

St. Mary Catholic School Mission Statement



As followers of Christ, we live as a Catholic community to learn and teach in ways that will help us to educate our minds and nurture our souls.



BELIEF STATEMENT

Catholic Education

We believe:

- Catholic education is founded on the teaching and learning of the life and mission of Jesus Christ.
- St. Mary Catholic School is a faith-filled community providing our students with the educational and spiritual belief that all people are created in God's image, are unique, and are worthy of dignity and respect.
- St. Mary Catholic School witnesses to Christ and the Gospel by living out our Catholic faith through Prayer, Liturgy, Evangelization, and Stewardship in our community.

Students and Students' Rights

We believe:

- Emphasis is placed on lifelong learning combined with the development of caring attitudes and behavior towards others that prepare our students to be moral citizens in a global society.
- "Students' rights" include, but are not limited to, a safe and nurturing environment, opportunities to succeed, achievement of goals using God-given gifts and talents, development of responsibility, and mutual respect of all persons.
- Total development of a student includes the spiritual, intellectual, social, emotional, and physical aspects of one's being.

Learning

We believe:

- Self-esteem is promoted through positive role modeling and recognition of each student's achievements.
- Emphasis is placed on preparing students with 21st Century skills that will earn them success in a global world.
- Students learn best when they can experience success through meaningful subject matter, differentiated learning, and appropriate challenges.



Dear SMS Parents,

Welcome to St. Mary Catholic School. Our Faculty and Staff are ready to welcome you and your children to an exciting year of learning and look forward to getting to know all the children that eagerly come to our school each day. We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children and are hopeful you will be involved in their educational process. Caring, supportive parents help make St. Mary Catholic School the warm, friendly community that it is. The St. Mary Catholic School Community wants to help each child reach their educational and spiritual potential.

We continue to seek innovative ways to educate the youth of St. Mary Catholic School. We are committed to educational reform and implement best practices. Our Faculty and Staff work diligently to align our curriculum to the state and diocesan standards.

This handbook has been designed to provide you with information about St. Mary Catholic School. Please read it carefully and review its information with your child before school begins, especially information about our core values, our operation, and our policies. This communication tool will help avoid misunderstandings and will list the behaviors that are expected by all St. Mary Catholic School students. The administration may make revisions to this handbook on occasion. Parents and students will be notified should this occur.

We continue to ask for your prayerful support and ask God's blessing on us as we work together in the Catholic Christian formation of your child.

Sincerely,

Mr. Andrew Carner, Principal

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ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTORY

School Office	(440) 243-4555	(440) 243-6214 fax
School Cafeteria	(440) 243-7270	
School Day Care	(440) 234-7210	
Rectory	(440) 243-3877	
PSR	(440) 243-8221	

DAILY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

The school office is open from 7:30AM until 3:30PM, Monday through Friday when school is in session.

Kindergarten – Grade 8

8:30AM Teacher present in classroom
9:00AM Bell for opening exercises
11:50AM 1st Lunch Period Gr. 6-7-8
12:10AM 2nd Lunch Period Gr. 3-4-5
2:30PM 3rd Lunch Period Kdg.-Gr. 2
3:10PM Prepare for dismissal (Kdg. dismisses at 3:10PM daily)
3:20PM Gr. 1-8 Car riders & walkers dismissed followed by buses

Preschool

P3 (M/T) 9:00AM-11:00AM
P4 (W/TH/F) 9:00AM-11:30AM
PK (T/W/TH/F) 12:45PM-3:05PM

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The calendar, for the following school year, will be posted on the school website and presented to the parents in the May Newsletter. We ask you to keep it in a convenient place for reference. Please be aware that days may be added to the end of the school year to accommodate excessive calamity days. The calendar lists holidays and parent-teacher conference dates. Each month the school newsletter will give a detailed account of all the activities that will be taking place that month.

ADMISSIONS

Acceptance

St. Mary Catholic School admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin, and does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs.

