



SAINT MARY SCHOOL

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027



www.saintmarylancaster.org
309 E. Chestnut Street
Lancaster, Ohio 43130
Tel: 740-654-1632

Dear Parents,

Saint Mary School is a spiritually and academically enriching place where students are able to grow and reach their fullest potential. Our work is firmly rooted in our Catholic faith, and we strive to love and teach our students in the same way that our Lord does. The faculty, staff, and I are aware of the responsibility that we have to educate your children, and we do not take it lightly.

As we move into this new school year, please know of the gratitude that we have for this opportunity to work with your child. May our Lord bless you now and always!

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Kayla Elrich'.

Kayla Elrich
Principal

Administration:

A. Pastor: As a ministry of St. Mary Parish, St. Mary School is under the jurisdiction of the Pastor. The Pastor has the responsibility to ensure that an effective religious education program is maintained and implemented in the school.

B. Principal: The Pastor delegates the immediate direction of the school and its instructional program to the school Principal. The Principal is responsible for implementing the policies and regulations of the Diocese and the Superintendent, while observing Ohio Catholic Schools Accrediting Association and State regulations relative to the operation of the school.

C. School Advisory Cabinet: The Diocese of Columbus strongly recommends that the Pastor share his responsibility for the parish school with a representative group of parents and parishioners. This Cabinet is advisory in nature, providing advice and assistance to the Pastor and the Principal as necessary. The Diocese of Columbus sets forth the scope and function of the School Advisory Cabinet. In accordance with this policy, the St. Mary School Advisory Cabinet's primary functions include:

- Catholic Unity and Identity - Purpose of the committee is to build and maintain connections with our parish, surrounding parishes, and other Catholic schools, while ensuring a focus on the Catholic faith within our school community.
- Advertising and Engagement - Purpose of the committee is to promote and market the school, engaging stakeholders, particularly current parents in the school community.
- Strategic Planning - Purpose of the committee is to assist in the development and maintenance of long- and short-term strategic plans for the school.

The School Advisory Board has no role in the following:

- The hiring, firing, or evaluation of staff;
- Making or changing school regulations;
- Dealing with cases involving student discipline, except expulsions;
- Authorizing capital expenditures;
- Selecting textbooks or deciding other specifics of the educational program.

Mission and Beliefs Statement: At St. Mary School, our mission is to be Christ-centered to all, to share the traditions of Catholicism through faithful service to our parish and local communities, and to build enduring academic foundations that foster growth-mindset and critical thinking in our students in an uplifting and nurturing environment.

At St. Mary School, we believe that:

1. Christ is the reason for our school, and as a Catholic institution, all that we do is based on our faith.
2. Students need a supportive and challenging learning environment that nurtures individual God-given gifts and talents as they progress developmentally.
3. Students need to be guided to develop the soft skills and real-world technology applications necessary to thrive in society including collaboration, digital literacy, critical thinking, problem solving, and technological proficiency.

4. A variety of resources and support are provided to meet the students' diverse learning styles.
5. Ongoing assessment includes a wide range of opportunities that allow students to demonstrate their knowledge and achievement.
6. Students work to develop responsibility, compassion, and leadership skills that are essential in order to live their faith and become contributing members of the church and society.
7. A community-based climate of learning in partnership with educators, parents, Saint Mary Church, and students is imperative to the spiritual, social, academic, emotional, and personal growth of each child.

Academics, Curriculum, and Learning Materials: St. Mary School follows the graded courses of study written by the Diocesan Department of Education in all subjects; Language Arts (Reading, English, Writing, Spelling, and Phonics), Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Health, Physical Education, Music, Art, Library, and Technology. The texts used for any course are selected by the faculty from a list of options that are approved by the Diocesan Department of Education. The graded courses of study provide the basis for the instruction. Additional learning materials are selected by the faculty based on the curriculum and student needs.

Access to Student Records: No data shall be released about students without the written consent of the parent(s)/ guardian(s) of a minor student or of the student who is 18 years of age or older. Those who are permitted to view an individual student's records are:

1. School personnel.
2. Parents(s)/guardian(s) of a minor student.
3. The student who is 18 years of age or older.
4. Non-custodial parent of an individual minor student unless denied access by a court order.
5. Officials of other schools to which the student transfers.

Parents(s)/guardian(s) of an individual minor student or a student 18 years or older may request a copy of any item in the file. All others are denied access unless they have a subpoena or the written permission of the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a minor student or of the student who is 18 years of age or older. A log sheet shall be kept on file each year for permanent records, and those who request to view a file will be required to fill out this sheet. School personnel may release information concerning students for research and statistical purposes as long as the individual student's identity is protected.

Accident Reports: When a student, staff member, or visitor is injured on school property or during a school sponsored event an accident report form is completed by the school nurse to document what occurred, the treatment administered, and the outcome. The principal shall review each accident report and initial and date the form. The school nurse, or a staff member if the nurse is unavailable, shall contact the parents/guardians of a student who is injured. If the parent/guardian is not available, emergency contacts listed on the child's emergency form will be called. It is imperative that parents/guardians keep this information up to date.

Admissions: In the admission of students to St. Mary School, the order of priority is listed below.

1. Children from active, participating, and contributing families of St. Mary Parish/St. Bernadette Parish and other Catholic parishes who are currently enrolled in St. Mary School/St. Bernadette School and their siblings, and non-Catholic children currently enrolled at St. Mary School. Families must meet the requirements in the Tuition Agreement to guarantee acceptance of re-enrollment. St. Mary parishioners seeking a parish scholarship

to enroll their children must be active, participating, and contributing members of St. Mary parish and the student(s) must be baptized Catholic.

2. Children of parishioners from surrounding parishes that do not have a school who are coming from a Catholic school and student is a baptized Catholic.
3. Children of parishioners from a surrounding parish that does have a school but the school cannot accommodate them due to the specific class being filled.
4. Children of parishioners from parishes that do not have a school and the student is a baptized Catholic.
5. Siblings of non-Catholic children currently enrolled at St. Mary School/St. Bernadette School, or previously graduated from St. Mary School.
6. Non-Catholics.

If there are more applicants than spaces available in any of the above categories, the Pastor will determine acceptance based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

1. Faculty/staff member
2. Number of years the family has been “active, participating, and contributing” members
3. Financial contribution to the parish
4. Parish and school volunteer activity
5. Date of registration in the parish
6. Previous application for school admission
7. Compliance with Tuition Agreement requirements
8. Prospective students with older siblings who have graduated from St. Mary School

A parent/guardian wishing to enroll their child/ren after January 1 for the remainder of the school year must show evidence of the child/ren meeting current grade level standards and a pattern of appropriate behavior in school. Those wishing to enroll after January 1 for the remainder of the school year will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the administration.

Students who are transferring from another school must submit a permanent record or transcript from a chartered school, per Diocesan Policy, which will be subject to review by the principal prior to admission and placement.

Pursuant with Diocesan Policy, the schools of the Diocese of Columbus do not grant credit for home-schooled students. A home-schooled student wishing to enroll at St. Mary must be evaluated by his/her public school district to determine grade placement prior to admission.

A waiting list will be created for each grade if classes are filled. As openings occur, the criteria listed above will be considered in offering the position to individuals on the waiting list in that grade. The Principal will advise the Pastor when an opening occurs. Waiting lists are not carried forward. New lists are created after registration each year. The custodial parent is required to provide the Principal or person in charge of Admissions a certified copy of any custody order or decree pertaining to a pupil. (Diocesan Policy) NOTE: Failure to comply with any of the obligations outlined in the Tuition Agreement form may result in the parent/guardian being responsible for the entire cost of the child(ren)’s education and future enrollment may be jeopardized.

Advanced Curriculum: Catholic Schools strive to meet the academic needs of all students. It is educationally sound to accelerate a student academically when the student demonstrates the need and ability to move beyond the grade-level curriculum. At Saint Mary School, our teachers differentiate the instruction for accelerated students by giving the students more challenging work in order to enhance the students' knowledge level of the concepts being taught. Criteria for determining this need is based on the following:

- Standardized test scores (STAR Math/Reading)
- Teacher recommendation
- Outside evaluation

Altar Servers: Fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade altar servers have the opportunity to serve funerals and assist at other parish and school liturgical celebrations. A monthly schedule by grade is posted. Training sessions are scheduled during the year for those interested in becoming altar servers. Information about volunteering as an altar server is available through the parish office.

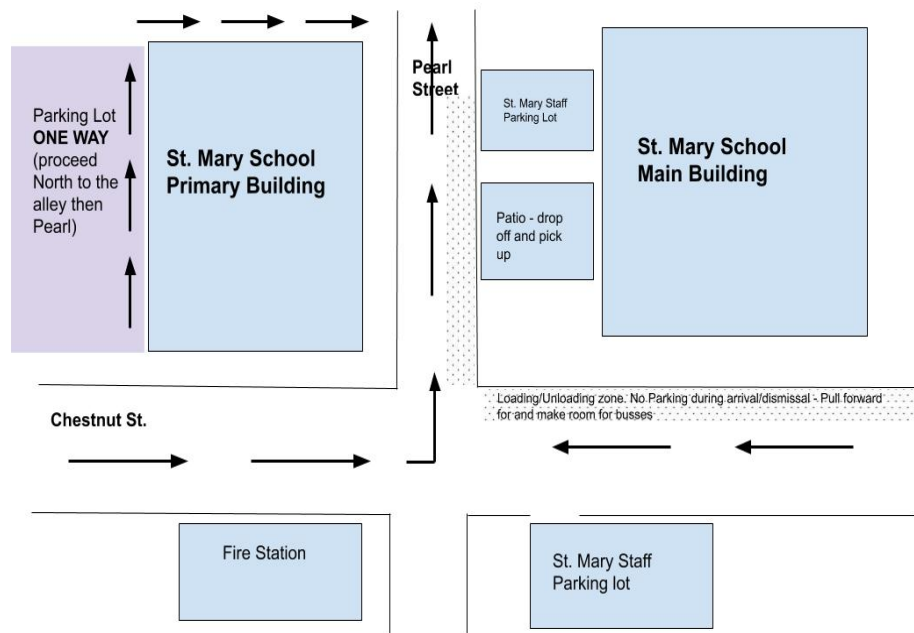
Amendment Statement: Statements in this handbook are subject to amendment with or without notice. The school principal will attempt to keep the school families informed of all changes as soon as practical. Some changes might have to be made immediately due to unforeseen circumstances.

Arrival and Dismissal of Students: At St. Mary School, the wellbeing and safety of our students is our number one priority. In order to protect our students and abide by safety and liability policies, students are not permitted on school grounds prior to 7:25 a.m. unless they are enrolled in our morning drop-off program. Students who are in the morning drop-off program can enter through the patio doors of the main building between 7:00am and 7:25am. Students who are not in the morning drop-off program should arrive for school between 7:25 a.m. and 7:45 a.m. and proceed to the gym in the main building where a staff member will be on morning duty.

Students arriving after 7:45 a.m. will be marked tardy. Students are expected to arrive at school on time each day, with the exception of those riding district buses. Only students with valid reasons for tardiness (doctor appointment, etc.) will be excused. Unexcused tardies include traffic, oversleeping, etc. Students who have three unexcused tardies in one quarter will receive a demerit. Any student in kindergarten through third grade who is tardy must have a parent escort him/her to the main building for sign-in with the secretary.

Students must leave the school grounds immediately following dismissal. On regular school days students must be picked up by 3:00 p.m. On early dismissal days students must be picked up by 1:00 p.m. Students who are not picked up by 1:20pm will be charged the drop-in KidsCARE rate. Parents are asked to respect the work hours of the school faculty and staff and ensure their children are picked up on time.

Keeping the best interest of our students in mind, the arrival and dismissal policy will be strictly enforced by the St. Mary's administration. During student arrival, the traffic flow shall be as outlined in the diagram on the following page:



During dismissal, students who have siblings will be dismissed in the location of their oldest sibling. K-2 students will be picked up at the front doors of the primary building. Pick-up is in person (not in a car line), so parents will need to park and walk to the front door. All students in 3rd-8th grade will be picked up on the side patio that faces Pearl Street. Parents must enter Pearl Street by turning right off of Chestnut Street. No left-hand turns onto Pearl Street from Chestnut Street into the pick-up lane are permitted.

Athletics: St. Mary School believes that participation in athletics, both as a player and as a spectator, is an integral part of the student's educational experience. Such participation is a privilege, not a right, that carries with it responsibilities to the school, the team, the student body, the community, and the individual student athlete. Interscholastic athletics are considered a supplement to the school's religious and academic programs, which strive to provide experiences that will help to develop the participant physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally. Students participating in the interscholastic program are at a prime age to learn good sportsmanship, to learn the meaning of competition, to build character, and to develop personal qualities, which will enable them to become successful citizens as well as athletes.

St. Mary School provides interscholastic sports for enrolled students in grades 7-8 under the direction of the school Athletic Director. They include opportunities for boys football, girls volleyball, boys and girls basketball, and boys and girls track and cross country. The availability of sport programs will be evaluated each school year by the St. Mary Athletic Director and administration. The St. Mary School Athletic Association is an advisory group of appointed volunteers who support the purpose of and have an interest in the success of the St. Mary School athletic program. The Athletic Association plays no role in the following:

- The hiring, firing, or evaluation of the St. Mary School Athletic Director, Assistant Athletic Director, or any St. Mary School coaches.
- Making or changing school regulations and/or policies.
- Determining student eligibility in athletic programs.
- Dealing with cases involving athlete conduct and/or the participation privileges and discipline matters of students.

- Determining the scheduling or cancellation of athletic practices or events.

Interscholastic sports for students in grades 6 and below and additional “club” sports are not financially supported by St. Mary School. Additional information concerning student athletics can be found in the St. Mary Athletic Handbook, which is available on the school website.

Athletic Practice Attire: Practice apparel for all sixth through eighth grade student athletes shall be shirts and shorts/pants that would be appropriate for school Physical Education classes. Spandex and compression shorts/pants, camis and spaghetti strap tanks, and midriff bearing tops are not permitted. There shall be no wording on the backside of shorts/pants. Shirts may not have offensive or threatening words or images, references to drugs or violence/weapons, or sexual connotations. If an athlete comes to practice wearing inappropriate clothing he/she will be asked to change clothes. If no extra clothes are available, the athlete will not be permitted to practice with the team that day and will not be permitted to dress for the next athletic contest. Each coach is responsible for the enforcement of this policy.

Athletic Programs and Absenteeism: A student must attend school the day of their athletic event and may not leave early. A student must attend school the day after an athletic event and be on time to school unless he/she has a physician’s excuse.

