, white, hunter green or black. Students may also wear St. Mary’s sweatshirts or plain, solid navy sweatshirts. **No hoodies. Sweater length is at the discretion of the parents with permission of the administration.**
- D. Socks must be worn at all times. Socks must be navy blue or white. No show socks are permitted, but must be of the same color.
- E. No earrings are permitted unless for a cultural reason. Discrete religious and medical bracelets may be worn. F. Hair should be neat and well-trimmed. Hair should be off the ears and above the collar. Bangs must be above the eyebrows. Extremes in hairstyles or color are prohibited; (examples may be but are not limited to shaved lettering, extreme hair colors, and tails). Exemptions or deviations from the policy must be approved by the principal and pastor.
- G. Shoes may be multicolored, but parents are asked to strive for conservative coloring. They may not have graphics or words on the shoes. Shoes must not leave black marks on the floor. Shoes with flashing lights or rollers are not permitted. Sandals and crocs and other open heel or toe shoes are not permitted for safety reasons. Socks

must be worn at all times. Shoes are expected to be always tied.

### **Uniform General Guidelines**

- Uniforms are to be worn on all school days except for days determined by the administration. ▪ Homeroom teachers will be responsible for checking for uniform violations.
- Jeans and spirit day shirts may be worn only on designated days.
- Clothing must be comfortable and allow movement for school activities.
- No hoodies are permitted to be worn in the classrooms.
- Administrative discretion may be used in determining if a student is following the uniform code. ▪ Body piercings are not permitted unless approved for cultural reasons or as approved by the administration. ▪ Walking shorts may be worn from August until October and April until the end of school. K – 5<sup>th</sup> grade can wear navy blue dress shorts. Grades 6, 7, and 8 grade can wear khaki dress shorts. Shorts are worn with uniform tops. Shorts should be no longer than just above the knee and no shorter than 2 inches above the knee. Biking shorts, tights, leggings, mini shorts, or sports shorts are not permitted. Belts must be worn if the shorts have belt loops.
- Watches should be basic timepieces. Smart watches or fitness watches are not permitted unless by special request by a parent in writing and approved by the administration. St. Mary's will not be responsible for loss or/damage to jewelry or watches.

### **PE Uniforms Guidelines**

- Grades PK – 3: Students wear their school uniform and tennis shoes. Girls should wear shorts under their uniform jumper.
- Grades 4 – 8: Students may wear appropriate length athletic shorts and t-shirt to wear in PE class. Clothing must be loose enough to be comfortable for movement. Clothing must be appropriate (no joggers, “fashion shorts” or yoga pants). Shorts length must be mid-thigh or longer (girls may wear boy athletic shorts which tend to be knee length). T-shirt length must come to the waist or longer.

### **Non-Uniform Day Guidelines**

- **Spirit Day** – On designated days, students may wear spirit shirts with their uniform pants or skirt. Students may wear jeans with their spirit shirt only if they donate the designated amount (usually \$1). The monies collected go to a charity determined by the principal. Jeans must be neat, clean, and free of holes. No rivets, cargo pants, lowriders, hip huggers, or baggy pants are permitted.
- **Casual Dress Day** – On designated days, students may wear casual dress. Casual dress requires that all shirts have sleeves. Shirts with lettering or graphics must be appropriate for school. Pants must be neat and clean, (no pajama bottoms). Shoes must be appropriate for PE and recess. No sandals or crocs are permitted even on casual dress days.
- **Dress-Up Day** – On designated days, students may wear dress attire. Dress-up days are meant to be special. Students are asked to wear clothing appropriate for a reception or family celebration. Students may wear uniforms if they choose not to dress up. Leggings are not permitted on dress-up day.
- **Birthday Dress-Up Day** – Students may choose to wear an outfit for their birthday. Students may wear a special shirt and jeans for their birthday, or they may dress up following the guidelines for dress-up day. If the birthday falls on a weekend, a day school is not in session or over the summer, please consult your child's homeroom teacher to arrange a birthday dress day.

The administration reserves the right to ask students to change clothing that does not comply with the school dress code. Parents may be asked to bring a change of clothing for their children, so students can change into appropriate clothing. Uniform violations will be recorded for a student. Additionally, St. Mary's will not be liable for any injury, loss or theft of jewelry or accessories included in the uniform policy.

### **Pre-Kindergarten Dress Code**

Pre-Kindergarten students do not wear a uniform, however, please follow these guidelines: comfortable; washable; appropriate for crafts and outdoor play; allows for self-dressing. No make-up or nail polish. Shoes should be closed-toe shoes. Tennis shoes work best. Dress shoes can be worn on special occasions. The Pre Kindergarten teacher will review more details on the dress code the first few days of school.

## **SCHOOL SCHEDULES**

### **School Office Hours**

Office hours are from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm on school days or by appointment.

### **State Requirements**

The state of Nebraska requires 1032 hours of instructional time for elementary students and 400 hundred instructional hours for Kindergarten students. St. Mary's School will meet and exceed those requirements.

In compliance with the state requirements, St. Mary's School has implemented the following policies:

1. Religion classes are an integral part of the instructional program.
2. All field trips are planned as part of the instructional program and must incorporate instructional standards.
3. Special events scheduled during the school day must meet instructional standards and have an educational purpose.

### **School Day Start Time**

School begins at 7:50 am for all grades (PK-8). Teachers will be on duty for drop-off at 7:35 am. Students arriving before 7:35am will be sent to Extended Day Care. Students are not permitted on the playground for line-up until 7:35 am. Cars are not permitted on the playground from 6:30 am to 3:10 pm during school days.

### **School Day Dismissal Time**

PK-8th grade dismisses at 3:20 pm.

### **School Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures**

- PK-1st grade will use the Clay Street zone at Pick-Up.
- If any PK-1st grade student has older siblings, they too will use Clay Street.
- If your child can not buckle themselves in at Pick-Up and require assistance from parents, we are happy to transfer that younger student's family to the gym lot zone to facilitate this.
- Parents are not to use 23rd Street to enter the drop off line as this causes traffic congestion. In the spirit of community cooperation, we are thankful for your assistance with this procedure.