1. Three-year-old Preschool entrance (P3), a child must be **three years old** on or before **August 1st**.
2. Four-year-old Preschool entrance (P4 - PK), a child must be **four years old** on or before **August 1st**. (Preschool students are required to submit a completed immunization form and physician signed physical form).
3. Kindergarten entrance, a child must be **five years old** on or before **August 1st** (Kindergarten students are required to have an updated immunization form.).
4. First grade entrance a child must be **six years old** on or before **August 1st**.

Acceptance Procedure

1. St. Mary Catholic School gives priority in accepting students who are children of parishioners of St. Mary Catholic Parish. (A parishioner is defined as one who is registered, attends, and contributes to the Parish).
2. Priority is given to students whose immediate family attended St. Mary Catholic School.
3. Priority is given to those who are entering from another Catholic school.
4. If space permits, non-parishioners will be accepted.
5. Acceptance is given to students in grades two through eight only after an interview with the parents and administration.
6. Students seeking admission to St. Mary Catholic School to avoid racial desegregation of their former school will not be granted acceptance.
7. St. Mary Catholic School complies with the regulations required by state and federal funding.

Registration

Please contact school administration office for proper procedure for completing initial registration. Proper documentation, including proof of guardianship, proof of residency, and child's birth certificate will be needed.

Re-Registration

Each year the parents of the students attending St. Mary Catholic School will be asked to re-register their children for the coming school year.

At the time of re-registration:

1. Tuition payments should be current
2. The Registration/Education fee for the following year is due
3. Commitment to participate in fund- raising activities.
4. Parent volunteers are welcomed for cafeteria service.
5. The pastor, along with the principal, has the right to determine who will be admitted to St. Mary.

Transfers

Parents withdrawing a child from St. Mary Catholic School, are required to notify the office in writing and sign a form, for permission, to forward all records directly to the new school. Transfers to a new school are granted with written parental/ guardian approval only. Records will only be transferred if tuition and fees are current.

TUITION & FEES

St. Mary Catholic Church Parish has an established policy of charging tuition in accordance with diocesan guidelines. Tuition is not to be equated with parish support. It is expected that families attend weekly Mass and use the contribution envelopes provided by the parish. The suggested contribution is one hour's wage per week.

Tuition payments are made through the FACTS Tuition Management Company or payment in full directly to the rectory. Tuition payments are to be made monthly. Delinquent payment tuition is sufficient cause for withholding report cards. Effective August 1st of each new school year, two NSF (non sufficient fund) notifications from the bank for any tuition or fee payment, will mandate future payments to be made in cash or by certified check.

Questions regarding payments should be directed to Mary Beth Hennessy at (440) 243-4555 x11 or mhennessy@smsberea.org. Special arrangements/ problems with the payment of tuition must be discussed with the Pastor at (440) 243-3877.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial aid is offered through the Diocese of Cleveland and St. Mary Catholic Parish. Families requesting financial aid through the Parish should consult with the pastor regarding the application process. This aid is provided through parish funds.

The Cleveland Diocese offers a Diocesan Tuition Assistance Program to families requesting financial aid. Packets of information are available in the school office.

SMS Merit Scholarships are awarded to Eighth Grade students accepted to Catholic high schools. These scholarships are provided through the generosity of St. Mary Catholic Church Parish and School families.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum at St. Mary Catholic School attempts to provide the total development of every student so that they may use their talents in the world of tomorrow and exert a Christian influence on this world. The curriculum, as outlined by the State of Ohio and the Cleveland Catholic Diocese, emphasizes the use of common core and a range of educational experiences that will best prepare St. Mary students for the 21st Century. To ensure each student's success, reform initiatives include: critical thinking skills, collaborative problem solving, performance-based learning and assessment, meaningful parent and community involvement, and the incorporation of instructional technology.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

St. Mary Catholic School's staff acknowledges that parents are the primary religious educators of the child. Attitudes toward religion and the practice of religion within the family context have a much greater effect, on the faith development of a child, than any formal religious instruction. To assist parents with the responsibility, the teachers provide daily instruction in Catholic doctrine and practice. Our religious education program is designed to foster a knowledge and appreciation of the richness of our Catholic heritage. Parent/Student meetings and retreats for First Communion, Reconciliation, and Confirmation help to prepare your child for the reception of the sacraments. Children are formally prepared for the sacraments as part of their daily religious

instruction in the classroom.