Athletic Programs Eligibility: Students in grades 7 and 8 who choose to represent St. Mary School in its sponsored athletic programs must maintain eligibility standards in order to participate. These standards provide that the students show satisfactory effort and maintain a satisfactory average in their subject classes. Eligibility standards can be found in the St. Mary School Athletic Handbook, which is available on the school website.

Attendance Area – Elementary School Criteria: School attendance areas are defined by diocesan criteria for both elementary and high schools.

1. A student shall attend the school of the parish in which the student’s parents(s) / guardian(s) are registered members. As stated in policy, if the parish school is full, the student may attend another parish school if the student’s Pastor and the Pastor of the chosen school concur.
2. In case of a consolidation, a number of parishes shall be assigned to a particular school.
3. If a parish has no school, the children may attend a nearby parochial school. Financial arrangement shall follow guidelines set forth in Diocesan Policy.

Attendance Area – Secondary School Criteria: School attendance areas are defined by diocesan criteria for both elementary and high schools. For secondary school waiver requests, refer to Diocesan Policy.

1. The location of the residence of the student’s legal guardian is used to determine the assigned high school. (This is defined by the specific street address, not the general zip code area.)
 - a. Residents of Fairfield and Hocking counties will attend Fisher Catholic High School. Residents of Perry County may choose between Fisher Catholic High School and Bishop Rosecrans High School. Parishioners at Pope John XXIII in Canal Winchester may choose between Fisher Catholic High School and Bishop Hartley High School.
 - b. A detailed listing of counties/parishes and high schools is available from the Diocese.

2. Boys may also attend St. Charles Preparatory School.

Band: Students may join the band in fifth grade. Seventh and eighth grade band students may be included in the activities of the Fisher Catholic High School band. The band performs at the annual Christmas Program, offers a Spring Concert, and performs at other scheduled events and competitions. Information about joining the school Band is available by contacting our Band Director.

Bookbags: Students must store their bookbags in their lockers/cubby areas. Bookbags are not permitted to be laying in the hallway or classroom, carried in between class rooms, etc.

Bullying: The Diocese of Columbus Schools and their staffs shall not tolerate any bullying on school grounds or at any school activity on or off campus. Bullying, including cyber bullying, is a pattern of abuse over time and involves a student being “picked on.” Bullying includes physical intimidation or assault, extortion, oral or written threats, teasing, putdowns, name calling, threatening looks/gestures/actions, cruel rumors, false accusations, and social isolation. The Diocese expects staff members who observe or become aware of an act of bullying to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. If a staff member believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, he/ she shall report to the school Principal for further investigation. The Diocese expects students and parents who become aware of an act of bullying on school grounds or any school activity on or off campus to report it to the school Principal for further investigation. The Principal will contact parents of the aggressor and the victim. This investigation may include interviews with students, parents, teachers, school staff, and reviewing records. (Diocesan Policy)

Consequences for students who bully others may include counseling, parent conference, detention, suspension and/or expulsion depending on the results of the investigation. Below are specific offenses and consequences related to bullying. The defining of consequences is an on-going process and will be periodically reviewed by members of the faculty and administration in accordance with the code of conduct.

Bus Transportation and Bus Discipline: Local public schools should be contacted to obtain bus/schedule information. Bus students assemble in the gym at dismissal. If students ride a bus other than their own, or students who normally do not take a bus ride home with a friend, they must present a note of explanation to the office before being allowed to ride on the bus and must present the note to the bus driver after being approved by the Principal.

The right of students to ride the bus is conditional upon their good behavior and observance of rules. Habitual disturbers are subject to forfeiture of this right, either temporarily or permanently. The bus driver is responsible for maintaining safe and reasonable student control. For repeated misbehavior, the bus driver will complete a conduct report on the student and submit it to the Principal. The Principal will decide what action should be taken.

Casual Days: St. Mary School will have several designated casual days per year for students and staff that will be announced in advance by the office. On designated casual days students may come to school out of uniform.

On specially designated Casual Days (OSU-Michigan Day, Christmas Casual Day, St. Patrick’s Day, etc.) students must wear a shirt or colors in accordance with that day. Students not in accordance with specially designated days or not wishing to participate in casual days must be in uniforms. For items not specifically mentioned in this policy, the Principal shall have the authority to determine if a student is in violation of intent of the Casual Day Dress Policy.

Child Custody: Where applicable, parents are required to submit a certified copy of any court order or decree relative to custody and/or residence of a child. Unless such a decree sets specific parameters regarding access to data, visitation, and so forth, the parent who is not the residential parent is granted full access to student data and to conferences with the teacher. Visitation, however, must be conducted outside of school hours. Should a parent request restriction of a parent who is not the residential parent, that parent must submit documentation from the court, or proper official, outlining specifically, a legal basis for such restriction. Verbal requests without such written documentation cannot be honored. For more information, please see Diocesan Policy. *Communication regarding student information can only be communicated to the custodial parent, residential parent or a legal guardian.*

Choir: Vocal music and music appreciation are part of the curriculum for all students in grades kindergarten through eight. In addition to music instruction, St. Mary School has a school choir program. Information about the school choir is available through our middle school music teacher who also serves as Choir Director.

Code of Conduct: The essence of Christian behavior is self-discipline; therefore, students must be free to choose one form of behavior over another. St. Mary School is responsible for establishing a learning environment in which students receive continuing instruction regarding acceptable behavior, per Diocesan policy. In choosing to misbehave or not follow the school or classroom rules, the student takes upon himself/herself the consequences of that chosen behavior. The Catholic Church respects the dignity of persons of all ages; therefore, corporal punishment in any form is not an acceptable form of punishment for student misbehavior. At St. Mary School, we believe that with every right comes responsibility and that by taking responsibility we all make our school a better place. These rights and responsibilities are the foundation of our code of conduct. When dealing with matters involving student discipline, we strive to teach our students to seek reconciliation with others, take corrective action, ask for forgiveness, and avoid repeating poor choices.

Students have the right to:	And the responsibility to:
Know the school rules	To follow them
Learn	Be prepared to learn and participate
A good education	To do their best every day
Use school materials	Treat them with respect
Be respected	Respect others
Be treated fairly	Treat others fairly
Be heard	Listen
To feel safe at school	Keep our school safe by following rules/look out for others
To be trusted	To be honest and take ownership for their actions and choices

The code of conduct serves to guide the behavior of students at St. Mary School and outlines student expectations both in the classroom as well as in related arts classes, recess and lunch. It binds neither the administration nor staff

to actions not in the best interest of the child; rather, it provides a framework within which behavior can be effectively monitored. Faculty and staff are to be fair, firm, and consistent in dealing with discipline situations. Teachers are expected to communicate with parents regarding discipline problems, especially if behavior is consistently out of line with school/classroom rules and regulations. Questions or concerns about discipline matters or consequences should first be directed to the teachers and staff members involved. The St. Mary administration, faculty, and staff protects the privacy of students, and therefore, will not discuss the discipline matters of other students. Questions or concerns about demerits or detentions should first be directed to the teachers and staff members who issued them. Situations not listed in the code of conduct are left to the judgment of the teacher/staff member/principal.

When a student chooses to break a rule, the following may occur:

Step 1. Grades K-8 = Warning and intervention to correct the behavior Students in grades K-3 may receive up to 3 warnings depending on the severity of the behavior, at the discretion of the classroom teacher or other faculty member. Interventions will be put in place by the teacher to help the student correct the behavior and prevent the behavior from reoccurring.

Step 2. Grades K-8 = Demerit An electronic demerit notice will be issued by the classroom teacher or faculty member explaining the infraction. This notice will be sent to the parents through FACTS and a copy of the notice will be placed in the student's file. Parents must electronically sign all demerit notices whether or not the parent agrees with the issuance of the demerit. The demerit notice is a form of communication with the parent.

Examples of behaviors that might earn demerit include but are not limited to:

- 3 tardy arrivals to school in 1 quarter
- Unauthorized gum chewing
- Uniform/dress code violation - grades 4-8 only
- Unauthorized picture taking
- Throwing objects or rough play - without intent to harm
- Disrupting class
- Destruction of property - temporary
- Failure to follow instructions
- Disrespect towards staff
- Inappropriate behavior during school day or at a school sponsored event (i.e. performance, field trip, assembly, etc.)
- Violation of Technology Acceptable Use Policy
- Detrimental behavior affecting the safety of self or others - resulting in no harm

Step 3. Grades K-8 = Detention Serious violations of the student code of conduct and other major infractions may result in an automatic detention. Detentions will be served twice a month from 7:15am-7:45am . A staff member will be present to monitor students serving detention. Students earning a detention will receive a notice indicating their assignment to the detention. This notice will be sent to the parents through FACTS and will include the date that the student will serve the detention.

Example of behaviors that might constitute an automatic detention include, but are not limited to:

- 3 demerits in 1 quarter
- Forgery
- Academic misconduct - cheating or copying work
- Derogatory talk or profane language (written, spoken, gesture)
- Unwelcome physical contact (i.e. hitting, biting, slapping, kicking, etc)
- Threatening another student
- Distribution of, showing others, and/or bringing to school or school events any material (written, photos, drawings, videos, etc) that is pornographic or sexual in nature
- Public displays of affection
- Racial, sexual, or other harassment
- Insubordination
- Destruction of property - permanent
- Violent gestures or actions (even if suggested or in jest)
- Detrimental behavior affecting safety of self or others - resulting in harm
- Misconduct on bus
- Posting, texting, or distributing (in any format) content or pictures of/about students or staff of St. Mary School or other Diocesan schools deemed to be intimidating, degrading, threatening, or of a bullying nature

Step 4. In-School Suspension The student will be counted as in attendance at school. The student will complete all school assignments and take all tests and quizzes. He or she will receive full credit for all work but will not be eligible for Irish Pride Honor Roll. The student may not participate in school activities including after school and athletic activities until the suspension is served. In-School Suspension will be monitored by a designated staff member. Notice of suspension will occur via FACTS with a letter mailed home to parents/guardians, a copy of which will be placed in the student's permanent file. School administrative decisions on suspension are final.

Step 5. Out-of-School Suspension Parents will be notified of the suspension and may be asked to take the student home immediately. The student will be counted as an unexcused absence on the day(s) of the out of school suspension. The student may not attend school or any other school related activity through the length of suspension. The student will be expected to complete all class assignments while serving the out-of-school suspension. Zeros/INS (insufficient) will be received for all tests and quizzes missed due to the out-of-school suspension and the student will not be eligible for Irish Pride Honor Roll. A suspension letter will be sent home to parents/guardians and placed in the student's permanent file. The student may not participate in school activities including after school and athletic activities until the suspension is served. School administrative decisions on suspensions are final.

Step 6. Expulsion A student who exhibits a constant disruption to the learning environment and does not change behavior after the above disciplinary actions have been taken, a student who poses a threat to students and staff, or a student who engages in extreme serious offenses may be expelled from St. Mary School. There is an expulsion appeal process. Upon the request for a hearing by any parent or guardian, the President of the St. Mary School

Advisory Board will appoint a committee of at least three school board members to hear the appeal. Within three school days of the request, a hearing will take place. Statements supporting the charges against the student may be submitted, as well as statements by the students and others on the student's behalf. The teacher who registered the complaint, the Principal, or another faculty representative and the parents or guardian of the student will be given the opportunity to express their views. The committee, by a majority vote of its membership, may affirm, reverse, or modify the decision to expel the student. On the first school day following the hearing, the committee shall notify the parents or guardians and the principal of its decision, in writing, clearly stating the reasons for the decision reached. The above policy is in accordance with the Diocesan Policy.

Suspension and expulsion procedures will be in accordance with Diocesan Policy. In all situations, there will be discretion left to the teacher and the principal. In accordance with Diocesan Policy, at no time will corporal punishment be used as a means of punishment. The principal may notify local authorities if the infraction is of a serious/illegal nature or endangers any person in the school community.

St. Mary School has the right to insist that any student who causes constant disruption in class or poses a danger to the school and other students receives professional counseling at the parent's expense.

A student who engages in disruptive conduct outside of school that causes embarrassment to the school and /or poor example to the students may be suspended from the school at the discretion of the principal. Students who attend a Catholic school can receive discipline for behavior that happens outside of school if it directly affects the school community. Cyber bullying, negative blogging and other types of behavior are not acceptable. This behavior negatively affects our school community.

The Diocese of Columbus has a concern with conduct by students at school or away from school that may bring discredit or harm to the name of the school or the reputation of the student body. Consequently, conduct at school or away from school that is inappropriate to Christian moral standards, conduct that is in violation of the law, conduct that is detrimental to the common good, threatening, harmful, or offensive to other students or staff or conduct that is of such nature as to jeopardize the good name of the school, may subject a student to discipline. Discipline for such conduct shall be at the sole discretion of the school (Diocesan Policy).

Damascus Retreat: The students in 6th and 7th grade have the opportunity to participate in an overnight retreat at Damascus Catholic Mission Campus. 8th grade students will attend the Confirmation Retreat at Damascus with the PSR program. Information and forms for this program are sent home to parents each year.

Directory Information Notice – Publishing Student Information: Directory information regarding students will be released in various formats including websites unless a parent notifies the school that such information is not to be released regarding his/her child. Directory information includes names of students, grade level, honor roll, activities, sports, awards, and date of graduation. (Diocesan Policy) All families are given copies of the Personally Identifiable Information Release Form for content for the school website and marketing items at the beginning of the school year. The Home and School group publishes a family directory each school year. Forms requesting family information and permission are sent home each year.

Early Departure from or Return to School: Parents removing children from school before regular dismissal times must check in with the office and sign-out the student in the log book. If a student returns to school during the day, he/she must go to the office before returning to class for an admission slip.

Eighth Grade Graduation: All students who successfully complete the required classes and earn passing grades, with or without the assistance of a Services, Written or Academic Support Plan, shall be granted a diploma. All tuition and school fees (including lunch fees, library fees, etc.) must be paid in full, per tuition policies, in order for a student to be granted his/her eighth-grade diploma.

Electronic Devices in School: Apple watches, Fit Bits, portable CD players, iPods, MP3 players, and any other music players or game devices may be brought to school, however, these items must be kept in the student's book bag and in the student's locker at the risk of the student. They may not be used in the building between 7:25 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. They are not to be used while in the Kids CARE supervision as well. If any of these items are found being used in the building by a student, they will be confiscated and turned in to the school office where a parent must pick it up.

Cell phones may be brought to school but must be turned off and kept in the student's locker at his/her own risk. This includes Apple watches and Fitbits. Cell phones can only be used with teacher or Principal permission during the school day. Cell phones cannot be used to call home for forgotten lunches, homework assignments, gym clothes, etc. A student must come to the office for these situations to possibly use the school phone. Cell phones found on a student's person will be confiscated and turned in to the school office where a parent must pick it up.