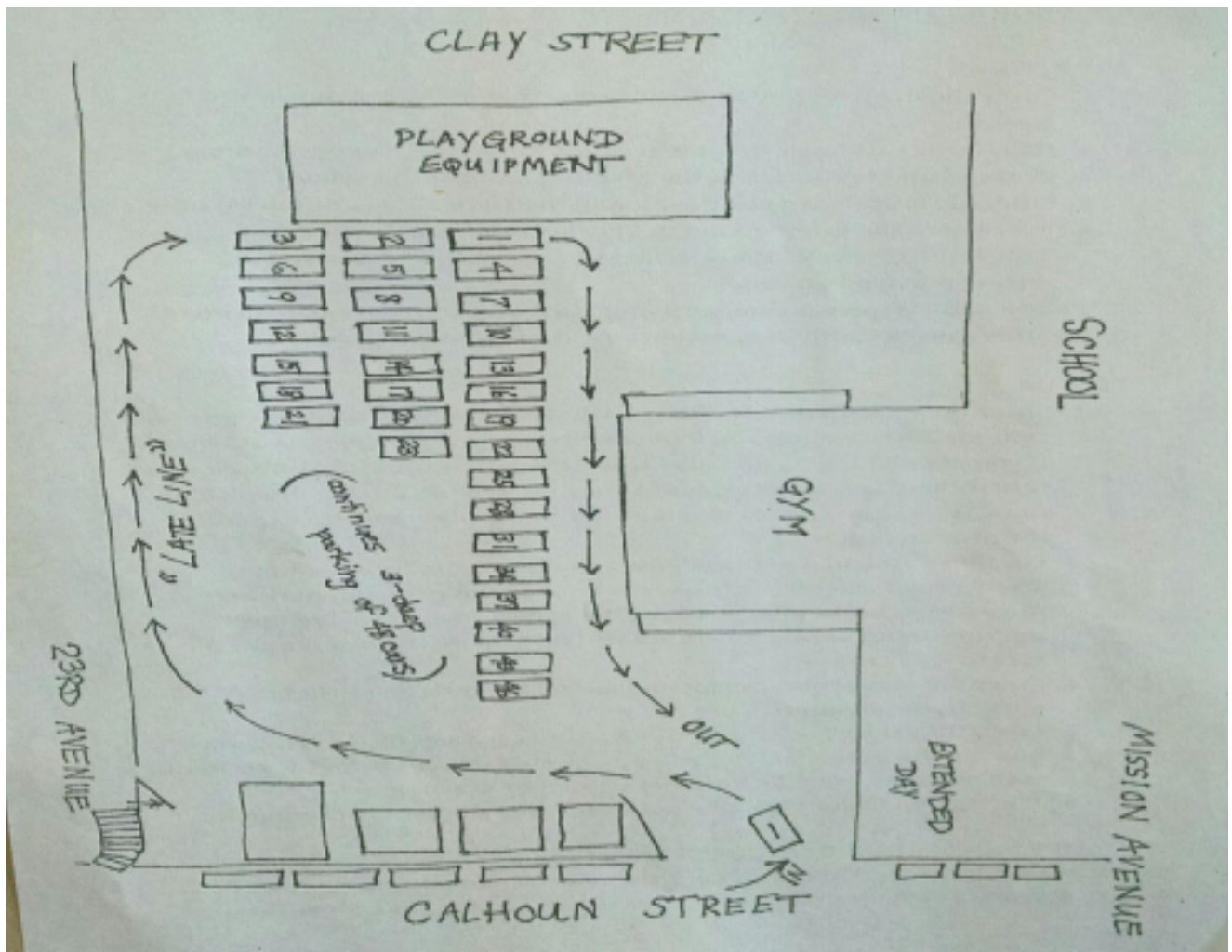
### **Drop Off Procedures:**

- Enter the drop off line at the intersection of 24th Ave and Clay Street. (near Sarpy County Museum).

- Proceed up Clay Street to the loading zone at the school.
- Students must leave driver's car using the right-side car door(s) only.
- Proceed to the intersection of Clay and Mission Avenue.

**Pick-Up Procedures:**

- Enter the pick-up line at either 24th Avenue/Clay Street or 24th Ave/Calhoun Street as assigned. ▪ New families are asked to display your name plate to help expedite the pick-up process for the first month. ▪ For those assigned to the gym lot, you may access the parking lot at/after 3:10pm. PE classes may be using the parking lot up until 3:10 pm – there will be orange cones out until it is safe to enter the lot.
- Enter the school parking lot and follow the instructions of the parking attendant(s).
- FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL STUDENTS, all cars will be loaded before any car leaves the lot. You will be directed out of the lot by a school staff member (see the back of this sheet for diagram).



*Remember, these procedures are to help keep your children safe.*

**Liturgical Celebrations**

Central to our Catholic Identity is the idea that we are a community of faith. Liturgical celebrations enhance the catechesis of students and staff and will be provided on a regular basis. All School Masses will be scheduled weekly. Students will be given opportunities to serve as lectors, in music ministry, and as altar servers according to age appropriateness. Buddy classes sit together for Mass and participate in service activities in the classroom, school, or wider community.

Mass Schedule: Begins at 8:30 am on the day of the week as follows:

Every Wednesday of the month is All School Mass Day

Holy Days of Obligation that fall on a school day will be observed as an All School Mass Day instead of the ordinary weekly All School Mass.

### **Extended Care**

An Extended Care Program is offered to all St. Mary's students. The hours of operation are 6:30-7:35 am and 3:20–5:30 pm when school is in session. Extended Care is closed when the school is not in session. Registration forms are available in the school office, school webpage and at the extended care room.

Medications in the school office are for school hours only and are not available to Extended Day or Breakfast Program staff. Please contact the Extended Day Director for the health information guidelines of the program.

### **Hot Lunch Program**

St. Mary's School participates in the National School Lunch Program and is a satellite of the Westside Public School Food Service Program and follows the nutritional guidelines set by the national school lunch program. Free and reduced breakfasts and lunches are offered to families who qualify or to all families for a cost. Families will receive information about the hot lunch program at registration and may also pick up information in the school office in August.

The breakfast program runs from 6:30-7:35 am. The cost for breakfast is \$3.00. Children enter through the east gym door along the ramp by ringing the doorbell.

Hot lunch costs \$3.25 per meal including milk/juice. An extra entree (hot pack) \* costs \$1.90. Children can purchase milk or juice for \$0.50 a carton. The choices are white or chocolate milk and orange or apple juice. Prices are subject to change and will be approved by the Nebraska Department of Education by the beginning of each school year.

Menus are sent home the last week of the month for the upcoming month and are also available on the school website and Facts. Children can purchase breakfast/lunch, bring cold lunch and/or can purchase milk or juice. **When a student brings cold lunch, it cannot include commercial items from fast food restaurants; pop is not permitted with any lunch. Parents are also not allowed to bring their child (ren) lunch from a fast food restaurant. No Exceptions. Allowing food from fast food restaurants into the cafeteria could jeopardize our participation in the free and reduced lunch program which benefits many of our families.**

St. Mary's participates in the National School Lunch Program. The new application guidelines come out in July. Forms are always available and can be filled out anytime should your needs change throughout the year. Contact the Lunch Director or the school office for an application. Reduced breakfast costs \$0.30 and reduced lunch costs \$0.40 (subject to change).