Religion class is considered a major subject and is taught daily. In addition, students are involved in Holy Day liturgies and school Masses. The students also attend prayer services, an annual May Crowning, monthly Eucharistic Adoration, and Reconciliation during Advent and Lent.

TESTING

A variety of methods are used to assess student's progress at St. Mary Catholic School. These include the following:

1. Teacher-made tests.
2. Printed tests that accompany specific textbook programs.
3. Standardized tests to measure achievement.
 - a. Grades One-Three-Five-Seven:
 - b. CAT (Cognitive Ability Test)
 - c. MAP Testing (Kdg-Grade 8)
 - d. Dibel Testing (Kdg-Grade 3)
 - e. ACRE Religion Testing
 - f. Math CBM Testing
 - g. Individualized testing by the school psychologist.
 - h. Writing Proficiency (Grades 3, 5, 7, & 8)

HOMEWORK

Homework is assigned on a consistent basis as an important part of classes. Students will be expected to turn in their assignments neatly completed and on time. Generally speaking, homework is a means of reinforcing materials already taught and to foster habits of independent study. Parents may check on student assignments by using Progress Book on-line or by referring to the Student Homework Assignment Notebook.

Daily Homework Assignments

Kindergarten

Nightly review of sight words and "ABC" recognition.

Grades 1, 2, 3

15 to 25 minutes Monday – Thursday. Homework is due the next day unless otherwise noted. Missing or incomplete work must be completed during recess or finished at home and returned the following day.

Grades 4 & 5 60 to 75 minutes daily (varies by student). It is expected that homework will be completed and turned in on time. Students will use the homework assignment notebook and ProgressBook to track assignments and due dates.

Grade 4 Late Assignment Policy: All assignments are due by the **9:00AM bell**. For each day an assignment is handed in late, a point will be taken off the total score. If an assignment is handed in a week or more later, the score given will be a 60%. An assignment never turned in will be scored as "0". This policy goes into effect **September 1st**.

Grade 5 Late Assignment Policy: Assignments one day late will lose 5%, two days late will lose 10%, three days late will lose 15%, and four days late will lose 20%. An assignment handed in five or more days late will be given a score of 60%. An assignment never turned in will be scored as "0". This policy goes into effect **September 1st**.

Grades 6, 7, 8 60 to 80 minutes daily. It is expected that homework will be completed and turned in on

time. Students will use the homework assignment notebook and ProgressBook to track assignments and due dates. Full credit will be given for homework assignments when it is returned the following day completed. Any student that has not completed his/her homework at the time it is due will be issued a Missing Homework Slip. This slip will notify the family that the assignment was not turned in when it was due and can only receive a maximum of 50% credit if the completed assignment is handed in the following day. Any assignment not turned in after that day will receive a “0” and work can no longer be made up for credit.

Specials Classes

Homework will be turned in to the homeroom teacher during morning homeroom on the day it is due. There will be 10% deducted from the grade if a homework assignment is turned in one day late, 20% if two days late, 30% if three days late, and 40% for any assignment turned in after three days. This policy also applies to projects. All projects and homework must be turned in one week prior to the end of a grading period in order to receive credit. No credit will be given after this date.

While the child desires parental interest in and assistance with homework, he/she must learn to assume responsibility for his/her own work as early as possible. The primary child needs supervision and assistance, but the intermediate or junior high student should be accountable to the teacher for his/her work.

Pick-up Homework for Absent Students

Classroom teachers are most willing to prepare assignments for students unable to be in school due to illness. Parents are asked to make this request of the teacher when reporting the absence in the morning and pick up the homework at the end of the school day. Missed assignments will be given due dates. Please refer to the classroom policy for more information. Please do not disturb the classrooms during the teaching day.