Cameras of any type may not be brought to school except with teacher permission for field. Pictures may not be taken on school property using cell phone cameras. Violation of this rule will result in the camera being confiscated and returned to the parent. There is to be absolutely no posting, texting, picture taking, or any other form of electronic media sent on a cell phone or the internet that contains either photos, drawings, text, or comments that bring discredit or harm to the name of our school or the reputation of a student or faculty member.

St. Mary School is not responsible for stolen or damaged electronic devices brought to school. The administration reserves the right to modify, up-date, or change any of the above-mentioned areas dealing with electronic devices when necessary.

Emergency Medical Authorization Information: A sheet containing information about each child is kept in the school clinic. This information is obtained at the beginning of each school year. **Please contact the office if this information changes during the year.** The emergency information sheet authorizes the school to give emergency medical attention and gives the names of relatives or neighbors who can be notified if parents cannot be reached.

Emergency Procedures and Crisis Response: St. Mary School has developed an emergency and crisis response plan. This plan has been prepared to help direct personnel in the effective management of emergency situations so that the safety of students and staff can be protected as much as possible. St. Mary School will work cooperatively with the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools as well as government and community agencies to prevent, assess, manage and investigate any threat to the safety and well-being of students and staff. This plan is designed to contain the primary elements or steps necessary for effective intervention and follow-up for selected common emergencies.

Since it is impossible to enumerate all the emergency situations that may arise, this guide, along with common sense, should help to ensure that emergencies will be handled as effectively and safely as possible. The overarching goal of this plan is to eliminate and/or minimize, to the extent possible, student and staff exposure to dangerous and traumatic situations. In the event that students and staff need to be evacuated from the Primary and Main Buildings, a notification will be sent to parents. After students have been taken to either the location, students should find their homeroom teacher and remain with that teacher until further instructions are given. When parents arrive at the evacuation facility, they should sign out their children on the Emergency Dismissal Sign Out sheets located at designated areas. No student may leave unless a parent or other authorized adult signs the student out. The responsibilities of all staff members during an emergency are stated in the Emergency Procedures Crisis Response Guide. A copy of the St. Mary School emergency and crisis response plan is available in the school office. Parents will be notified via text, phone, and email if an emergent situation arises. Further details will be given at that time.

Enrichment Programs: St. Mary School complements the instructional program by making available to the students several enrichment programs and the opportunity to develop particular talents through special projects. A Science Fair, House System, and Band are some of the opportunities made available to students. Other enrichment activities are organized directly by the teachers or the Home and School Association in order to meet the children's needs and to supplement the curriculum.

Extended Time: Students who have accommodations for extended time will continue to be given this time based on what is written in their academic plan. This time is not unlimited though as it is not best practice to have students submit work weeks after the information is taught. Extended time due to absences will be given based on the policies set forth in our student handbook .

Fidelity to Church Teachings: All school personnel who serve in Catholic schools shall be examples of Catholic moral behavior and professionalism and are to be faithful to Church teachings in both their instruction and lifestyle.

As explained by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops:

The integration of religious truth and values with the rest of life is brought about in the Catholic school not only by its unique curriculum but, more important, by the presence of teachers [personnel] who express an integrated approach to learning and living in their private and professional lives.

All school personnel, regardless of their religious affiliation, are therefore required to abide by the moral values advanced by the teachings of Christ, the tenets of the Catholic Church, and the policies and regulations of the Diocesan Department for Education, the Diocese and the employing school. School personnel may be disciplined or terminated for violations of these standards, or any conduct which is contrary to, or rejects or offends the teachings, doctrines, or principles of the Catholic Church.

Field Trips: Field trips are taken to enrich the learning experiences of the pupils. They are planned by the faculty and staff only, with approval from the administration, and are considered part of the curriculum. Permission slips will be given to the children several days prior to the trip. They are to be signed by the parents and returned before the day of the trip. Transportation will be provided by bus. For information about volunteering as field trip chaperones or drivers please see the "Volunteers" and "Volunteer Code of Conduct" sections of this handbook.

Food Allergies: Parents should notify the school if their child has a life-threatening food allergy. St. Mary School follows Diocesan Policy regarding the management of food allergies at school. In accordance with this policy, a food allergy action plan specific to the student with the life-threatening food allergy is developed by the school nurse and the child's parents. The nurse also reviews all allergy information provided by the student's parents and physician, and shares this information with the appropriate teachers and staff. The parents of the child with a life-threatening allergy provide the school with medications prescribed, as noted in the food allergy action plan. The parents will also provide a supply of "safe" snacks for use by their child at school. Parents of children with life-threatening food allergies are responsible for notifying bus transportation providers with information regarding their child's allergy.

Fundraising: In order to ensure that the St. Mary School community makes good decisions about fundraising, and plans, undertakes, and facilitates viable fundraising activities, the following procedures will be used when an individual, group, or auxiliary organization (i.e. Home and School, Athletics, etc.) wishes to plan a fundraiser:

1. Individuals or groups wishing to conduct a fundraiser at or affiliated with St. Mary School must first complete a Fundraiser Approval Form available at the school office.
2. Next, they must seek approval of their fundraiser through a sponsoring auxiliary organization of St. Mary School (i.e. Home and School, Athletics, etc.).
3. Final approval of the fundraising activity rests with the St. Mary Pastor and/or Principal.

Harassment: St. Mary School harassment policy is intended to protect students against harassment before it becomes actionable. Harassment in any form is not in keeping with conduct expectations of a student in a Catholic school. Any violation of the policy should immediately be brought to the attention of an administrator or teacher. Violators will be dealt with immediately. Harassment is considered a major violation of school rules.

1. Sexual Harassment: St. Mary School is committed to preventing sexual harassment behavior by our students at all times, but specifically at school, school carriers, and at school activities. Sexual harassment is improper, immoral and illegal behavior and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment is defined by Ohio and federal laws as unwanted sexual advances, or unwanted visual, verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. St. Mary School abides by the Harassment Policy as established by the Diocese of Columbus, Department of Education. That policy states the following:

- a. Harassment can take many forms. Harassment can occur at any school activity and/or can take place in classrooms, halls, cafeterias, or even at programs sponsored by the school at other locations. It does not include compliments of a socially acceptable nature. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that embarrasses, denigrates, or shows hostility toward a person because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, sex, national origin, age or disability.
- b. It is the policy of the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Columbus to maintain a working and academic environment, in all programs and activities, free of all forms of harassment and intimidation. No student, teacher, or other staff member — male or female — should be subject to harassment in any form, and specifically not to unsolicited and/or unwelcome sexual overtures or conduct, either verbal or physical.
- c. Conduct which constitutes sexual harassment is prohibited. Sexually harassing conduct includes but is not limited to, the following:

- offensive sexual flirtations, advances, or propositions;
 - continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature;
 - explicit or degrading sexual or gender-based comments about another individual or his appearance;
 - the display or circulation of sexually explicit or suggestive writing, pictures or objects;
 - any offensive or abusive physical conduct which shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of gender or sex;
 - graffiti of a sexual nature;
 - fondling oneself sexually or talking about one's sexual activity in front of others;
 - spreading rumors about or categorizing others as to sexual activity.
- d. Sexual harassment also includes the taking of, or refusal to take any school or academic action on the basis of a person's submission to or refusal of sexual overtures. No person should so much as imply that an individual's "cooperation" or submission to unwelcome sexual activity will have any effect on the individual's assignment, advancement, development, academic evaluation, participation in school programs or activities, or any other condition of school or academic achievement.
- e. Not all physical conduct is necessarily considered sexual in nature. (For example, a coach hugging a student after an accomplishment, a teacher consoling a child with an injury, or physical conduct during athletic events would not be considered sexual conduct.) However, peer-based sexual harassment (e.g., student to student) can be a form of prohibited conduct where the harassing conduct creates a hostile environment.
- f. A sexually hostile environment can be created by a school employee, volunteer, another student, or a visitor to the school.
- g. Anyone who experiences what they believe is harassing conduct must bring it to the attention of an appropriate person at the school, or at the superintendent's office. Any person who believes they are subject to harassment or intimidation should contact either the Principal, assistant Principal, or Pastor at the elementary level; and the Principal, assistant Principal or superintendent at the secondary level. A complaint should be filed in writing. In the case of harassment involving a student or students, the parents or guardians of the respective students shall be duly notified. In the event that an individual alleges harassment by a Principal, assistant Principal or a Pastor, the individual may file the complaint with the superintendent. All complaints will be promptly investigated, and the person initiating the complaint will be advised of the outcome of the investigation.
- h. A student who believes he or she has been sexually harassed (or a parent who believes that their child has been harassed) should immediately report it to a responsible school official.
- 1). Where it is determined that improper harassment has occurred, the school will take immediate disciplinary action against any administrator, teacher, staff or student engaging in harassment. The response shall take into account and be considered to be appropriate for the ages of the individuals and circumstances.
 - 2). No retaliation against anyone who reports harassment will be tolerated. The Diocese prohibits such retaliation and will take appropriate responsive action if retaliation

occurs.

- 3). Any knowingly false charge or harassment made for the purpose of harming a person's reputation will have very serious consequences, which may include, depending on the circumstances, termination of participation in programs, suspension, or expulsion.

2. **Racial Harassment:** No student shall disregard the rights of or demonstrate lack of respect for others by using racial slurs, discriminatory remarks, or inappropriate terminology, either directly or indirectly, while on school grounds, school carriers, or at any school-related activities. Racial harassment is improper and immoral behavior and will not be tolerated in this Christian community.

Home and School Parent Association: Every parent/guardian at St. Mary School is a member of the Home and School Association. The Association's objectives include promoting better communication and interaction between parents/teachers/school administration, providing opportunities for social interaction among parents and families, providing programs/activities for students, and assisting in providing financial support for the school through fundraising efforts. Home and School meetings are typically held once a month as noted on the online school calendar. A representative of each school family is strongly encouraged to attend at least one meeting during the school year to contribute input to the Home and School Association.

Homework: The 4 major purposes of homework are:

1. An extension of classwork to practice and reinforce skills or concepts introduced in the classroom.
2. A preparation for classwork to prepare for in-class discussion or activities/experiments (students are often asked to read or study materials for this preparation).
3. An enrichment to allow students to explore in-depth subjects of personal interest and to allow individual creative forms of expression.
4. A basis for developing responsibility to encourage self-discipline, to establish good study habits, and to motivate students to want to learn more.

Homework assignments may include: memorization, practice exercises, outside reading, research, art projects or family activities. Homework is the responsibility not only of the student, but also the parents. Parents are not expected to do the work for the student, but their guidance and support are needed to see that the student has enough time and a suitable environment in which to do assignments. If a student comes home repeatedly telling parents that he/she has no work to do, it would be advisable for the parents to check with the teacher. Parental interest, encouragement and cooperation will surely help the student to feel successful and proud of his/her completed assignments. It would be ideal on school nights, Monday through Thursday, for students to begin the habit of scheduling a study time, whether or not there is assigned homework. Students could review spelling words, practice handwriting, drill math facts, read, review class notes, etc. Skills are gained only through continual practice and routine. The time allotment for homework is based upon the ability of the average child. The following are suggested time allotments as given by the Diocesan School Office; Primary grades: 20 minutes, Intermediate: 60 minutes, Junior High: 90 minutes.

Human Growth and Development: Human growth and development is taught in accordance with the diocesan religion, science, and health courses of study. Following the courses of study, the identification of the reproductive system and its components are taught in fifth grade, with an emphasis on the Catholic Church's teachings on

morality and human sexuality. In the middle school years of grades six, seven, and eight, the Catholic Church's teachings on human sexuality as a gift from God for procreation and the reservation of this gift for marriage is taught, per diocesan curriculum. In alignment with the diocesan philosophy for Catholic schools, instruction is grounded in Catholic theology. Instruction supports the human growth and development components of the courses of study to fulfill our Catholic identity in light of our mission.

Intervention Services: St. Mary School follows a Response to Intervention (or RTI) process in order to ensure that students' academic and social needs are met to the best of the ability of St. Mary School. All students at St. Mary receive "Tier 1" instruction and accommodations in their regular classrooms which include appropriate instruction, a standards-based curriculum, regular assessment and screening, differentiated instruction, and behavior interventions. If a teacher or a child's parent/guardian identifies a learning issue, a speech impairment, or a pattern of behavioral concerns, the St. Mary RTI process will be followed. The teacher will notify the school principal, communicate with the child's parents about the concerns, and begin documenting classroom interventions that are being implemented for four-six weeks. Examples of documentation may include writing samples, STAR data, classroom assessments/assignments, behavior journals, notes from classroom observations, etc. If, after the four-six weeks of documented classroom interventions, the child is not making progress, the teacher will notify the parent/guardian, the principal, and the school intervention specialist, and a "child find" meeting will be scheduled. The local public school district (and/or the child's district of residence) will be contacted by St. Mary and involved with scheduling and attending the child find meeting. The teacher will present the documentation at the child find meeting and a discussion will be held about the child's progress and the teacher/parent concerns. If the public school district suspects that the child has a disability, they will move forward with scheduling testing of the student, a follow up meeting, and writing a plan/IEP for the student if he/she qualifies. If the public school district does not suspect a disability or agree to test the student, the teacher, parent, and the St. Mary intervention specialist will discuss the creating an "Academic Support Plan" for the student (this is similar to a public school district "504 plan") if applicable.

Kids C.A.R.E. Program: The Kids C.A.R.E. after school program is available to St. Mary School students in kindergarten through eighth grade from 2:40 pm – 5:30pm when school is in session. Detailed information about Kids C.A.R.E. rates is available in the Kids C.A.R.E. handbook. In order to participate in Kids C.A.R.E. students must be registered with the program before the first day of school. Please contact the Kids C.A.R.E. Director for handbook and policy information.

Kindergarten Age Requirement: Children must be five (5) years old by August 30 to attend Kindergarten. Enrollment consideration for students who will turn five between September 1 and September 30 will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Library: St. Mary School maintains a well-equipped library with books, periodicals, and reference materials available to serve both student and faculty needs. Selection of materials is made with the curriculum and the needs of both students and teachers as the primary concern. Students will have the opportunity to visit the library each week. Students are responsible for any items they check out of the school library. Fees for overdue, lost, or damaged library items must be paid in full by the end of the school year in order for a child to receive his/her final progress report.

Lockers: All lockers (including those in the athletic locker rooms) are school property and must be treated as such.

Students are to use their assigned locker only and will accept the responsibilities that go with this privilege. As school property, all lockers may be searched or checked by school staff at any time. The use of a personal lock on a locker is prohibited. Students are expected to respect the rights of other students and, therefore, use their own locker only. Any damage to assigned lockers will be assessed to the student.