Every family has a lunch account through FACTS. The account is used by the lunch staff to input the children's daily charges for breakfast and lunch. The finance office typically imports the charges from into the family FACTS account on a weekly basis. In FACTS, these charges are found in the "Prepay Accounts" section under "Hot Lunch". Parents are able to load their "Hot Lunch" accounts with money and then the account is debited as breakfast, lunch or milk charges are

entered. The school asks that you monitor the “Hot Lunch” account and continue to add money as needed to maintain a positive balance.

The school is always in need of parent volunteers to help serve lunch. Volunteering for lunch counts as 2 hours toward your service hour commitment. Volunteers usually serve one day every week, but the school is also able to schedule you every other week if needed. There is a Sign-Up Genius form found on this website where parents/grandparents can sign up to volunteer to serve lunch.

#### Lunchroom Rules

- Students are expected to use appropriate table manners.
- Students are to raise their hand when they need assistance.
- Students are permitted to talk during lunch. Students are expected to carry on conversations at their assigned table using appropriate volume.
- Students will ask permission to leave their tables to use the restroom, get an extra milk, etc. ▪ Students will eat their own lunches. **TRADING LUNCHES IS NOT PERMITTED.** We have added a sharing table that the children are welcome to use following the guidelines set by the lunch room director. ▪ Students will be responsible for cleaning up their tables before they are dismissed from their tables. ▪ Students will participate in prayer at the end of lunch and be quiet when directed by the teachers. ▪ Students will not be permitted to bring candy, glass bottles, or soft drinks into the lunchroom in compliance with the school Wellness Policy.

Food intolerances are not considered a medical food allergy. An intolerance is characterized by the body lacking a chemical needed to digest certain food (usually resulting in gastrointestinal symptoms). An allergy is characterized by an immune system reaction and can be life-threatening.

Please note that nut items are not served on the elementary school menus by the Westside Community School District. **It is the responsibility of the parent to preview any school hot lunches ordered for safety if their child has a food allergy or other medical condition:** [MealViewer Schools](#) (“Allergens” filter tab to left of menu).

**Special Hot Lunch Meals:** If a medical meal accommodation is needed for your student due to allergies or other medical conditions, a licensed healthcare provider must complete the Medical Statement form [HERE](#). Please submit the completed Medical Statement to the hot lunch coordinator.

**Milk Substitutions:** **Parents** may request a [fluid milk substitute](#) for a child with an intolerance, medical or special dietary needs. The non-dairy product that is offered as part of the reimbursable school meal must meet the nutrient standards established by the USDA (water, juice, etc. do not meet those requirements). Please complete the parent milk substitution form [HERE](#) and submit it to the hot lunch coordinator or contact the school office. A new request must be provided each school year.

### **Healthy School Environment/ Wellness Policy**

St. Mary’s School recognizes that the school plays a critical role in creating a healthy environment for the prevention of childhood obesity and combating problems associated with poor nutrition and lack of physical activity. This policy requires all members of the school and community to maintain an environment that enhances maximum student potential. Feedback and review are encouraged and welcomed from all stakeholders.

#### **Nutrition Education**

The primary goal of nutrition education is to influence students’ eating behaviors. St. Mary’s school will promote nutrition education throughout students’ PK-8 educational program. Nutrition education is incorporated into a variety of curriculum areas. These curriculum experiences provide the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy food choices for a lifetime.

Nutrition Education Goal- All students will participate in classes on nutritional health and good eating habits. These lessons are to be included in the Physical Education classes and in the science curriculum. Teachers and staff will be familiar with the goals and monitor activities in the classroom. All grades will comply with NDE Rule 10 code sections 004.02A and 004.03A.

**Physical Activity:**

The primary goals are to offer opportunities for students to experience a variety of physical activities and to teach the value of a consistent fitness program for better health, academic success and general personal well-being. Schools will promote opportunities for physical activity throughout the school day and during existing after-school programs. Physical activity, health and fitness education are incorporated throughout a students' PK-8 educational program.

Physical Activity Goal:

All students will participate in regularly scheduled Physical Education classes in compliance with NDE Rule 10 code 004.02A for grades K-6 and 004.03A for grades 6-8.

**Nutrition Standards:**

Students' lifelong health and nutritious eating habits are greatly influenced by the types and choices of foods and beverages available to them. School reimbursable meals meet the federal program requirements and nutrition standards. Staff will promote archdiocesan standards and provide information relative to foods and beverages sold or served to students outside of the school meal programs. Fast food or commercially prepared lunches may not be brought in their branded packaging.

**Candy, Gum, and Soda/Pop and Energy Drinks**

Students are not permitted to bring candy, gum, soda/pop, or energy drinks to school. Students may bring candy to school for special activities as determined by school personnel. Gum chewing is not permitted on school grounds.

**Other School-Based Activities and Goals:**

St. Mary's School promotes a school environment which provides consistent wellness messages that are conducive to healthy eating and being physically active as well as mentally healthy.

Other Wellness Goal(s):

Students will have access to resources to support mental health and social and emotional wellbeing through the following: Catholic Charities School Mental Health Program when indicated by referral or request.

Classroom instruction using Friendly as a regular part of the religion, science or health curriculum. School nursing services as needed or referred.

**Delinquent School Lunch Account Policy.**

Family FACTS "Hot Lunch" prepay accounts should maintain a positive balance if students are ordering lunch. If the account becomes negative, the parents will receive email notices.

All students can order hot breakfast or lunch and will be fed no matter their lunch account status, however, no extra milks or hot packs (more than one entrée) will be given to the student if there is a negative balance. When the administration determines that the account has become excessively delinquent, a meeting may be required with the family, school finance and principal.

Free and Reduced applications are always available and may be filled out anytime during the year, especially should

financial status or family sizes change. Applications are confidential. Once a family qualifies for free or reduced priced meals they stay eligible for the remainder of the school year no matter if their financial or family status changes.

List of school officials who have authority and responsibility for compliance with each policy: Principal, Dr. Trish Wallinger  
Pastor, Father Lydel Lape  
School Nurse or Health Coordinator, Nurse Bridgette Laney  
Lunch Program Coordinator, Mrs. Becky Billings

## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The USDA "And Justice for All" poster is displayed at each feeding site in a location that is visible to students during meal service. Nebraska Department of Education, Nutrition Services 05-11

The wellness policy is published in the Parent Handbook, on the school website and available by request from the school office.

The school and the lunch program comply with all of the policies and requirements of the School Wellness Policy and the information contained will be updated annually. St. Mary's School has made measurable and appropriate progress toward the goals contained in the SWP and is comparable to the Healthier Generations Wellness Policy and uses language similar to or as defined by the Nebraska Department of Education for compliance.