Lunch: St. Mary School offers a full lunch program that serves hot lunch, brown bag lunch, and milk on a daily basis. The price for a school lunch is determined annually, based on the projected expenses of the cafeteria program. Additionally, a la carte items will be sold daily. Meal accounts must be kept up to date so that a student is not in arrears with the cafeteria. Monies owed to the cafeteria must be paid in full by the end of the school year in order for students to receive their final progress report. Students who bring their own lunches may buy milk at a price determined annually.

Meals may only be eaten in the cafeteria (unless deemed physically impossible) and no food may be taken to the park or any other area during the lunch period. In accordance with the diocesan and school wellness policy, packed lunches should not include pop/soda. Students may not share lunches due to the number of those with food allergies. Take-out food from restaurants may not be brought to students to be eaten during lunch. Visitors will be unable to eat lunch with their child at this time.

Make-up Work: If a student has missed school due to illness, an appointment, or for another excused absence their assignments from that day will be sent to the school office by 2:30pm. The work may be picked up for the student until the school office closes at 3:30pm. If the work is unable to be picked up, the student may get their missed assignments upon their return to school. A student who has missed a full day of school will have the number of school days they were absent to complete and turn in their missing assignments. (For example, a student who is absent for two school days due to illness will have two school days, upon their return to school, to submit their make-up work. If they were ill on a Monday and Tuesday and return to school on Wednesday will be expected to turn in all of their missing assignments by that Friday.) An exception to this policy would be in the case of a student who is hospitalized or has an extended illness or injury and is able to make up the work through tutoring or some other type of aid.

St. Mary School strongly urges parents to schedule family vacations when school is not in session. Make-up assignments for missed work due to vacation will not be given prior to the student leaving on vacation. Rather, on the day the student returns to school, he/she will collect all missed work from his/her teacher(s). The student will then have the number of school days they missed to complete and turn in all assignments. (For example, a student who misses school on a Thursday, Friday, and Monday due to vacation will collect his/her assignments upon their return to school Tuesday and will have three school days to complete all missed work.) This policy allows students to have access to their classroom materials and their teacher as they complete missed work. Students who do not complete and turn in make-up work in the allotted time will not receive full credit for their assignments.

Mass Attendance: All students of St. Mary School should attend Mass every Sunday or Saturday evening. This is a serious obligation and the responsibility for this attendance lies with the parents. During school, students attend all school liturgies weekly and as scheduled throughout the year.

Middle School Homerooms: Homeroom assignments for students in grades 6-8 are determined by the faculty and principal of St. Mary School based on recommendations from sending teachers/schools and on the emotional,

social, and educational needs of the students. It is important for students and parents to remember that, regardless of homeroom assignments, the middle school students will have many opportunities to work with the other homeroom teachers and students throughout the course of the year.

Middle School House System: All students in grades 6-8 participate in our middle school House system. The Houses are cooperative, mixed groups of students who work together for the good of the school and the community. Each House is named for a Catholic saint that the members learn about and emulate through service to each other, the school, and the community. Houses conduct various service projects, fundraisers, and activities that student members design and implement throughout the course of the school year. Each House is assigned a faculty/staff coordinator who supervises their activities. Houses typically meet once a month during the school day and teach our middle school students about leadership, service, and the Catholic faith.

Musical Performances (Programs and Concerts): Each December, the primary and intermediate students perform a Christmas Program for the school community, and the St. Mary School Band and Choir students have a performance as well. St. Mary School also offers a concert in the spring featuring our Band and Choir members.

The St. Mary Music Department puts together a musical play each spring. Students in grades 6-8 learn and practice the music and performance pieces as part of their regular music classes in order to fulfill curricular goals. In addition, middle school students in grades 6-8 may volunteer to try out for speaking or acting parts in the musical, to serve as part of the stage crew, or to assist with lighting, sound, direction, and other components of the production.

Non-Discrimination and Reasonable Accommodation Procedure: St. Mary School recruits and admits students of any race, color, gender or ethnicity to all its rights, privileges, programs, and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, or English proficiency in the administration of its educational programs and extracurricular activities. Students shall not be denied admission to a school because of a disability unless this disability seriously impairs the student's ability to complete successfully the school's academic program, or unless the school cannot provide sufficient care or make reasonable accommodation for the disabled child. Furthermore, the school is not intended to be an alternative to court or administrative agency ordered, or public-school initiated desegregation. The school is open to students of families who sincerely seek the religious nature of our program. While preference is given to parish members, others are welcome as space allows. New admissions are subject to the approval of the Principal who will exercise discretion so as to assure enrollment for good and proper reasons, consistent with the school's philosophy and mission. St. Mary School will not enroll a student for whom financial obligations to this or other schools of the Diocese remain unpaid.

Office Hours and Purpose: The school office is open on days that school is in session from 7:30AM-3:30PM. The purpose of the school office and office staff are to serve students, faculty, staff, parents, and visitors with school related matters during school hours, while keeping the school environment safe. All visitors, including school parents, must check in at the office.

Parent Communication and Conferences: Parents should contact the teacher first each time they have a question or concern about grades, assignments, assessments/tests, classroom matters, etc. The chain of command with regard to home and school communication should be followed at all times. Concerns and disagreements will be addressed, with solutions sought, with those persons involved per Diocesan Policy. Our main Parent Communication system is FACTS. All families will receive a FACTS login prior to the start of the school year. It is

essential that all parents read the emails that are sent from the school because they contain important and helpful information. If your email address changes throughout the year, please notify the school office.

Parent-teacher conference nights are scheduled each fall. This first scheduled conference is recommended for all parents. Other scheduled conferences are at parent or teacher request throughout the school year. During the conference the child's progress, habits of self-control and concentration, interests and aptitudes should be discussed. The child's emotional and social growth must also be considered, in order that the teacher and the parents may cooperate more closely with one another to educate the student to the fullest capacity. Such cooperation will prepare the student to meet religious, social and educational needs. Student led conferences are conducted at various grade levels. Parents are welcome to call the school office to leave a message for the teacher or e-mail the teacher to schedule a conference when they feel this is necessary.

Parental Behavior: Our goal is to partner with parents in the spiritual and academic formation of their children. This partnership is founded upon collaboration and the expectation that all adults including parents and guardians will be positive, solution-oriented, and Christ-like in their dialogue and communication.

Physical Education Class Attire: Please see uniform policy for information regarding the PE uniform for students in 6th-8th grade. Students in kindergarten through 5th grade are expected to wear sneakers to school on their designated P.E. day. Girls should opt to wear pants or shorts (when permitted) on P.E. day or wear shorts or uniform leggings underneath their jumpers or skirts.

Preschool Program: St. Mary School proudly offers morning, afternoon, and all-day preschool classes. Our preschool provides our littlest learners with developmentally appropriate activities and materials to help them learn and grow academically, socially, and emotionally. Information about our preschool program is available through the school office.

Progress Reporting and Grading: Student progress for all grade levels, Kindergarten through eighth, is posted on our online grading program on a regular basis. Parents are given accounts for the online grading program and are expected to log in and check their child's progress regularly. Quarterly/cumulative progress for students all students in grades kindergarten through eight will be posted after the end of each grading period. Grading periods are noted on the school calendar.

There are different methods used for measuring achievement, effort and behavior. Understanding on the part of the parents and words of praise and encouragement are very effective at this time in a child's development. The Diocese of Columbus sets forth the progress codes used to report student achievement. Additional information and/or updates about the diocesan progress report and standards-based grading policy can be found on the Office of Catholic Schools website.

Promotion and Retention: Promotion in St. Mary School shall be based on a consideration for the welfare of the student. Every student shall be placed where he/she can work to his/her ability. Results of research indicate that with rare exceptions, children adjust and achieve better in later years when they are in classes of children with like ages. The diocese requires that various factors be taken into consideration when making a retention determination. Of primary consideration is whether or not a second year in the same grade will enable the student to gain the skills and knowledge not learned in the first year. Other factors that must be considered are academic progress, possible

learning disabilities, and social and emotional maturity. When reviewing academic progress, multiple indicators should be used including daily work, assessments, progress reports, standardized testing, Academic Support Plans, Service Plans, and Written Plans. In the case of retention, the student's lack of progress must be clearly documented and communicated to parents by the teacher, with classroom interventions put into place and monitored before retention is considered. Parents must be notified in writing by the end of the second quarter if retention is being considered. At the start of the third quarter, a meeting with parents, teachers, and the Principal should be held to address student progress in meeting benchmarks, to review interventions, and to discuss retention. By the middle of the fourth quarter, an additional meeting is required to determine the final recourse for retention. Any requirements for summer intervention should be discussed at this meeting, as well.

Criteria for Promotion/Retention Grades K-3

- A. Academic Achievement - Since the main emphasis in the primary grades is on reading and mathematics, not meeting the standards or significant benchmarks in these subjects may result in retention. Students must master certain minimum requirements in those subject areas to merit promotion.
- B. Maturity - The ability of the student to adapt to classroom procedures, work independently, and interact with and relate to peers must be taken into consideration.

Criteria for Retention Grades 4-8

- A. Academic Achievement
 - a. Not meeting the standards and/or significant benchmarks for the year in two major subject areas (Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science).

Publishing Student Information: A school, school employee, school organization or the diocese may publish student information in various formats including websites under the following conditions. If proper notice is given and the parents of a student do not object, directory information may be released. Directory information includes names of students, grade level, honor roll, activities, sports, awards, and date of graduation. A consent signed and dated by the parents(s) of a student must be obtained to release personally identifiable information. Personally identifiable information is information that makes the identity of a student more traceable. Personally identifiable information includes pictures with and without names, addresses, social security numbers, ID numbers, personal characteristics (height, weight, etc.), and educational records. (Diocesan Policy)

Recess and Lunch Rules: All students are required to conduct themselves in an orderly manner during the school day, including during lunch and recess. All students are expected to take their recess and lunch periods with their classmates. In fair weather, all students are expected to be outdoors for recess. Students must bring a light jacket or sweatshirt to school when air temperatures are expected to be in the 40-60 degrees. When air temperatures are below 40 degrees, a coat is required for all students. Parents are asked not to request that their children be kept indoors for recess. If the park and/or patio has ice, snow, or flooding, recess will be held inside in the classrooms. If the air temperature is 25 degrees or below, there is a wind chill factor of 25 degrees or below, it is raining or snowing, or there is the threat of severe weather, recess will be held inside in the classrooms. To maintain student safety, the following rules are enforced for recess:

PATIO RULES

- Play safe.
 - Equipment that is brought out to the patio must be approved by an adult who is on duty.
 - No ball games involving distance kicking or throwing.
 - If a ball rolls in the street, an adult must get it.
- Respect school property.
 - No standing or sitting on the bike rack.
 - No playing with or touching trash cans.
 - No jumping over or climbing on the fence.
 - No standing on, climbing on, walking on, or jumping to or from the wall.
 - No food or drinks brought out from lunch.
- Respect others.
 - No lifting other students, tackling, fighting, hitting, or rough play.
 - Take turns and play fair.
 - No public displays of affection or foul language.
- Obey the adults in charge.
 - Listen to them and show them respect.
 - Stop playing and line up without pushing or shoving when the whistle blows.
 - Stay on the patio. Ask an adult in charge for permission to come back in the building if needed.

PARK RULES

- Play safe.
 - Walk to and from the park and use the sidewalks and crosswalks.
 - If a ball rolls in the street, an adult must get it.
- Use the playground equipment correctly.
 - Walk up ladders.
 - Go down slides in seated positions.
 - Do not walk or hang on the bars.
 - Do not jump from anything higher than your waist.
- Respect City property.
 - No digging in the mulch, dirt, or grass.
 - No picking up or throwing mulch, dirt, sticks, or rocks.
 - No playing with or touching trash cans.
 - No standing on benches or tables.
 - No food or drinks brought out from lunch.
- Respect others.
 - No lifting other students, tackling, fighting, hitting, or rough play.
 - Take turns and play fair.

- o No public displays of affection or foul language.
- Obey the adults in charge.
 - o Listen to them and show them respect.
 - o Stop playing and line up without pushing or shoving when the whistle blows.
 - o Stay in the park. Ask an adult in charge for permission to come back to the building if needed. Students must be walked back to the building by an adult.

INDOOR RECESS RULES

- Play safe.
 - o Walk in the classrooms and hallways.
 - o Quiet, calm games are permitted in classrooms and hallways only (no throwing, catching, or running).
- Respect school property.
 - o Respect all classroom/school materials and areas.
 - o No food or drinks brought from lunch.
- Respect others.
 - o No lifting other students, tackling, fighting, hitting, or rough play.
 - o Take turns and play fair.
 - o No public displays of affection or foul language.
- Obey the adults in charge.
 - o Listen to them and show respect.
 - o Stop playing, clean up what you are using, and line up without pushing or shoving when you are told.
 - o Stay in the classroom or area that you are told to play in.
 - o Ask an adult in charge for permission to use the restroom or go to your locker.

CONSEQUENCES FOR CHOOSING NOT TO FOLLOW RECESS RULES

1. Warning by an adult on duty.
2. 5 minutes out of recess for grades K-3, 10 minutes out of recess for grades 4-8.
3. For serious matters such as fighting, hitting, etc. students will be sent to the office to speak with their teacher and/or the principal.

All students are expected to eat lunch with their classmates and must sit at their assigned tables. Students are expected to follow the lunchroom rules posted in the school gym and follow the directions of the adults in charge. Students must clean up after themselves and clean their area when they are finished eating. There is absolutely no throwing food or food fighting, no stealing or taking the food of other students, and no sharing food due to food allergies. Students may not run around the gym or in the bleacher area during lunch times. Those students waiting in the bleachers are expected to sit calmly and patiently. Middle school students in grades 6-8 who do not follow lunchroom rules will be reported to their homeroom teacher and receive appropriate consequences in accordance with our demerit and detention system. Students in Kindergarten through grade five who do not follow lunchroom rules will

be reported to their classroom teacher and receive appropriate consequences in accordance with their classroom rules.

Religious Education Program: The unique feature of a parochial school is the process of religious development and formation of its students. At St. Mary School this is maintained through a complete graded course of study in religion, which is taught in grades K-8, covering the basic tenets, beliefs, traditions and practices of the Roman Catholic faith. Sacramental preparation for Eucharist, Reconciliation, and Confirmation is incorporated into the curriculum at the appropriate grade levels. Primary and intermediate grades receive thirty-five minutes of instruction daily, while the junior high receives forty minutes of instruction daily. Eucharistic participation is of high priority. Please refer to the monthly and yearly calendars for liturgies and prayer services scheduled. Parents and friends are encouraged to attend any of these liturgies. The student body also has the opportunity to experience traditional devotions and practices of the Catholic faith including Benediction, the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Lenten sacrifices, mission education, vocation awareness, grace before/after meals, morning prayer and prayer at the end of the school day. All of the above components, as well as a pervading atmosphere of faith, contribute to the process of internalizing values that are distinctively attributed to the Catholic faith.

Reporting Abuse or Neglect: By law it is the responsibility of each professional staff member to report immediately to the appropriate community agency any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect (Ohio Revised Code 2151.421). The link to the official form for reporting sexual abuse, “Diocese of Columbus Complaint Form for Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor” can be found here:

<https://d2wldr9tsuuj1b.cloudfront.net/15206/documents/2017/6/complaintform.pdf> This will be used in all necessary instances.

Right to a Catholic Education: Catholic schools exist to collaborate with parents and guardians to foster spiritual growth and the educational development of each child. Catholic schools also serve the community, particularly the Catholic community of the diocese. Catholic schools of the Diocese of Columbus shall be open to children of parent(s) or guardian(s) who seek the religiously oriented education, which Catholic schools can provide. Schools shall recruit and admit students of any race, color, gender (except those schools supporting a single gender according to their mission) or ethnicity to all its rights, privileges, programs, and activities. In addition, the school shall not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, English proficiency, or disability in the administration of its educational programs and extracurricular activities. Preference shall be given to members of Catholic parishes. Others shall be welcomed on the basis of availability of space at the discretion of the Pastor and/or Principal. Pastors and Principals shall exercise discretion in judging admission of pupils. Pastors and Principals must refuse admittance to anyone who in their opinion seeks to enroll for the purpose of circumventing the law. Catholic schools are schools of choice. Any parent who wishes to have a Catholic education for his/her child agrees that the parent and child will abide by the policies and regulations of the school. If the policies and/or regulations are not adhered to, or if the school determines that attendance by a student will not be continued, the child may be asked by the Principal and/or Pastor at the elementary level and the Principal and/or Superintendent at the high school level to leave the school.

School Closing Information: If the Lancaster City Schools close due to weather, St. Mary School will also typically close. There may be weather-related situations in which St. Mary School closes while the Lancaster City Schools remain open. Announcements about St. Mary School closings, delays, and early dismissals will be made through our school announcement phone alert system, posted on our school website, and sent via email and text.

There may be days when school is dismissed early due to bad weather. Please make sure that your child knows what to do if he/she is sent home early. Your child should have a key or know where a key is kept if both parents work or would be unable to be at home when the child comes home early. You should let your child know if he/she is to go to a neighbor's or relative's home if they are dismissed early. When school is dismissed early due to bad weather, the city and county buses will pick the students up at school and bring them home. We do not want students dropped off at home with no way of getting in, particularly in inclement weather. Again, please take time to discuss what your child should do if school should dismiss early. On days that may present a possible weather-related problem, please remind your child what to do before leaving home in the morning. Parents are kindly asked to wait for their call from the School Announcement system and avoid calling the office to inquire about closings as our lines are usually tied up when such situations occur. In the event of a two-hour delay, no students should enter the building prior to 9:30am. If a child is found unattended outside by a staff member, the staff member will ensure the child's safety and will notify the following: building principal, student parent/guardian, student emergency contacts, and local authorities as needed.

School Dances: Only students who attend St. Mary School will be permitted to attend school-sponsored dances. Regular school rules and codes of conduct shall apply to and be enforced for all dances. Inappropriate actions such as kissing, dirty dancing, foul language, or dangerous behavior will not be tolerated during any dance. If a student is told more than once to stop any behavior considered to be inappropriate, the student will sit out for the remainder of the dance. During an evening dance, the student's parents will be called to take the student home. Further disciplinary action could be taken at the discretion of the Principal. The DJ at each dance will be reminded that he/she is playing music in a Catholic school and shall be asked that songs pertaining to sex, body parts, guns and violence, vulgarity, etc. not be played.

Dress attire for girls and boys attending school-sponsored dances must reflect the values of Catholic moral teaching. Dress attire must be modest and unrevealing at all school-sponsored dances including the Eighth Grade Graduation Dance. Students may not wear strapless, backless, halter, spaghetti strap, clear strap, or single strap dresses/tops unless they wear a sweater or cover-up to the Eighth Grade Graduation Dance or any school school-sponsored dance. In addition, dress/tops/skirts with cutouts are not permitted, there should be no cleavage showing, and dresses/skirts must be a modest length.

There shall be an adequate number of chaperones present at all times. Teachers are to patrol the dance floor, locker rooms, rest rooms, and the upper hall on a regular basis. The bleacher lights are to remain on at all times. School dances held in the evening shall begin at 7:00pm and end at 9:00pm. Students will not be permitted to go outside during evening dances. Students leaving evening dances early must be picked up at the door by a parent. An adult chaperone must be notified when the student's parent arrives to pick up the student and make sure that it is indeed the student's parent before allowing the student to leave. Parents will be called to pick up their child if they are caught drinking or smoking while at an evening dance or carrying items that could be considered or used as a weapon. Such action could also result in either suspension or expulsion.

Students and parents are asked to refrain from behavior that is exclusive in nature regarding the dance including inviting only certain students to dinner, picture locations, etc. The 7th and 8th grade dance is meant to be a joyful time, so we ask that parents are respectful with these sensitive situations.

All students are expected to be in good academic standing in order to be eligible to attend the 7th and 8th Grade

Graduation Dance.

School Security: At St. Mary School the safety of our students and staff is top priority. Therefore, all entrances to both the Primary and Main Buildings are locked at all times.

ALL visitors to the school must report to the main building to check-in at the office. ALL visitors are expected to ring the doorbell and wait for a staff member to verify their identity and admit them into the school. Students, parents, and other visitors should not be opening the entrance doors for anyone. Please allow the staff to do their job in protecting our school. Remember that threats to student welfare are not always obvious or initiated by complete strangers.

SCRIP Rewards: All remaining balances of SCRIP rewards will remain with Saint Mary after a child withdraws from Saint Mary School. These funds will not be given directly to families and/or transferred to another entity. The only exception to this is graduating eighth grade students who are going to FCHS. Funds will be transferred to FCHS once upon graduation for those who have a balance greater than \$10.00.

Service Hours: Each family is required to volunteer 10 total hours during the 2026-2027 academic year. These hours can include volunteer work related to Home and School events, athletic events, school fundraisers, cafeteria assistance, playground supervision, parish life (excluding liturgical ministries), and much more. Any family member who is 18 years or older may contribute to your family's ten-hour requirement. For every hour that is not worked, a donation of \$10.00 per hour in lieu of volunteering for those families that may have time constraints impacting their ability to be present and volunteer will be requested at the close of the academic year. Studies have shown that students whose parents are involved in their school are more likely to succeed, so we hope that this program will yield many positive fruits. Please keep in mind that in order to volunteer, you must complete the Protecting God's Children course and have a current BCI fingerprint record on file.

Social Media Policy: Pictures of students may be used on school social media outlets with prior permission from parents. Students, faculty, staff, and parents are expected to maintain respectful and appropriate personal accounts, and no faculty or staff member may accept friend requests from any minor unless the minor is a family member.

Spirit Days: St. Mary School has specially designated Spirit Days throughout the school year. Spirit Days are listed on the online calendar. Any additional Spirit Days will be announced by the office.

PERMITTED SPIRIT DAY APPAREL K-8:

- Jeans, corduroy pants, sweatpants, knit pants, cargo pants, or uniform pants that meet the standards outlined below
- Cargo shorts, walking shorts, jean shorts, or capri pants permitted until October 1 and after May 1
- Skirts or dresses no shorter than 2" above the knee/Shorts that have at least a 7" inseam
- Shirts purchased from the school Spirit Store
- Shirts that say "St. Mary School", "Irish", or "FCHS" or are from other school organizations/groups
- House shirts that say "SMS" permitted
- Dress shoes or tennis shoes only, socks must be worn

For items not specifically mentioned in this policy, the principal shall have the authority to determine if a student is in violation of intent of the Spirit Day Dress Policy.

Standardized Testing: All students in grades K-8 participate in STAR Reading/Early Literacy and STAR Math assessments at least three times per year (August/September, January, and April/May). These computer-based assessments help teachers and parents track student growth over time in Reading and Math. Testing reports are sent home to parents.

Student Absence: Attendance at classes is a basic requirement for academic success. Absence detracts from this requirement and prevents the student from fulfilling an essential condition for earning credit for scholastic work. A school may refuse credit to any student who misses 28 days, pro-rated per marking period, whether the absences are excused or unexcused (Diocesan Policy). Continuous absences will be subject to review by the principal. An exception to this is hospitalization, extended illness or injury, and ability to make up work through tutoring or some other type of aid approved by the principal.

After each absence, a student must bring an excuse, written, dated and signed by the parent, stating the specific reason for the absence and noting any medication to be taken. The excuse is to be given to the student's homeroom teacher on the day of return. Excused absences include illness, death in the family, delays in public school transportation, and inclement weather. Please call the school office at 740-654-1632 between 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. to notify us if your child is absent. A doctor's note will be required to excuse absences due to illness that are longer than two days.

Students who miss classes regularly or take vacations during school time cannot have the privilege of being given assignments, "makeup" work, or tests by teachers either before the absence. Please see "Make-up Work" for more specific information.

No student shall be permitted to leave school before the dismissal time except in case of sickness or emergency. If a student should get sick while in school, the parent will be notified and arrangements made for picking up the child. To be excused from school, a student must present a written note from the parent. If possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside school time.

Please see truancy policy below for additional information.

Student Health Services and Illness: St. Mary School seeks to promote and protect the health of its students through cooperation between the student, the family, the health care provider and the school. Health matters are coordinated by the school nurse. **STUDENTS WHO ARE ILL SHOULD NOT BE SENT TO SCHOOL.**

1. Health Records

a. Parents must provide a complete health record for each student at the time of admission. It is the parents' responsibility to keep this record up to date. A Physician's Form and an Ohio Health Dental Form and (for incoming 7th graders only) verification of receipt of an MMR booster are required. The forms must be received by May 10 preceding the school year. Late registering students must provide these forms not later than the first day of school. In addition, parents should complete and keep the current Emergency Medical Authorization Card, which will be consulted and followed in an emergency. When sick, students can only be released to

individuals listed on the Emergency Medical Authorization Card.

2. Serious Illness or Emergency

a. The school follows the procedures for the care of emergency sickness or injury issued by the State of Ohio. By law, qualified school officials must tender first aid, but nothing more. If illness or injury requires that a student be sent home, a parent will be notified. Upon such notification the student must be picked up by an adult listed on the Emergency Medical Authorization Sheet.

3. Screenings and Immunizations

a. Appropriate vision, hearing, and scoliosis screenings shall be administered. Parents will be notified of the dates and, if screening results are problematic, of the need for follow up. Unless exempted by a physician, all students are required to be immunized against seven diseases: diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella (German measles). The school nurse will examine each student's record to ensure compliance with state health regulations. Parents may be asked exact dates of vaccination and, if appropriate, to have the student revaccinated. (State School Immunization Law, Ohio revised Code Sections 3701.13, 3313.617, and 5104.06E.)

4. Absence Due to Illness

a. The school must be notified if a student is going to be absent. A parent must call the office (state law) or the school will have to try to contact the parent. Listed below is the length of time your child must be excluded from class for the following diseases:

- Fever – any temperature greater than 100 degrees is considered a fever, children must be fever-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications (such as Tylenol, Motrin, Advil, etc.) in order to return to school
- Cold – children with an upper respiratory infection without a fever may attend school only if they feel well enough to do so
- Infection – children must be on an antibiotic for 24 hours or longer
- Diarrhea – children with diarrhea must stay home until they are symptom free for 24 hours
- Vomiting – children who have vomited must stay home until they are symptom free for 24 hours
- Chickenpox - until scabs are dried
- Measles (3 days) - 4 days from first appearance of rash
- Measles (regular) - 4 days from first appearance of rash
- Mumps - 9 days after swelling occurs
- Scarlet Fever - until child has been under antibiotic treatment for 24 hours, or until recovered
- Whooping Cough - 3 weeks from date of first whoop or until recovery has occurred as determined by a physician

5. Administration of Medication to Students

a. When medication is prescribed for a student, parents are encouraged to discuss with the physician the possibility of a medication schedule outside of school hours. We recognize, however, that there are situations where this is not in the best interest of the child. Any student possessing or using a prescribed medication must

have on file a medical authorization form, properly completed, signed by the parent and accompanied by a physician's statement. These forms are available in the school office and from the school nurse or health aide. Such medication must be in its original container and have an affixed pharmacy label with the student's name. The school cannot administer prescribed medication unless these guidelines are strictly followed. b. The possession or use of nonprescription, over the counter, medication is discouraged (e.g., cough drops, Tylenol, etc.). The school will consider administering such medication if parents provide a signed, written request for such which includes the specific dosage and the times at which the medication is to be administered. In most cases, school personnel will not honor a request to exceed the label instructions without a physician's statement. Any such medication should be sent to the school office in its original container, where it will be held for the day. The student or parent should report to the office at the end of the day for any unused medication. If the parent judges that the student is mature and capable of keeping the medication, the school office must be informed in writing that the student is carrying the medication. The school does not keep medications for students use and will not administer aspirin under any circumstances, due to the connection with Reye's syndrome.

Student Phone Calls: Parents are asked not to interrupt the activities of the classroom. Forgotten books and lunches may be left in the office for the staff to deliver to students. Important messages by phone will be delivered to the students, but only in case of an emergency. In emergency situations, students may use the telephone located in the school office. Cell phones may be brought to school by students, but must be shut off and kept in the student's locker at his/her own risk upon arrival to school and until dismissal.

Substance Abuse Policy: The following is the policy of the Diocese of Columbus: The Diocese strictly prohibits the use, manufacture, distribution, dispensation, sale, storage or possession of any illegal drug, including marijuana, while on diocesan property, or in the performance of any services for the diocese. Off duty and off premises use, manufacture, distribution, dispensation, sale, storage or possession of any illegal drug is also a violation of diocesan policy if such conduct interferes with the employee's work or the work of co-workers, or if public knowledge of such conduct adversely impacts on the reputation of the diocese.

The diocese also strictly prohibits the unauthorized use, personal possession, or storage of alcoholic beverages or marijuana on the diocese's property, or in the performance of any services for the diocese.

Suspension and Expulsion Serious misconduct is cause for suspension and/or expulsion. Serious misconduct is that which disrupts the academic atmosphere of the school, endangers students, teachers, or school officials, damages property, or flagrantly or repeatedly violates regulations or policies of the diocese or school.

For such conduct the Principal or administrator in charge may immediately suspend the student from school. The student may be sent home during the school day provided that the student's parent or guardian has been notified. Expulsion shall not take place except as a result of the suspension procedure described below.