## **PROCEDURE FOR ACCEPTING AND FILING COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION**

## **IN NEBRASKA SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS**

1. Right to File a Complaint. Any person alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability has a right to file a complaint within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory action.
2. Acceptance. All complaints, written or verbal, shall be accepted by the School Food Authority (SFA) and forwarded to the Administrator of the Nebraska Department of Education – Nutrition Services within five days. It is necessary that the information be sufficient to determine the identity of the agency or individual toward which the complaint is directed, and to indicate the possibility of a violation. Anonymous complaints shall be handled as any other complaint.
3. Verbal Complaints. If a complainant makes the allegation verbally or through the telephone conversation and refuses or is not inclined to place such allegations in writing, the person to whom the allegations are made shall write up the elements of the complaint for the complainant. Every effort should be made to have the complainant provide the following information:
  - a. Name, address and telephone number or other means of contacting the complainant.
  - b. The specific location and name of the entity delivering the program service or benefit.
  - c. The nature of the incident(s) or action(s) that lead the complainant to feel discrimination was a factor.
  - d. The basis on which the complainant feels discrimination exists (race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability).
  - e. The names, titles and addresses of persons who may have knowledge of the discriminatory action(s).
  - f. The date(s) during which the alleged discriminatory action occurred, or if continuing, the duration of such actions.

### **Weather Schedule**

St. Mary's School will follow the Bellevue Public Schools for closing of school for snow days. School closing announcements will be made on KMTV 3, WOWT 6, and KETV 7. KFAB radio will also announce closings. Text notifications will be sent to families that have a cell phone. In 2016-2017, this is automatic. Prior to this year, families had to sign-up to receive the text notifications and can be added to the distribution list at any time by calling the office.

In case of severe weather which develops during the school day, listen to local radio stations and T.V. stations for announcements. In cases of severe weather that occur during the school day, students will remain in school until it is safe for dismissal or a parent comes to pick up their children. Parents are required to sign children out in the office. Parents always have the option of not sending children to school on a day when severe weather is forecast or developing.

When a tornado watch is given, staff will monitor the situation. If a tornado warning is issued, the children will be placed in a safe, sheltered area. Children will not be dismissed until an 'all clear' signal is sounded. It is not recommended that anyone leave the school after a tornado warning has been issued; therefore, children will not be permitted to leave until the school receives an all clear signal.

## **EXTREME WEATHER GUIDELINES AND AIR QUALITY**

The opportunity for fresh air and outdoor play or exercise is an important part of a child's school day. Students benefit from outdoor activity and the opportunity to break from the structure of the classroom. While opportunities for outdoor activity are

strongly encouraged, there may be times when it is necessary to modify or suspend outdoor activity due to weather conditions. The following guidelines are for the health and safety of our students.

**Hot Weather** On school days when there is excessive hot weather, the following guidelines are used for determining whether students can participate fully in outdoor activities such as recess and physical education.

- The heat index will be factored in when determining whether outdoor activities are appropriate. As the heat index increases so do health risks.
- Outdoor recess or physical education classes will be suspended when the “feel like” temperature is **100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater**. The KETV weather “feels like” temperature will be used for determination: <https://www.ketv.com/weather/#hourly-forecast>
- Students will have access to water before, during and after the outside activity. It is highly recommended for children to bring a refillable water bottle from home.
- Written requests from a parent that their child with a medical condition be excluded from outdoor activity due to extreme weather conditions or poor air quality will be honored for up to three consecutive school days. A physician’s note must be obtained for any additional times.

**Cold Weather** On school days when there is excessive cold weather, the following guidelines are used for determining whether students can participate fully in outdoor activities such as recess and physical education.

- The wind chill factor will be taken into account when determining whether outdoor activities are appropriate.
- Outdoor recess or physical education classes will be suspended when the “feel like” temperature is **20 degrees Fahrenheit or less for Prekindergarten students and 10 degrees Fahrenheit or less for Kindergarten through 8th Grade students**. The KETV weather “feels like” temperature will be used for determination: <https://www.ketv.com/weather/#hourly-forecast>
- **Winter Weather Clothing** Please send your child to school prepared to play outside every day in the winter. We recommend that you send a coat, hat, gloves, snow boots, and snow pants during the winter months. A student may be excluded from outdoor activities if school staff determines s/he does not have sufficient warm clothing.

**Air Quality** On school days when the air quality is compromised, “The Air Quality and Outdoor Activity Guidance for Schools” will be followed [HERE](#).

Written requests from a parent that their child with a medical condition be excluded from outdoor activity due to extreme weather conditions or poor air quality will be honored for up to three consecutive school days. A physician’s note must be obtained for any additional times.

## HEALTH RELATED

### SCHOOL HEALTH

Optimum health and wellness is the goal for each student attending school. With that in mind, the school has adopted the following procedures.

An annual Student Health Questionnaire is completed at the beginning of every school year for each child enrolled by a parent/guardian. This form is completed at the beginning of each school year so that personnel have the most current and accurate health information to help safely care for your child/ren. A new questionnaire or written note must be submitted

whenever there is a significant change in a student's health status.

School follows the guidelines from the Nebraska Department of Education, [Rule 59](#), which directs the emergency response to life threatening asthma or systemic allergic reactions (anaphylaxis). All St. Mary School Emergency Response Team Members have received training in Rule 59 (call to 911, administration of an EpiPen injection and Albuterol provided through a nebulizer) and its implementation for any breathing emergency. The Emergency Response Team members are also certified in CPR/AED and First Aid.

Parents are required to provide written medical documentation for students known to have **Diabetes, Asthma, Life threatening Allergies, and/or Seizures**. This documentation includes Emergency Action Plans and medication authorization signed and directed by the student's physician. An Emergency Medical Action Plan is a written outline of directions provided by a doctor that will help direct staff to care for your child at school. This allows school personnel to be proactive and respond appropriately in emergency situations. Medical Action Plans need to be updated annually or more frequently as the condition warrants.

Students who have a history of Asthma, Life-threatening Allergies and/or Seizures, but have not required medical management for longer than one year, may be considered to have an "inactive medical condition" at school per parent request and submission of the completed document [HERE](#). These students will not be required to have emergency medications and medical action plans at school. School is not held liable for any injury or death arising from this parental decision. The inactive health condition will remain in effect, until a parent notifies the school in writing of its reversal, and submits an updated Emergency Medical Action Plan with medication to school. Students who use inhalers seasonally or self-manage (6th-8th grade only) are NOT considered to have an inactive condition.