1. If the parent or guardian has not been reached on the day the misconduct occurred, then prior to the start of the next school day, the Principal or administrator in charge shall notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) of the suspension. If there is a delay in notifying the student's caregiver, the student may be placed in an in-school suspension. In the case of an in-school suspension, the student will do class work isolated from the other students and under adult supervision. No later than the next school day the Principal or administrator in charge shall notify

the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) of the suspension, both verbally and in writing, stating the reason(s) for the suspension and requesting that the student and the parent(s) or guardian(s) meet with him/her to review the matter.

2. Within three school days of the suspension, the Principal or administrator in charge shall meet with the student and parent(s) or guardian(s). The student and parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be given an opportunity to express their views.

3. By the school day following the meeting, the Principal or administrator in charge shall advise the student and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of his/ her decision, either to readmit the student to school, extend the period of suspension, or expel the student.

4. If the decision is to extend the period of suspension, the length of this period shall be indicated; the suspension period may not exceed 10 school days per incident. If the student has served an in-school suspension, the in-school suspension counts toward the total suspension time.

5. If the student is expelled, the principal or administrator in charge shall notify the parent or guardian(s) and the superintendent of schools, in writing, clearly stating the reasons for the expulsion. This notification shall also inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) and the student of the right to appeal the expulsion to the local school advisory board. If the school does have an advisory board, or if the school advisory board does not have an appeals procedure, or if the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) choose to waive an appeal at this level, the principal or administrator in charge shall notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) and student of the right to appeal the expulsion to the Diocesan Grievance Committee.

6. If the parent(s) or guardian(s) request a hearing before the local school advisory board and the school advisory board has an appeals procedure, this hearing shall take place within three school days of the request. Statements supporting the charges against the student may be submitted as well as statements by the student and others on the student's behalf. The parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be given an opportunity to express their views. The advisory board or its designees may, by a majority vote of its membership, affirm, reverse, or modify the decision to expel.

7. By the school day following the hearing, the advisory board or its designee shall notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) and the superintendent of its decision, in writing, clearly stating the reasons for the decision reached. If the decision is to uphold the expulsion, this notification shall also inform the parent(s) or guardian(s) and student of the right to appeal the expulsion to the Diocesan Grievance Committee.

8. Review of an expulsion shall be made only when requested by the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) or when requested by either the pastor or superintendent acting at the student's request. This request must be within two calendar weeks of the expulsion date. The review will be conducted by the Diocesan Grievance Committee composed of an independent group of parents appointed by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee.

9. If a hearing is requested, it shall take place within three school days of the request. The student, the principal, and the parent(s) or guardian(s) shall have an opportunity to express their views. If a hearing was held at the local level, only documented information presented at the local level may be presented at the diocesan level. By the school day following the hearing, the Grievance Committee or its designee shall notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) and student

of its decision, in writing. The decision of the board shall be final and binding.

10. When a student is expelled, public school authorities shall be notified and the regular transfer procedure used for records. Readmission to a school within the diocese (i.e. the same school or another school), shall be at the discretion of the receiving pastor/principal (elementary) or principal (secondary).

Tardiness: Students are considered tardy to school if they arrive at school between 7:45 a.m. and 9:30am. Three tardies will equal one half-day unexcused absence. Students arriving after 9:30 a.m. will be marked as absent for half the day. Students leaving before 2:40 will be marked absent for the afternoon. Tardy arrivals to school disrupt the learning environment and cause students who do not arrive on time to miss instruction. Consequences for excessive tardiness are listed in the code of conduct. Students who arrive at school after 7:45 a.m. must report to the office before going to their classroom/homeroom. A tardy slip will be issued by the office for admittance to class. Tardy slips will be recorded on the student's permanent record and on the report card. A tardy that is due to a medical appointment is regarded as an excused tardy. The student must present verification upon arriving at school from the physician in such a situation. A pattern of tardiness or excessive tardiness will not be permitted. Parents will be notified if such incidents of tardiness persist and appropriate action taken by the school administration.

Technology: The St. Mary computer lab, library, and classrooms are equipped with multimedia computers, color inkjet printers, scanners, and projectors in addition to laptop computers. These materials exist for the use of the St. Mary School staff as well as the St. Mary School students. St. Mary School students may use technology equipment for educational/school purposes only. The programs on the computers offer various instruments for both remediation and enrichment. With this software students learn computer basics, informational search skills, word processing, keyboarding skills, and desktop publishing. The educational software promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as enhancement and practice for all subject areas.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy: We are pleased to offer students of St. Mary School access to the school's computer network and the Internet. To gain access to the school's technology resources and the Internet, all students must obtain parental permission. Access to the Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and other resources throughout the world. While our intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, students may find ways to access other materials as well. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet, in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration, exceed any disadvantages. Families should be warned that some material accessible via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end St. Mary supports and respects each family's right to decide whether or not to apply for access. St. Mary School follows the policy set by the Diocese of Columbus, Office of Catholic Schools relating to technology use. Accordingly, a Technology Acceptable Use form must be completed for each student every school year and may be found at the end of this handbook.

Truancy: Attendance and engagement are key to success in school. Students who attend school regularly have a greater opportunity to develop academically and socially. Research shows that Ohio students who are never chronically absent are much more likely to read and perform on grade level and graduate on time. In October 2025, The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce released official guidance for schools to be implemented during the 2026-2027 academic year. Based on this information, medical absences are no longer counted separately from other absences. This

means that that all time missed from school—whether excused, medical, or unexcused—now counts toward a student's total hours missed for the school year. Below are the steps that will be taken based on total number of absences. Students' attendance records will be reviewed quarterly.

- **Excessive Absences** (5% total): Parents/guardians will receive a letter notifying them of a student's excessive absences once a student misses 5% of the total number of school days.
- **Habitual Truancy** (10% total): Parents/guardians will receive a letter notifying them of a student's habitual truancy once a student misses 10% of the total number of school days. A mandatory meeting with an administrator will also be scheduled.
- **Chronic Absenteeism** (More than 10% total): If the student continues to be excessively absent, the school will take further action, including the possible dismissal from Saint Mary School.

The following state and diocesan policies also apply:

- **EdChoice:** To maintain EdChoice Scholarship eligibility for future school years, a scholarship recipient student may not have more than twenty (20) unexcused absences during a single school year.
- **Diocese Credit:** A school may refuse credit to any student who misses 28 days, pro-rated per marking period, whether the absences are excused or unexcused.

Tuition: St. Mary School has the right to check tuition and fee payments of families previously having children attending other Catholic/private schools. Decisions for admission to St. Mary School will be contingent upon evidence of good payment records. Maintaining the children's enrollment will be contingent upon the present record of payments. The final decision regarding acceptance and/or continuance of families will rest with the financial committee of St. Mary Church. There is a \$125.00 non-refundable per family registration fee due at the time of registration. St. Mary School's tuition payment policy is as follows:

1. The tuition rate for each academic year is established by the St. Mary Parish Finance Committee. Each family enters into a written and signed agreement with the School for tuition payment at the time of registration.
2. There are two methods for the payment of tuition:
 - a. One payment in full due by July 1st to receive a 5% discount.
 - b. Payments scheduled through the FACTS tuition portal.
3. The first tuition payment is due in July unless paid-in-full. No student will be admitted to class at the beginning of the school year until the July and August payments are paid, nor will students be admitted to class whose family owes tuition from a previous year.
4. All current balances can be viewed through the FACTS website.
5. There are penalties for late payment of tuition. They include:
 - a. Progress reports and grades will be withheld at the end of each quarter until tuition is paid in full. Progress reports and grades will not be released at the end of the school year if outstanding tuition is due.
 - b. Unless the Principal/Pastor has been notified of an extenuating circumstance(s) prior to the start of the second semester, a student will not be permitted to attend St. Mary School at the start of the second semester if the tuition balance is not current as of December 15.

c. Eighth grade students will not be permitted to participate in graduation ceremonies unless tuition has been paid in full.

6. Parents who are unable to maintain the payment schedule during the year must contact the principal or pastor in advance of the due dates to avoid any penalty. In such situations, the principal, along with representatives from the St. Mary School Tuition Committee, will arrange a meeting with a member/members of the family to discuss any special arrangements that may be necessary for the extenuating circumstances.

7. A family currently enrolled in St. Mary School, who does not pay tuition on a regular basis as outlined in both the St. Mary School Tuition Payment Policy and in accordance with the Tuition Agreement signed by the parent at the time of registration and who has not contacted the school office concerning the reason for either irregular or nonpayment of tuition during that particular school year, will be required to pay in full the cost of the entire school year on or before July 15th in order to enroll their child(ren) in St. Mary School for the next school year. All past tuition must be paid in full before a parent can register their child(ren).

8. A family who is not presently enrolled in St. Mary School, but who was previously enrolled in St. Mary School and who has had a history of either not paying tuition on a regular basis or non-payment of tuition for a particular year and who failed to contact the school office concerning such situation, will be required to pay in full the entire tuition for the school year on or before July 15th in order to re-enroll their child(ren) in St. Mary School. All past tuition must be paid in full before the cost of the full year will be accepted.

9. If a family has had a history of inconsistent tuition payments in previous years, this family will be required to pre-pay their tuition quarterly before the start of the next quarter. No discount will apply to these pre-payments. If tuition is not paid on time then student(s) will not be permitted to return for the next quarter.

10. If a family that is up to date with their tuition payments withdraws from St. Mary School during the first five days of a quarter, the amount of reimbursed tuition shall be prorated to the end of the school year. If a family that is up to date with their tuition payments withdraws after five days into a quarter, the family shall be reimbursed the remainder of the school year, excluding the quarter in which the withdrawal occurred. All tuition refunds will be at the discretion of the St. Mary School Tuition Committee and will not include the registration fees, any discounts, scholarships, or SCRIP rewards.

11. Any student going from one school to another in the Diocese will be accepted only if all financial obligations are current at the sending school per Diocesan policy.

Toys and Personal Items: Students are not to bring any toys or personal items to school unless it is cleared by a school official. Examples include but are not limited to: pop its, fidget spinners, putty, etc.

Tuition Parish Scholarship Eligibility In order to be eligible for St. Mary Parish Scholarship, a family must meet four criteria as a participating parish family, complete FACTS, and be approved by the pastor:

1. They must be registered in the parish.
2. They must be recognized by the Pastor as a family participating in the sacramental life of the parish.
3. They must contribute time and talent to the ministries of the parish.
4. In agreement with the Pastor, they must regularly contribute an appropriate portion of their annual income to the financial support of the parish. A predetermined amount may not be assigned to define “regular contribution” as a qualifying factor for a parish scholarship due to the fact that the “regular contribution” to the parish would no longer be considered a free-will gift to the Church, which is tax deductible, but rather more

tuition paid directly to the parish rather than the school.

Uniform Policy:

Boys Grades K-5

- White dress shirt or polo with collar, short or long-sleeved (Grades 4-5 shirts tucked in at all times)
- White undershirt only (no writing, decorations, or graphics)
- Solid forest green, grey, or navy-blue cardigan sweater, long-sleeved pullover sweater, or sweater vest
- Gray uniform fleece with school monogram/logo
- Solid navy-blue dress slacks (no corduroy, denim, or painter/carpenter style)
- Solid navy-blue walking shorts permitted from the first day of school until October 1 and from May 1 until the end of the school year (no corduroy, denim, or painter/carpenter style)
- White socks (socks must be visible)
- Solid brown, navy blue, or black belts must be worn by grades 4-5 (no buckles, studs, decorations, or cut-outs)

Boys Grades 6-8

- Uniform white oxford button down shirt, short or long-sleeved (shirts tucked in at all times)
- White undershirt only (no writing, decorations, or graphics)
- Solid green or gray uniform crew neck or v-neck sweater with emblem
- Gray uniform fleece with school monogram/logo
- Uniform ties worn October 1-April 30, all Mass days, and all Benediction days. Ties may be clip-on. Shirts must be buttoned at the top when ties are worn.
- Black uniform pants with belt loops and “Irish” embroidered on back
- Black uniform walking shorts with belt loops and “Irish” embroidered on back, permitted from the first day of school until October 1 and from May 1 until the end of the school year
- Solid black belt (no buckles, studs, decorations, or cut-outs)
- Black or white socks (socks must be visible)
- Black or brown leather dress shoes or white, black, or gray tennis shoes with white, black, or gray laces only. Shoes may be a combination of white and grey, white and black, etc. as long as the colors are white, black, or gray only.

Girls Grades K-5

- White dress shirt or polo with collar, short or long-sleeved (Grades 4-5 shirts tucked in at all times)
- Plaid approved school jumper available through School Closet no more than 2” above or below the knee (skirts not permitted)
- Solid forest green, grey, or navy-blue cardigan sweater, long-sleeved pullover sweater, sweater vest, or uniform sweater
- Gray uniform fleece with school monogram/logo
- Solid navy-blue dress pants with belt loops (no corduroy, denim, or painter/ carpenter style)
- Solid navy-blue walking shorts permitted from the first day of school until October 1 and from May 1 until the end of the school year (no corduroy, denim, or painter/carpenter style). Shorts may not be more than 2” above or

below the knee.

- White socks (socks must be visible) without embellishments (lace, ruffles, etc.)
- Plain white, forest green, or navy knee socks
- Solid black or navy tights (no rips, tears, or runs). Tights are defined as a piece of clothing made of very thin material that tightly covers the feet.
- Solid black or navy cotton leggings worn under jumpers in place of tights, must be worn with uniform socks. Leggings cannot be nylon, polyester, or spandex and may not be patterned.
- Solid brown, navy blue, or black belts must be worn by grades 4-5 (no buckles, studs, decorations, or cut-outs)

Girls Grades 6-8

- Uniform white oxford button down shirt, short or long-sleeved (shirts tucked in at all times)
- White undershirt or cami only (no writing, decorations, or graphics)
- Plaid approved school jumper available through School Closet no more than 2" above or below the knee (skirts not permitted)
- Solid forest green or gray uniform cardigan, crew neck, or v-neck sweater
- Gray uniform fleece with school monogram/logo
- Black uniform pants with belt loops and "Irish" embroidered on back (no capris)
- Black uniform walking shorts with belt loops and "Irish" embroidered on back, permitted from the first day of school until October 1 and from May 1 until the end of the school year
- Solid black belt (no buckles, studs, decorations, or cut-outs)
- Black or white socks (socks must be visible)
- Plain white, forest green, navy, or black knee socks
- Plain black or gray opaque tights (no rips, tears, or runs). Tights are defined as a piece of clothing made of very thin material that tightly covers the feet. Leggings of any type are not permitted.
- Black or brown leather dress shoes, plain gray flats, or mostly white, black, or gray tennis shoes with white, black, or gray laces only. Shoes may be a combination of white and grey, white and black, etc. as long as the colors are white, black, or gray only.
- Light make-up only including foundation, light color eye shadow, and mascara (no eyeliner or dark eyeshadow)

Not Permitted Grades K-5

- Hooded sweatshirts, non-uniform sweatshirts, coats, jackets, etc. worn during school hours
- Shirts/sweatshirts/sweaters with logos, decorations, or brand names
- Shirts that are tight-fitting, spandex, or nylon material
- Turtlenecks
- Jumpers higher than 2" above or below the knee (jumpers must have a normal waistline)
- Shorts that have less than a 7" inseam
- Shoes in poor condition (shoes with laces must be tied at all times for students in 3-8 grade)
- High tops or tennis shoes above the ankle, shoes with heels, crocs, open-toe shoes, sandals, light-up shoes, or slippers/slides
- Boots above the ankle
- Extreme hairstyles that include, but are not limited to mohawks, faux-hawks, mullets, excessive spikes, etc.