**Absence due to illness:** School administration reserves the right to require a doctor's note in order for a child to return to school after missing three consecutive days. In addition, once a child has been absent for 15 cumulative days a doctor's note may be required for re-admittance. Special consideration will be taken on a case by case basis upon review of the principal. **Any student absent from school due to illness is not eligible to participate in school sponsored extracurricular activities occurring on that same day.**

**Accidents and Illness:** In case of an accident or illness at school, the student will be sent to the office where care will be given and a parent/guardian notified when necessary. When a parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the person listed as the emergency contact will be called. Current emergency contact information is extremely important. When professional assistance is required, the rescue squad will be summoned and will provide transportation to a medical facility as necessary. The cost shall be the parent's/guardian's responsibility.

**Recess/Physical Education Activity Exclusion:** A parent/guardian note requesting a child be excused from recess and physical education class will be accepted for **three consecutive** school days. **Any additional time will require a written physician's note. Exclusion from physical education class will also include physical play at recess, unless otherwise stated in the physician's note. A doctor's clearance note is also required before the student can return to PE/Recess without restrictions.**

**Concussions:** It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school office if their child has sustained a concussion. If a concussion is suspected at school, a parent/guardian will be notified. The student may return to school with written information from a licensed medical provider. That information should include any recommended accommodations or limitations for the school to consider regarding learning and physical activities. The child will be **unable to return to physical education class and physical play at recess until cleared by a licensed medical professional in writing.**

**Fever:** A fever is considered to be **100.4** degrees Fahrenheit or above. Students may not be in attendance at school until they have been afebrile (**fever-free**) for a **minimum of 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications** (Tylenol, Motrin, Advil, etc.). Any student sent home from school with a fever, **may not attend classes the following day** in order to fulfill the minimum 24 hour requirement and allow the fever to break naturally. The time period may be increased during an infectious disease outbreak as determined by the local health department and school officials. This is important to reduce the spread of illness at school.

**Vomiting or Diarrhea:** Keep your child at home for the duration of these symptoms. Any student with vomiting or diarrhea **may not attend school until at least 24 hours since the last episode.** Children must be able to drink fluids, eat food, and toilet normally at home before returning to classes. This time period may be increased during outbreaks or clusters of gastrointestinal viruses as determined by the local health department and school officials.

A one time vomiting incident due to excessive coughing (without any other symptoms) will be evaluated by the school nurse on an individual basis.

**Conjunctivitis “Pink Eye”:** May return 24 hours after antibiotics, or when eye is normal in appearance, or with written physician approval.

**Suspected contagious conditions:** School administration may determine to send a child home with unidentified symptoms, a rapidly spreading rash, or a rash with a low grade fever and behavioral changes, or red eyes with copious amounts of drainage. Students may return to class with a doctor’s clearance note or when symptoms are resolved.

**Diagnosed Diseases/Conditions:** Exclusion period from school will follow the guidelines set forth by the local health departments and [Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services](#). These guidelines can supersede any personal healthcare provider’s note submitted to school regarding re-entry.

### **Potty Training**

All children must be potty trained to attend school. Students must wear underwear. Please note that wearing pull ups is NOT considered toilet trained. Our building is not equipped or staffed to follow the state of Nebraska diaper changing regulations (391NAC 3-006.23B, Diapering and Toileting).

### **Casts, Splints, and Orthopedic Devices**

Any student who has a cast, splint, brace, crutches, CAM boot, or other orthopedic devices should report to the school office upon returning to school. **All physical activities will be restricted until a note is received from a medical provider outlining what precautions are to be taken at school.** Students must have been taught the proper use of crutches, walkers or other orthopedic devices before returning to school. The use of crutches and other devices on school property by an untrained student poses a safety risk for the student, fellow classmates, and staff (particularly on stairs). The school will not be responsible for injuries that occur without a physician’s written statement on file. Wheelchairs in the health office are for emergency use only. The school does not provide assistive devices for daily use.

Accommodations such as early classroom entry or dismissal, assistance with books, assistance in the hallways, dress code alterations, and elevator usage will be assessed on an individual basis to determine the need.

**All students must have written confirmation from a medical provider to resume normal activities.**

### **Health Screening Policy**

School health screenings for height, weight, vision, hearing, and dental shall be performed yearly for those grades included under the requirements of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services guidelines. Color vision screening is also available per teacher or parent request. School health screening is not diagnostic nor is it intended to replace regular preventative health care. The goal is to assist parents in the identification of potential health problems so they may seek appropriate medical evaluation. Students may be screened upon the request of a parent or teacher at any time. Students with abnormal results at the initial screening may be re-screened. Parents will be notified in writing of any findings indicating a need for further evaluation by a healthcare professional, in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-248. The cost of such evaluation shall be borne by the parent or guardian.

**Exemption:** A child is not required to submit to school health screening if his or her parent or guardian provides school authorities with a statement signed by a physician stating that such child has undergone the required screening within the last six months preceding the school’s scheduled health screening.

## Nut Policy and Food Allergies

Nuts are the most prevalent, life threatening food allergy in our school. St. Mary Catholic School does its best to minimize the risk of exposure to nuts for our students with known allergies and have a plan in place to respond to an emergency. A parent or guardian must inform the school if their child has **any type** of life threatening food allergy and submit emergency medication with a physician's instructions to school. **The school will do its best to minimize the risk of exposure to nuts, but cannot guarantee that the facility or dining area will be allergen free.** School staff are available to help, but cannot be responsible for interpreting specific ingredients for your child. Ultimately, all students with dangerous allergies must be educated in how to protect themselves. **Communication** between the home and school is important to ensure the continued safety and welfare of all of our students.

1. A parent should **contact their child's teacher directly** to request that their child sits at a designated "**NUT RESTRICTED**" table in the lunchroom. Students who sit at this table may not bring a lunch that contains any type of food or snack containing nuts. Students with allergies to nuts may invite non-allergic friends to join them as long as those friends are eating a hot lunch. This is because hot lunches do not contain nuts.
2. Please contact your child's teacher and the school administration if a separate seating arrangement is needed for other food allergies (besides nuts).
3. **School does not allow snacks or treats that contain nut ingredients to be opened or eaten in the classrooms.**
4. Do not send snacks or treats containing nuts for classroom parties or celebrations.
5. Parents sending food to be shared at school should contact the teacher ahead of time to check for **all food allergies and intolerances** and allow time for the teacher to communicate with all parents regarding what is being served.
6. Parents of children with **any type of food allergy** or intolerance are encouraged to **send their own supply of safe snacks for the teacher to have on hand** to lessen the risk of exposure.
7. School discourages the use of nut products in activities and projects.

## Medication Policy:

If a student is required to take medication during school hours, medication is to be provided by a parent/guardian and will only be administered following these guidelines:

- **Prescription Medication** requires a signed physician's note stating the medication, dosage and administration directions.. The medicine must be in the prescription container with a pharmacy label outlining directions for administration.
- The following **Over the Counter Medications (OTC)** are allowable with the completion of our school form [HERE](#): **Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Benadryl, Tums (12 years and older), Cough Drops, Lactaid (4 years and older), Anti-Itch Cream, and Antibiotic Cream.** OTC medicines must be in the original container labeled with the student's name, and the manufacturer's directions must be legible.
  - Administered only per the manufacturer's instructions, unless a healthcare provider's authorization is obtained.
  - If this medicine is needed for more than 3 consecutive days at school, a healthcare provider's authorization must be obtained.
- It is strongly recommended that a parent or guardian bring any medication directly to the school office. School is not responsible for medicine misplaced or misused by a student outside of the office or after school hours.
- All school medicines are kept in the office with the exception of cough drops.
- No expired medications of any kind will be accepted by the school.
- Homeopathic and Naturopathic Medications will not be administered at school. Herbal preparations are unregulated by the FDA, so we do not have the evidence to understand the potential side effects, adverse reactions, and interactions with medications and foods.

School medicines are available during school hours only. Extended Day staff, coaches, or the parish sports program do not have access to the school office medications. Parents must communicate directly with any

programs outside of school hours and follow their medication policies.

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- School is not responsible for the unknown or unauthorized self-management of medications by students.
- The school reserves the right to refuse to administer medications.
- A parent/guardian may bring and administer medication to their child at school anytime without physician authorization.
- The school does not assume responsibility for reactions to medicine brought to school.
- At the end of the school year, a parent or legal guardian must claim any unused medications at the school office. Medications will not be sent home with students. After June 1 each year, the school will dispose of any unclaimed medicine.
- Medication authorization expires at the end of each school year.

**Self-Management of Allergy/Asthma, Diabetes, or Seizure Conditions (for 6th-8th Grade Students Only):** Parent requests for self-management of asthma/anaphylaxis, diabetes, or a seizure condition for their 6th-8th grade student are permitted only if Nebraska 79-224 and 79-225 statutes are followed. The following must be submitted **each school year**:

- Current medical management plan signed by the physician. This plan must include:
  1. Identify the health care services the student may receive at school relating to such conditions.
  2. Evaluate the student's understanding of and ability to self-manage his or her condition.
  3. Permit regular monitoring of the student's self-management of his or her condition by an appropriately credentialed health care professional.
  4. Be signed by the student's parent or guardian and physician responsible for treatment of the student's condition
- Parent/guardian written request to school
- Parent/guardian signed statement to indemnify and hold harmless the school against any claim arising from the student's self- management
- The medical management plan must be kept on file at the school
- Once the medical management plan is in place, the student shall be allowed to self- manage his or her condition on school grounds, during any school related activity, or in any private location specified in the plan. • If the school determines that the student has endangered himself, herself, or others through the misuse of such medical supplies, it may prohibit the student from possessing the necessary medical supplies to manage his or her condition, or place other necessary and appropriate restrictions or conditions on the student's self- management. In addition, the student may be subject to discipline. The school shall promptly notify the parent or guardian of any prohibition, restriction, or condition imposed, as well as any disciplinary action taken against the student. • It is strongly recommended that back up supplies of medications needed to manage his or her condition be kept in the school office.
- The student shall notify a school staff member when he/she has self-administered his/her medication or is in need of assistance at any time.
- School is not responsible for the unknown or unauthorized self-management of medications by students.

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Each child must have up-to-date emergency information on file listing parents/guardians daytime telephone numbers and alternate persons to be notified in case of illness or injury.

Parents/Guardians will be called for any concerning injury or illness at school. (Routine or minor issues will be documented at school or emailed without calling a parent directly). If the school staff determines that the child should not be in school, parents/guardians (or another designated caregiver) is expected to pick up the child **within one hour** of notification. If parents are unavailable, the alternate persons on the child's emergency information form will be contacted to pick up the child. If no one can be notified, the school staff may choose to hold the child in the office to monitor his or her condition. If the staff believes it is necessary, 911 may be called. Parents will assume financial responsibility for medical treatment that may be administered to the child which is authorized by the school staff in the event that the parents cannot be reached.

If your child has any health problems or needs special attention, the school nurse, teacher, and administration should be

informed so the safest learning environment possible can be provided. Please be aware that a school nurse is **not** in the building every day.

Parents who do not give permission for the school nurse to forward health information to other staff on a need-to-know basis will need to notify the school office in writing. This would include alerting teachers and staff to watch for symptoms and to give resources to EMS in case of an emergency.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

### **Vaccination Policy**

All students are required to have the immunizations mandated by the state of Nebraska found [HERE](#). According to Nebraska state law, each school is required to keep the immunization history of the students enrolled on file. Parents and guardians must present one of the following documents to the school to verify immunization status:

- An immunization record showing that the child is protected by age-appropriate immunizations, as outlined by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
- A statement signed by a physician stating that the required immunization would be “injurious to the student or a member of the student’s family or household” is acceptable. This is considered a medical exemption. Forms signed by a physician which state the parents do not feel it is in the best interest of the child or are choosing an alternative schedule are **not** sufficient to satisfy the medical exemption.
- A student may be provisionally enrolled in school if s/he has started the immunizations and continues to receive immunizations **as rapidly as medically feasible**.
- The only religious waivers allowed will be those complying with the Omaha Archdiocese Policy for MMR and Varicella vaccinations. We expect all students (Catholic and non-Catholic) attending St. Mary’s Catholic School to abide by these policies.

In the event of a disease outbreak, any unvaccinated or under vaccinated child will not be able to attend school (without prejudice to academic standing) until the disease is contained. The child will be readmitted with direction from the local health departments; a physician’s clearance note may also be required.

*#3503.1: Immunization Policy for Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Omaha.*

## **PHYSICAL EXAMS**

Nebraska State Law requires all students **entering kindergarten or 7th grade, transferring from another state, or transferring from homeschooling** have a physical examination by a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse within six months prior to the start of school. Exams by a **chiropractor** are **not** acceptable under this law. A copy of the physical examination is due in the health office prior to the first day of school. Children are exempt from this requirement when the parent/legal guardian provides a written statement of objection/waiver.

## **VISION EXAMS**

Nebraska State Statute also requires that all students **entering kindergarten, transferring from another state or transferring from homeschooling** provide evidence of vision evaluation within six months prior to entry. The evaluation may be performed by a physician, physician assistant, advanced practice registered nurse, or vision professional (optometrist or ophthalmologist). The exam shall include testing for amblyopia, strabismus (eye misalignment), internal and external eye health, and visual acuity. Children are exempt from this requirement when the parent/legal guardian provides a written statement of objection/waiver.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY ISSUES**

### **Alcoholic Beverages and Drug Use**

State laws and school policy strictly prohibit student possession or use of alcoholic beverages on school property or at any school sponsored function. Students who violate this policy may be suspended, referred to legal authorities, and /or

required to participate in counseling programs at the expense of the parents/guardian. Repeated violation of this rule may result in expulsion.