- Boys hair below the ears or the collar, or in the eyes (hair must be neatly trimmed)
- Boys hair higher than the height of a business card
- Fitness Trackers and Digital Watches: Because we are unable to determine which devices have internet access, digital watches and fitness trackers are not permitted.
- Necklaces (with the exception of a single religious medal, cross, or crucifix)
- Boys earrings
- Dangling earrings (girls earrings must be no bigger than the size of a quarter)
- More than one earrings per ear
- More than one bracelet
- More than one ring
- Make-up, nail polish, or fake nails
- Hair coloring
- Tattoos or body piercings
- Decorative headbands or accessories that are wider or taller than a business card
- Pants with rips or holes

Not Permitted Grades 6-8

- Hooded sweatshirts, non-uniform sweatshirts, coats, jackets, etc. worn during school hours
- Shirts/sweatshirts/sweaters with logos, decorations, or brand names
- Shirts that are tight-fitting, spandex, or nylon material
- Turtlenecks
- Jumpers higher than 2" above or below the knee (jumpers must have a normal waistline)
- Shorts that have less than a 7" inseam
- Shoes in poor condition (shoes with laces must be tied at all times for students in 3-8 grade)
- High tops or tennis shoes above the ankle, shoes with heels, crocs, open-toe shoes, sandals, light-up shoes, or slippers/slides
- Boots above the ankle
- Extreme hairstyles that include, but are not limited to mohawks, faux-hawks, mullets, excessive spikes, etc.
- Boys' hair below the ears or the collar, or in the eyes (hair must be neatly trimmed)
- Boys' hair higher than the height of a business card
- Boys' hair coloring, highlighting, frosted tips, etc.
- Fitness Trackers and Digital Watches: Because we are unable to determine which devices have internet access, digital watches and fitness trackers are not permitted.
- Necklaces (with the exception of a single religious medal, cross, or crucifix)
- Boys earrings
- Dangling earrings (girls earrings must be no bigger than the size of a quarter)
- More than one earrings per ear
- More than one bracelet
- More than one ring
- Decorative headbands or accessories that are wider or taller than a business card

- Heavy make-up (no eyeliner or dark eyeshadow)
- Acrylic or fake nails for girls (neutral nail polish permitted)
- Hair coloring that is an unnatural color or extreme
- Tattoos, body piercings, or drawings on body
- Pants with rips or holes
- Socks with tights

Permitted Spirit Day Apparel Grades K-8

- Jeans, corduroy pants, sweatpants, knit pants, cargo pants, or uniform pants that meet the standards outlined below
- Cargo shorts, walking shorts, jean shorts, or capri pants permitted until October 1 and after May 1
- Skirts or dresses no shorter than 2" above the knee (Grades 6-8: Shorts that have at least a 7" inseam)
- Shirts purchased from the school Spirit Store
- Shirts that say "St. Mary School", "Irish", or "FCHS" or are from other school organizations/groups
- House shirts that say "SMS" permitted
- Dress shoes or tennis shoes only, socks must be worn

Physical Education Class Attire Grades 6-8

- Approved P.E. class apparel for all students in grades 6-8 shall be the school PE uniform t-shirt, black athletic shorts that have at least a 7" inseam or athletic pants, and athletic sneakers.

The following are not permitted:

- Spandex or compression shorts/pants
- Wording on the backside of shorts/pants
- Words or images considered to be threatening or offensive or referencing drugs, violence, weapons, or sex

Not Permitted on Casual Days Grades K-8

- Leggings, yoga pants, stretch, compression, or tight-fitting athletic pants
- Stretch or tight-fitting shorts, skirts, or dresses
- Shorts, dresses, or skirts that do not meet the length requirements listed above.
- Ripped or frayed clothing of any kind
- Pants, shorts, or skirts with writing or words written on or across the bottom/backside
- Pajama pants
- Any clothing with words or illustrations contrary to our school philosophy (no references to liquor, drugs, explicit pictures, words, or phrases, etc.)
- Mesh or see through clothing of any kind
- Tank tops or sleeveless tops
- Spaghetti straps, halter tops, clear strap or one strap tops
- Bare midriffs, low-cut shirts, shirts that reveal stomach when arm are raised, or shirts that reveal cleavage
- Hats or caps
- High tops or tennis shoes above the ankle, shoes with heels, crocs, open-toe shoes, sandals, light-up shoes, or

slippers/slides

- Boots above the ankle
- If hooded sweatshirts are worn, hoods must remain down

STUDENTS MUST REMAIN IN FULL UNIFORM UNTIL THEY LEAVE THE PREMISES. THE PRINCIPAL SHALL HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO DETERMINE IF A STUDENT IS IN VIOLATION OF THE DRESS CODE AND/ OR TO UPDATE THE DRESS CODE AT HIS/HER DISCRETION.

Use of Name/Branding Policy: Attaching the school's name, logo, or other insignia to an event, activity, or publication implies a close connection with the school, usually sponsorship or endorsement. However, involvement by individual faculty, staff, students, or parents is not, by itself, sufficient basis to title an activity, program, or event as "school" sponsored. Rather the activity, program, or event must be one for which the school takes institutional responsibility.

Faculty members, staff, students, parents, and parish members may use or authorize the use of the school name, logo, or insignia (alone or in conjunction with the name of a specified organization or activity) only with the written approval of the pastor and principal in parish schools or the principal and Superintendent in Diocesan high schools. No individual, company, or organization may seek to use the school name, logo, or insignia for any commercial benefit without the written approval of the pastor and principal in parish schools or the principal and Superintendent in diocesan high schools.

In appropriate cases determined by the pastor/principal or principal/superintendent, permission for ongoing events, activities, or publications requiring approval under this policy may be given.

Use of School Gym and School Facilities: The St. Mary School gymnasium exists for the use of St. Mary School and Parish. As a part of our parish property the gym may be used by school or parish sponsored groups only. Per Diocesan Policy, the school/parish administration may make the school gymnasium available for use by individuals or groups not affiliated with the school/parish provided that:

- The school is reimbursed by the individual or group for any costs incurred.
- Adequate supervision and insurance is assured.
- The individual or group accepts responsibility for all damages.
- The school/parish secures a written agreement with the individual or group using the facilities.
- Evidence of general liability coverage of not less than one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) per occurrence is provided by the individual or group, per Diocesan Policy.

These conditions may be further restricted by the Pastor, Principal, and/or the Bishop. Individuals or groups wishing to inquire about the usage of the school gymnasium should contact the school office or the parish administrator. First priority for scheduling will be given to St. Mary School and/or parish sponsored activities/events.

Violence: No student shall use, possess, handle, transmit or conceal any object which is, or can be considered, a weapon or instrument of violence. Objects which are explosive or incendiary in nature, or any object reasonably determined to be a threat to the safety or security of any person, are prohibited on school premises, and at school-

related functions. See Diocesan Policy for disciplinary actions regarding this policy.

Visitors: For the purposes of fire safety accountability and student safety, we request that all parents and visitors report to the school office upon entering the school building. As soon as a person arrives at school to visit or volunteer in either the main or primary buildings, they are required to register in the office. A volunteer/visitor badge will be issued at the time the person registers. After registering, the person will be either escorted to the classroom or given permission to go to the area they will be visiting/volunteering.

Parents are welcome to observe their child's class. Those who wish to observe their child in the classroom are asked to contact their child's teacher to make arrangements for a suitable time. The appropriateness of the observation and time will be left to the discretion of the teacher. Those who wish to visit a classroom must give at least twenty-four hours' notice before being allowed to visit a classroom. This twenty-four-hour notice does not apply to those who volunteer in various capacities in the building on a regular basis.

Volunteers: St. Mary School appreciates and is very proud of its parent and parish/community volunteers. Volunteering is not only vital to the smooth operation of everyday school life, it is an important connection between home, school, parish, and community. Any adult (volunteers and paid staff) responsible for the care, custody or control of students in any school or school sponsored activity in the Diocese of Columbus must submit to a criminal background check and have clear BCI and FBI reports (paid staff) and attend a "Protecting God's Children" session as prescribed by the Diocese of Columbus prior to their involvement. Additional information and registration for the session may be found online at www.virtus.org.

Volunteer Code of Conduct: Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. A volunteer is expected to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in the Volunteer Code of Conduct as a condition of providing services to the children and youth of our school.

As a volunteer, I will:

1. Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
2. Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth at school activities.
3. Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and /or youth.
4. Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth or their parents without prior written approval from the Pastor or administrator.
5. Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the Pastor or administrator.
6. Report suspected abuse to the Pastor, administrator, or appropriate supervisor and the local Child Protective Services agency. I understand that failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is, according to the law, a misdemeanor.

As a volunteer, I will not:

1. Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth.
2. Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
3. Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time.

4. Pose any health risk to children and/or youth (i.e. no fevers or other contagious situations).
5. Strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or youth.
6. Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or youth.
7. Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
8. Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth.
9. Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth.

A volunteer working with children and/or youth is subject to a thorough background check, including criminal history. Any action inconsistent with the Volunteer Code of Conduct may result in a person being removed as a volunteer with children and/or youth at our school.

Wellness Policy: Catholic schools recognize that it is essential to educate the whole child, spiritually, academically, physically, socially, and emotionally. Similarly, wellness education must be multi-dimensional and encompass all the same areas in order to promote ultimate health. Catholic schools aid this emphasis on total wellness by embracing the reverence for life, self-respect, and respect for others. The primary goal of nutrition education is to positively impact eating behaviors. More details regarding our wellness policy can be found in the cafeteria section of our website.

Weekly School Communication – Friday Newsletter: Weekly updates and communication from the school will be sent to school families every Friday. School families are responsible for reading this newsletter each week in order to stay well informed of up-to-date information from the administration, Home and School Association, and other school groups.

Withdrawal of Students: When a student wishes to withdraw from St. Mary School, the office must be notified and a records request form must be completed by the parent/guardian. Any items that are property of the school and are “on loan” to the student, such as textbooks and library books, must be returned to the school. All fees must be paid in full including lunch monies owed, library fees, and tuition. If a family that is up to date with their tuition payments withdraws from St. Mary School during the first five days of a quarter, the amount of reimbursed tuition shall be prorated to the end of the school year. If a family that is up to date with their tuition payments withdraws after five days into a quarter, the family shall be reimbursed the remainder of the school year, excluding the quarter in which the withdrawal occurred. All tuition refunds will be at the discretion of the St. Mary School Tuition Committee, but will not include: registration fees or any tuition assistance or scholarship money. Any student going from one school to another in the Diocese will be accepted only if all financial obligations are current at the sending school per Diocesan Policy.

Yearbook: The yearbook is a commemorative hardback book of student memories at St. Mary’s. This is a middle school project that entails soliciting advertisers, taking pictures, collecting money and completing the final layout. The compilation of the school yearbook is supervised by a St. Mary faculty member.

Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Please read this document carefully before signing.

Catholic schools within the Diocese of Columbus have implemented voice, data, and video electronic communication systems that will allow unprecedented educational opportunities for students and staff to communicate, learn, and publish information. These network resources provide students and staff access to electronic resources and are to be used for educational purposes. Communication over the diocesan network is not to be considered private. Network supervision and maintenance may require review and inspection of network activity.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR INTERNET ACCESS AND USE: The use of the Internet must be in support of education or research and adhere to the educational goals and objectives of the Diocese of Columbus Office of Catholic Schools. While some materials accessible via the Internet may contain information that is inappropriate or inaccurate, the Office of Catholic Schools believes that the benefits to students and school employees exceed the disadvantages. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using network resources.

Acceptable Use of the Internet: Students and school employees are responsible for appropriate behavior when using the Internet just as they are in a classroom or hallway. Students and school employees are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette:

- Do not view, send or access abusive, obscene or harassing materials. A good rule to follow is never view, send or access materials which you would not want your teachers and parents to see. Should students or school employees encounter such material by accident, they should report it to their teacher or administrator immediately.
- Do not access or participate in chat rooms, or multi-user environments including but not limited to IM, MUDs or MOOs; download or play games; subscribe to or access listservs; download music files or check, send or receive email unless prior permission is granted by a teacher.
- Do not give out any personal information including names, addresses, phone numbers or credit card information pertaining to themselves or any other person without appropriate staff approval.
- Do not engage in any commercial, for-profit activities.
- Do not violate copyright laws. Materials accessed through the Internet must be properly cited when referenced.
- Do not download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives or disks. Do not copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files.
- Do not waste school resources by printing excessively or consuming limited hard drive space or network space.
- Do not use the Internet in any way which disrupts the service or its operation for others.
- Presenting another person's work, or AI generated work, as your own constitutes academic dishonesty. This includes both deliberate and non-deliberate use of another person's work, or AI generated work.

Consequences for Inappropriate Use of the Internet: Since internet access is a privilege and not a right, users have the responsibility to use the Internet in an appropriate manner. Consequences of misuse or abuse of the Internet, depending upon the severity of the situation may include one or more of the following:

- A warning followed by re-clarification of the acceptable use guidelines.
- Loss of privilege of internet access for not less than 45 school days.
- Notification of parents and administrators by phone or personal conference.
- Referral to proper authorities for disciplinary and/or legal action.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR TECHNOLOGY NETWORK AND EQUIPMENT ACCESS AND USE OF SCHOOL OWNED MATERIALS:

Schools within the Diocese of Columbus provide a variety of technology resources that will allow unprecedented educational opportunities for students and staff to communicate, learn, and publish information. These resources include computers, software, scanners, printers, digital cameras, video cameras and much more. Students and school employees will be required to act appropriately when utilizing technology equipment and work areas.