### **Illegal Possession of Firearms and Weapons**

State laws and school policy strictly prohibit the possession of any firearms or weapons judged to be harmful or dangerous to the person, him or herself, or others on school property. An ordinary object utilized in a harmful manner is also prohibited. Any student who violates this rule will be immediately suspended from school and referred to appropriate authorities. Further disciplinary action will be taken after consultation with parents and authorities.

### **Illegal Drugs**

State laws and school policy strictly prohibit the use, evidence of use, or possession and/or transfer of narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, look alike pills of any type, or possession of drug-related paraphernalia anywhere on school property or at any school sponsored function. Violations of this policy may result in suspension, referral to the appropriate legal authorities, and/or being required to participate in a counseling program at the expense of the parents/guardian. Violations may result in expulsions.

### **Smoking**

State laws and school policy prohibit students from carrying or using tobacco products on school property or at school sponsored activities. Students who violate this policy are subject to suspension. Repeated violations of this rule may result in expulsion. St. Mary's School building is a tobacco free building. (Nebraska Clean Air Act 1979 LB 3440)

### **Injury/Illness**

Emergency contacts are completed in FACTS annually. THIS INFORMATION MUST BE CURRENT AT ALL TIMES. In case of injury or illness requiring immediate attention, the school will call 911 and the child will be transported by ambulance to the hospital at the parent's or guardian's expense.

### **Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect**

State law requires St. Mary's employees to notify Child Protective Service and Law Enforcement officials if they believe a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect. The school cooperates in the investigation of such cases.

### **Visitors**

Parents are welcome to visit at any time. To reduce vandalism, the threat of intruders, and unwarranted disruption of classroom activity, all visitors, including parents, will need to report to the office. Visitors must check in and wear a visitor's name tag while in the building.

Parents who wish to visit their child's classroom and/or participate in a school day activity are requested to make arrangements ahead of time. You will be informed if that day's schedule has been altered or if for some other reason, you cannot observe the chosen activity. We suggest that a visit be limited to one instructional period.

All entrances to the building are locked. Visitors will need to use the main entrance located adjacent to the school office. To enter the building, please push the door buzzer and look up at the security camera located in the upper right corner of the doorway. You may be asked to identify yourself. Please pull the left-hand door open when you hear the clicking

sound.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in aiding us to provide a safe environment for our students and our staff.

### **Security**

All doors entering the school are locked at all times. All students coming into the building after 8:00 am must enter through the front door, Mission Ave entrance, and sign in. Please do not ring the doorbell on any other door to get into the building. All visitors must come in the front door, Mission Ave entrance. Please ring the buzzer at the Mission Ave door. All visitors are to sign in at the office and receive a visitor's pass if they are staying in the building. All visitors are to sign out of the building as they leave and return the visitor's pass.

When events are scheduled in the gym, please use the gym entrance. For sport practices, please use the doorbell and the coach will admit you to the building when dropping off or picking up your child.

### **Crisis Plan**

St. Mary's School has developed a crisis plan to be used in a variety of situations such as fire, tornado, and intruder in the building. As required by state law, the school holds regular safety drills which include fire drills, tornado drills, and intruder in the building drills. If the need arises, students will be evacuated from the building and go to the church.

A team of staff members are trained emergency responders. They are trained in CPR and trained for emergency situations.

In the event of a school emergency, parents are advised to listen to local T.V. and radio stations for information. School officials will release information as soon as possible via text, email, and other means available.

### **Youth and Gang Apparel, Possessions, and Behaviors**

For the safety and welfare of students and the need for a secure learning environment, dress identified by the administration as gang related apparel is not permitted on school property or at any school sponsored activity. Any item worn or carried to identify a person as a gang member is not permitted on school property or at any school sponsored activity.

### **Bicycles**

Children are to park their bicycles behind the school on the playground. All bicycles are to be locked. The school is not responsible for lost or damaged bicycles. The school encourages students to wear bicycle helmets on their way to and from school. Students are also encouraged to register their bicycle at the police station.

Students are to park their bicycles in the proper, assigned rack. Students must walk their bicycles off school property and are not permitted to ride bicycles on school grounds during school hours and extended care hours (6:30 am to 6:00 pm).

### **Walking Home from School**

For students walking home, parents should notify the school in advance via a written or emailed note. The school will provide adult supervision for the Mission Avenue crosswalk.

### **Asbestos Notice**

Certain portions of our building contain asbestos. There is no danger to anyone as long as the material is undisturbed. We are in compliance with all rules and regulations for asbestos safety.

## **NON-ACADEMIC MATTERS**

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

Extra-curricular activities must support the mission of St. Mary's Catholic School. Throughout all programs and activities, participation, skill development, collaboration, and sportsmanship will be emphasized. Students must maintain satisfactory academic standing and satisfactory conduct to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities.

### **Athletics**

St. Mary's Parish Athletic Club offers Girls Volleyball (grades 3-8) and Boys and Girls Basketball for 2nd thru 8th grade students that are members of St. Mary's School or Parish. Information for registration will be posted in the school newsletter and the church bulletin.

Student's school health information and medications are not available to the sports program. Please contact the Athletic Director directly regarding the program's health guidelines.

### **Sunday Policy (Archdiocesan Policy #5012)**

To assure that students and parents are given full opportunity to meet their Sunday Mass attendance/obligations; all scheduled non-religious use of the parish/elementary school/high school in the Archdiocese on Sunday will begin no sooner than 12:00 Noon. Pre-arranged approval may be granted by the pastor. Effective: August 2006

### **Band**

The band program begins in 5th grade. Instruction for band is provided in cooperation with Gross High School. For more information about the band program, please call the school office.

### **Clubs**

After school clubs are designed to enhance the school program. Students who wish to form a club must have the approval of the principal. Students who want to form a club are responsible for finding a teacher or parent to sponsor the club. All clubs will meet outside of the regular school day. Fees may be required as part of the club membership.

### **Lost and Found**

The school asks that all students mark personal items with their name. We cannot be responsible for lost items. A lost and found box is located in the Silent Hallway near the teacher's workroom. Students may ask for permission to check the box for lost items. Parents may come to look for lost items in the lost and found box as well. The lost and found items that are not claimed will be donated to a local charity. During parent/teacher conferences we will set the items out for parents to look through and pick up lost items. At the end of the year, whatever is left will be donated.