Acceptable Use of Networks and Technology Equipment: Students and school employees are responsible for appropriate behavior when using diocesan or school technology resources. Students and school employees are expected to abide by the following rules:

- Do not intentionally damage computers, computer systems or computer networks.
- Students and school employees should take special care with the physical facilities, hardware, software, and furnishings.
- Students and school employees do not remove/move, unplug, alter or add equipment or software to the network without the approval of the network administrator.
- Do not create or willfully disseminate computer viruses. Students and school employees should be sensitive to the ease of spreading viruses and should take steps to ensure that disks and files are virus free.
- Do not attempt to gain unauthorized or illegal access to diocesan technology resources or any other technology resources.
- Do not attempt to gain access to the diocesan or any other computer system or go beyond your authorized access by entering another person's password or accessing another person's files.
- Do not download, install or run any software without the express permission of your teacher or the network administrator.
- Personal technology equipment brought to school is subject to the procedures outlined in the Technology Acceptable Use Policy.
- Do not alter the computers or change the settings or system configurations in any way.
- Do not alter, damage or vandalize diocesan technology equipment or software in any way.
- Do not use diocesan resources to create, manage or access personal web pages or personal servers without the express permission of your teacher or network manager.

Consequences for Inappropriate Use of Networks or Technology Equipment: Users have the responsibility to use technology resources in an appropriate manner. Consequences of misuse or abuse of these resources by students, depending upon the severity of the situation may include one or more of the following: · A warning followed by re-clarification of the acceptable use guidelines. · Loss of access to diocesan technology resources. · Notification of parents and administrators by phone or personal conference. · Referral to proper authorities for disciplinary and/or legal action. · Students who have lost technology privileges may not use personal equipment in lieu of diocesan or school equipment.

Consequences of Misuse or Abuse of These Resources by Employees: School employees are responsible to read and be knowledgeable of the Technology Acceptable Use Policy. School employees are aware that the Diocesan computer systems and technology resources are intended for educational purposes. School employees understand that it is difficult to restrict access to all controversial materials and will not hold the diocese responsible for materials acquired on the network.

Conclusion: School personnel will exercise reasonable oversight to ensure that the communication and technology resources of the school and diocese are used in the appropriate manner. The diocese makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the diocesan system will be error-free or without defect. The diocese will not be responsible for any damage you may suffer including, but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. The diocese is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information attained through or stored on the system. The diocese will not be responsible for financial obligations arising from unauthorized use of the system.

Acknowledgment: Both student and parent or legal guardian must acknowledge this handbook. Parental or legal guardian acknowledgment indicates you are granting permission for your child to have access to all District technology resources available for student use.

Your acknowledgment of this handbook indicates that you have reviewed this information with your child, and your child(ren) agrees to the following: “I have read the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools Technology Acceptable Use Policy, and I agree to follow the rules contained in this policy. I understand the consequences if I choose to violate any of the rules.”

Additionally, your acknowledgment of this handbook indicates that as the parent or legal guardian of the student above, you have read this Technology Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for your child to access the Diocesan Office of Catholic Schools computer systems and technology resources. You understand that your child will be held liable for violations of this agreement. You understand that the Diocesan computer systems and technology resources are intended for educational purposes. You also understand that it is difficult for your child’s school to restrict access to all controversial materials, and you will not hold the Diocese responsible for materials acquired on the network.

Acknowledgement of Risks

Updated: July 3, 2024

We, the parent(s) and student who are signing this student handbook for Saint Mary School (“School”), acknowledge and agree that, as a student at the School and as parent(s) of that student, entering into the School or being on the School premises or entering into the parish or being on the parish premises (as applicable), having personal contact with teachers, classmates, and other School/parish staff, involves a certain degree of risk, including contracting and passing on communicable diseases (such as influenza, colds, COVID-19, etc.), and then potentially passing it on to others, including family members. Due to the inherent risk and the close proximity of persons at the School, there is an elevated risk of student and parent(s) contracting a disease simply by being in the School/parish building, on the School/parish premises, or at any School/parish function.

By signing this School Handbook, we acknowledge and agree that after carefully considering the risks involved, we voluntarily and willingly accept those risks of being in an in-person environment, including the risk of contracting communicable diseases. If I have underlying health concerns which may place me at greater risk of contracting communicable diseases, and all reasonable accommodations have been met, I acknowledge and agree to assume these risks.



ASBESTOS PLAN TO INFORM
DIOCESE of COLUMBUS

Saint Mary School | Lancaster, Ohio

Date: July 27, 2026

To: Columbus Diocese Workers, Students and their Guardians

From: LEA

RE: Notification Requirement per Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act

Consistent with the requirements of the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act or “AHERA” (40CFR Part 763) the Columbus Diocese Schools inspect for Asbestos Containing Building Materials (ACBM) and develop an Asbestos Management Plan for each school. This is to:

“Ensure that workers and building occupants, organizations, or parent teacher organizations, are informed at least once each school year about inspections, response actions, and post response actions activities, including periodic re-inspections and surveillance activities that are planned or are in progress.”

“Ensure that short term workers (e.g. phone repair workers, utility repair workers, or exterminators) who may come in contact with asbestos in a school are provided information regarding the location of asbestos containing building material (ACBM) and suspected or assumed ACBM.”

Some Diocese of Columbus school buildings contain known or suspected asbestos containing building materials and are subject to periodic surveillances every six months.

Each of the school buildings is being re-inspected and an Asbestos Management Plan is currently being prepared. When completed they will be available for review at the school offices.



www.saintmarylancaster.org
309 E. Chestnut Street
Lancaster, Ohio 43130
Tel: 740-654-1632

Personally Identifiable Information Release Form

Parent(s)/guardian(s) consent for release of personally identifiable information

The undersigned parent(s)/guardian(s) of their child(ren) who is/are student(s) at Saint Mary School hereby consent to the release of the following personally identifiable information.

Specific information to be released: Photograph of child in classroom, attending student activities, etc. with grade level

Reason for release: Social media and marketing

Information to be released via: Social media and print resources

The undersigned consent to the transfer of the above information to a third or subsequent party.

Parent/guardian name and signature: Electronic

By electronically “acknowledging” this handbook, you are consenting to the information above.

Please notify the school office if you would like a copy of this release.



THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

February 7, 2025

Google Workspace for Education - Online Education Productivity Tools

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Please review this consent form. Receiving your consent is necessary to comply with Google Workspace for Education policies. Saint Mary School uses Google Workspace for Education, and is seeking your permission to continue to offer these tools to your child. Google Workspace for Education is a set of online education productivity tools including Gmail, Calendar, Docs, Classroom, and more, and is used by tens of millions of students and teachers around the world. The students at Saint Mary School use their online Google Workspace for Education accounts to complete assignments, communicate with their teachers, and learn to properly engage with technology.

The notice below provides answers to common questions about what Google can and cannot do with your child's personal information, including:

- What personal information does Google collect?
- How does Google use this information?
- Will Google disclose my child's personal information?
- Does Google use student personal information for users in K-12 schools to target advertising?
- Can my child share information with others using the Google Workspace for Education account?

Please read the below notice carefully, let your school administrator know of any questions, and sign on the signature page that will be sent home this week to indicate that you've read the notice and give your consent. If you do not provide your consent, we will not create a Google account for your child or we will remove the Google Workspace for Education account for your child.

Thank you.



THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

GOOGLE WORKSPACE FOR EDUCATION NOTICE TO PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

This NOTICE describes the personal information we provide to Google for these accounts and how Google collects, uses, and discloses personal information from students in connection with these accounts.

Using their Google Workspace for Education accounts, students may access and use the following “Core Services” offered by Google (described at https://workspace.google.com/terms/user_features.html):

- Assignments
- Calendar
- Classroom
- Cloud Search
- Drive and Docs
- Gmail
- Google Chat
- Google Chrome Sync
- Google Meet
- Google Vault
- Groups for Business
- Keep
- Migrate
- Sites
- Tasks

In addition, Saint Mary School also allow students to access certain other Google services with their Google Workspace for Education accounts. Specifically, your child may have access to the following “Additional Service”: Google Maps

Further, we allow students to access additional third-party services with their Google Workspace for Education accounts. Our school administrator enables access to these third-party services with your student’s Google Workspace for Education account, and authorizes the disclosure of data as requested by the third party services.



THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

Google provides additional detail about the information it collects, as well as how it uses and discloses the information it collects from Google Workspace for Education accounts in its Google Workspace for Education Privacy Notice. You can read that notice online at https://workspace.google.com/terms/education_privacy.html. While we recommend that you review this information in its entirety, the answers to the most commonly asked questions are below:

What personal information does Google collect?

When creating a student account, Saint Mary School may provide Google with certain personal information about the student, including, for example, a name, email address (always a school account, not a personal account), and (school account) password. Google may also collect personal information directly from students, such as telephone number (a parent's number, never a student phone number) for account recovery or a profile photo added to the Google Workspace for Education account.

When a student uses Google core services, Google also collects information based on how those services are used. This includes:

- Account information, which includes things like name and email address.
- Activity while using the core services, which includes things like viewing and interacting with content, people with whom your student communicates or shares content, and other details about their usage of the services.
- Settings, apps, browsers & devices. Google collects information about your student's settings and the apps, browsers, and devices they use to access Google services. This information includes browser and device type, settings configuration, unique identifiers, operating system, mobile network information, and application version number. Google also collects information about the interaction of your student's apps, browsers, and devices with Google services, including IP address, crash reports, system activity, and the date and time of a request.
- Location information. Google collects information about your student's location as determined by various technologies such as IP address and GPS.
- Direct communications. Google keeps records of communications when your student
- Provides feedback, asks questions, or seeks technical support:
- Activity while using additional services, which includes things like terms your student searches for, videos they watch, content and ads they view and interact with, voice and audio information when they use audio features, purchase activity, and activity on third-party sites and apps that use Google services.
- Apps, browsers, and devices. Google collects the information about your student's apps, browser, and devices described above in the core services section.
- Location information. Google collects info about your student's location as determined by various technologies including GPS, IP address, sensor data from their device, and information about things near

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their device, such as Wi-Fi access points, cell towers, and Bluetooth-enabled devices. The types of location data we collect depend in part on your student's device and account settings, which is usually configured by the school.

How does Google use this information?

In Google Workspace for Education Core Services, Google uses student personal information primarily to provide the core services that schools and students use, but it is also used to maintain and improve the services; make recommendations to optimize the use of the services; provide and improve other services your student requests; provide support; protect Google's users, customers, the public, and Google; and comply with legal obligations. See the [Google Cloud Privacy Notice](#) for more information.

In Google Additional Services, Google may use the information collected from all Additional Services to deliver, maintain, and improve our services; develop new services; provide personalized services; measure performance; communicate with schools or users; and protect Google, Google's users, and the public. See the [Google Privacy Policy](#) for more details.

Does Google use student personal information for users in K-12 schools to target advertising?

No. There are no ads shown in Google Workspace for Education core services. Also, none of the personal information collected in the core services is used for advertising purposes.

Some additional services show ads. However, for users in primary and secondary (K12) schools, the ads will not be personalized ads, which means Google does not use information from your student's account or past activity to target ads. However, Google may show ads based on general factors like the student's search queries, the time of day, or the content of a page they're reading.

Can my child share information with others using the Google Workspace for Education account?

We may allow students to access Google services such as Google Docs and Sites, which include features where users can share information with others or publicly.

For example, if your student shares a document or a photo with a friend who then makes a copy of it, or shares it again, then that photo may continue to appear in the friend's Google Account, even if your student removes it from their Google Account. When users share information publicly, it may become accessible through search engines, including Google Search.

Will Google disclose my child's personal information?

Google will not share personal information with companies, organizations, and individuals outside of Google except in the following cases:



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Within our school: Our school administrator and school tech support will have access to your student's information.

For example, they may be able to:

- View account information, activity and statistics;
- Change your student's account password;
- Suspend or terminate your student's account access;
- Access your student's account information in order to satisfy applicable law, regulation, legal process, or enforceable governmental request.
- Restrict your students' ability to delete or edit their information or privacy settings.
- With your consent: Google will share personal information outside of Google with parental consent.

For external processing: Google will share personal information with Google's affiliates and other trusted third party providers to process it for us as Google instructs them and in compliance with our [Google Privacy Policy](#), the [Google Cloud Privacy Notice](#), and any other appropriate confidentiality and security measures.

For legal reasons: Google will share personal information outside of Google if they have a good-faith belief that access, use, preservation or disclosure of the information is reasonably necessary for legal reasons, including complying with enforceable governmental requests and protecting you and Google.

What choices do I have as a parent or guardian?

First, you can consent to the collection and use of your child's information by Google. If you don't provide your consent, we will not create a Google Workspace for Education account for your child, and Google will not collect or use your child's information as described in this notice. Alternatives to using Google Workspace should be discussed with your school administration.

If you consent to your child's use of Google Workspace for Education, you can access or request deletion of your child's Google Workspace for Education account by contacting Kayla Elrich. If you wish to stop any further collection or use of your child's information, you can request that we use the service controls available to access personal information, limit your child's access to features or services, or delete personal information in the services or your child's account entirely. You and your child can also visit <https://myaccount.google.com> while signed in to the Google Workspace for Education account to view and manage the personal information and settings of the account.

What if I have more questions or would like to read further?

If you have questions about our use of Google's Google Workspace for Education accounts or the choices available to you, please contact Kayla Elrich.

Student Facing AI Policy and Contract (Diocesan Policy 6520)

I agree to the following rules regarding the use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools in connection with schoolwork:

1. I will only use GenAI tools to help complete school assignments or assessments when a teacher has given permission.
2. I may use GenAI to deepen my understanding of concepts.
3. I will ask my teacher before using GenAI if I am unsure whether GenAI is allowed or appropriate for an assignment.
4. I will be honest about when and how I use GenAI in my schoolwork. I will follow my teacher's directions for citing GenAI.
5. I understand that GenAI may provide inaccurate or biased results, and I will use it carefully and critically, asking my teacher if I am not sure.
6. I take full responsibility and ownership of all the work I turn in.
7. I will use GenAI tools responsibly, avoiding content or actions that could cause emotional or reputational harm to myself or others. I will not use GenAI to manipulate the likeness (photos, videos, etc.) of faculty, staff, or students in a way that is disrespectful, dishonest, or harmful.
8. I agree to use the designated GenAI tool(s) if my teacher or the school recommends a specific tool.
9. I will not share personal, sensitive, or confidential information with GenAI tools.
10. I will not use GenAI carelessly or without purpose. GenAI tools require significant energy and resources to operate, and I will use them thoughtfully, respecting both the task at hand and our responsibility to care for God's creation.
11. I understand that this policy may be updated as technology and school practices change, and I will follow any new guidelines shared with me by teachers or school leaders.

Academic Integrity and GenAI Misuse

Misuse of GenAI in academic work is a serious violation of academic integrity and will be addressed by the school administration and faculty. Students may be subject to disciplinary action even if they think their use of GenAI is humorous or harmless. School administration and faculty will decide on the consequences of GenAI misuse.