### **Lockers**

Locker numbers will be assigned to students by the teachers. The school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items.

Lockers are the property of the school and are provided for student use. School personnel reserve the right to inspect lockers at any time.

### **Room Parents**

Room parents are volunteers who assist the classroom teacher for special activities. They plan parties for Christmas and Valentine's Day in collaboration with the classroom teacher. Classroom food allergies and intolerances need to be taken into consideration when planning food/snacks to be shared with students. NO NUT products are allowed to be shared with students. Communication regarding student food allergies and intolerances between classroom parents, room parents, and teachers is imperative for the safety of all.

### **Parties**

- Holiday Parties – Room parents and teachers jointly plan holiday parties. Home and School sponsors Halloween Fun Night. Classroom parties include Christmas and Valentine's Day.
- Birthday Parties – If you are planning a party for your child we highly encourage you to send the invitations through the mail or some other means. Children who bring invitations to school must use one of the following options – invitations must be given to every child in the class or invitations must be given to all boys if your child is a boy or invitations must be given to all girls if your child is a girl. The teacher reserves the right to determine when the invitations may be given to children in the class. Please do not send balloons, flowers, and gifts to your child at school during the school day. Birthday celebrations should be planned for after school hours. Students may wear free dress on their birthdays.

### **Electronic Devices**

Electronic devices may include but are not limited to cell phones, MP3 players, iPods, personal digital assistants (PDA), compact disc players, portable game consoles, cameras, digital scanners, laptop computers, and other electronic or battery powered instruments which transmit voice, text or data from one person to another. The use of such electronic devices is not permitted during regular school hours. Students must keep cell phones in their backpack during the regular school day. If a student is caught using cell phones or other electronic devices, the student will turn the item into the office and pick it up after school. A second offense will result in the item being turned into the office, Saturday School will be scheduled, and the parents will come to school to retrieve the item. Multiple offenses may result in the loss of the item for a longer time, additional Saturday School, and parent conferences.

### **Toys and Other items From Home**

We ask that students leave all toys, games, money, and other items at home. The school cannot be responsible for the loss or damage incurred to any item that is brought to school from home.

### **Recess**

Children in grades Kindergarten thru 8<sup>th</sup> will be expected to go out for recess on a regular basis. Students may not be in classrooms unless they are supervised by school personnel.

### **Playground Guidelines**

Teachers or school personnel will expect students to comply with playground rules and school rules when they are on the playground:

1. Students must remain in clear view of the teacher or school personnel when on the playground.

2. Children must obtain permission before leaving the playground area (that includes going to the restroom or to the classroom.)
3. Students are to keep their hands to themselves (no wrapping arms around or hanging on to other students).
4. All games and activities are open to everyone.
5. Students should always use proper language and be courteous and respectful towards other students and adults. No put downs or name calling.
6. No fighting is allowed; this includes pushing and shoving (especially during football, basketball and 4-square games). This includes play fighting.
7. No leaning on, touching or climbing the fence in any way.
8. No games, books, music, papers, etc. from the class or home are to be used on the playground at recess.
9. No food, beverage or gum is allowed on the playground.
10. Students will use the play structure safely by always using both hands, using the monkey bars and flip bars for hanging only, and dismounting from the equipment properly, feet first.
11. Students will be seated feet first on slides. Slide down only on your bottom, not on your tummy or back. Never stand on a slide. No climbing up the slide. No “buddy” sliding (two or more together).
12. Only 1 student at a time is allowed on each slide platform and climbing wall. Please be sure the area is clear before proceeding. Do not attempt to climb up the back of the climbing wall, only the front.
13. No bouncing balls off the school, fences, roofs or windows. If a ball goes off the school grounds, students will notify a recess duty supervisor who will retrieve it at their convenience.

Note: Older students are sometimes permitted to retrieve a ball outside the premises, but the student must have express permission by staff, so they can be monitored.

14. There will be a maximum of two balls per basketball hoop.
15. No bugs, sticks or other items may be brought in from recess.
16. When the whistle blows, students must stop all activity and line up.
17. Students are responsible for taking care of playground equipment. The school cannot be responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items from home.
18. The school is not responsible for any student on the playground when school is not in session or when Extended Day is closed.

### **Outside Recess Guidelines**

During winter months, the administration, faculty and staff would like to encourage students to be physically active during recess – especially when there is snow! This means that students will need to have appropriate snow gear to wear during recess. This includes SNOW boots (not fashion boots), snow pants, mittens or gloves, hats and heavy coats.

All students should come prepared each day to be outside during recess; this would include heavy coats, mittens and a hat. For girls, please have them bring snow pants or wear heavy tights/leggings for recess- those little bare legs get cold quickly. Students will be encouraged to actively play, which may include climbing on the snow piles, making snow angels and building snow sculptures. It will not include throwing snow.

Only those students who are wearing appropriate snow gear, including: snow pants, heavy jacket, hat, mittens or gloves and snow boots, will be allowed to be in the snow. Reminder: Bring school shoes to wear inside. If anyone has old towels to donate to put wet gear on, please send them in!

### **School Pictures**

School pictures are taken early in the school year. Information regarding the company, prices, times, and dates are made known in the school newsletter and flyers sent home. An order form from the company will be sent home, and the parents may order pictures as they want. The order form and payment must be returned to school prior to having pictures taken. Information about eighth grade pictures will be given separately. Class composites will be available for purchase. On picture day, students dress up following the guidelines for casual dress up day. Students are discouraged from wearing elaborate hairstyles, clothing, high heels, or other apparel which would make it difficult for the child to participate in the regular school day.

### **Photographs and Video for Release**

Parental permission is required before the school can release photos or video of a child to press such as newspapers, T.V., etc. Parents are asked to fill out the release form when completing on-line registration.

### **Student Council**

Student Council is an organization of older students who represent St. Mary's School in a variety of ways throughout the school year. Students in grades 6-8 may participate in student council. A faculty member serves as advisor for the group. All officers and representatives must demonstrate the following leadership qualities:

- Maintain a C average
- Be honest, loyal, and responsible
- Practice good organizational skills
- Work well with peers and school personnel
- Communicate well with peers and school personnel
- Students must demonstrate strong social skills

### **Skateboards, Roller Blades, Roller Shoes**

Skateboards, roller blades, roller shoes, or any type of roller apparatus are not permitted on school property or at any school sponsored activity.

### **Utilization of School Facilities**

Organizations and other persons must obtain permission from the principal or pastor to use the school facilities. .

### **Right to Amend the School Handbook**

The school, as determined by the Principal and Pastor, has the right to amend the handbook as deemed necessary. Uniform policy and compliance are the responsibility of the administration with approval of the pastor. Parents will be given notification if changes are made to other portions or policies within the handbook.