REPORT CARDS and INTERIM REPORTS

Report cards are issued at the completion of each quarter for all students in Kindergarten through Grade 8. Preschool will receive Progress Reports quarterly. Students in Kindergarten through Grade 2 will receive an Interim/Progress Report at the end of the first quarter and will only receive additional quarterly reports if the student is struggling in a particular area. Parents of students in Kindergarten through Grade 2 can access general school information through Progress Book and the school website.

Parents of students in Grades 3 through 8 will be able to monitor their child’s daily academic progress using the Progress Book. Interim/Progress Reports will only be sent to Grades 3 through 8 parents when a student is experiencing difficulty in a subject. Parents should review academic progress with their child. Emphasis should be placed on EFFORT, CONDUCT, and HOME STUDY as reasons for success or lack of success in academic study.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

St. Mary Catholic School issues quarterly Academic Awards for students in Grades 4-8. These Honor and Merit Roll awards provide encouragement & recognition, to students, for their efforts and academic achievements. An “N” or “U” in any subject, including Spanish, Computer, Music, or Physical Education eliminates the possibility of receiving any academic award in Grades 4-8.

1. Grades 6-8:
 - a. 1st Honors – All A’s and one ”B” in Religion, Social Studies, Science, Reading, English,

- Math, and a “B-” or higher in the Special classes.
- b. 2nd Honors - All B- 's or higher in Religion, Social Studies, Science, Reading, English, Math, and Special classes.
2. Grades 4–5:
- a. 1st Honors – All A’s & one “B” in Religion, Social Studies, Science, Reading, English, Math.
 - b. 2nd Honors – All A’s / B’s in Religion, Social Studies, Science, Reading, English, Math.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Special education can be provided at St. Mary Catholic School when the service plan has ‘reasonable’ accommodations that can be met by our staff and our facility. With each new House Bill, the program is evaluated, and the needs of St. Mary Catholic School are analyzed. At present, we enjoy the services of an inclusion teacher as well as the following personnel on a part time basis: clerk, speech and hearing teacher, remedial reading and math tutor, and psychologist.

SMILES – St. Mary Improvement of Learning Skills

This program is designed for the primary grades to help them develop the necessary skills for academic learning and to give them a positive self-concept and desire to learn. The students meet 1-2 times per week for a twenty-minute session. Their learning strengths and weaknesses are first assessed, and with observation from the teacher, a program is designed to help provide the child with alternative learning styles. Emphasis is placed on strengthening listening, visual, motor, and language development skills.

MUSIC

The students at St. Mary Catholic School have the opportunity to develop their instrumental musical talents in addition to receiving vocal music. Private instrumental lessons are available, and fee based, on brass, woodwind, string & percussion instruments, and piano keyboard. Students taking lessons are encouraged to participate in the school band. Performances are offered throughout the year - parents and relatives are urged to attend these special events.

Drama Club is offered as an extra- curricular activity, dependent upon student interest, in the spring..

MEDIA CENTER/ TECHNOLOGY/ DISCOVERY HALL

The St. Mary Catholic School Media Center is an integral part of instruction and curriculum from Kindergarten through Eighth Grade. Students are taught the skills necessary to be successful in the rapidly evolving digital workplace of the future. Each classroom receives weekly computer lessons and students have liberal use of the library and computer lab. Students also have access to classroom computer stations and laptop computers. Students may arrange to use the computer lab either before or after school to work independently on assignments.

ATHLETICS (CYO)

The Athletic Program, at St. Mary Catholic School, accommodates all students in Grades 3 through 8, as well as, the students enrolled in the St. Mary Catholic Church PSR Program. We believe that the athletic programs significantly influence the development of Christian values in all of our participants. Our programs foster the development of social interaction, positive self-esteem, and Christian attitudes in addition to athletic skills. All parents are encouraged to actively VOLUNTEER WITH CYO EVENTS, for the success of the athletes and the athletic program.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a part of the school curriculum and contribute greatly to the cultural and intellectual growth of the child. Because they are educational trips, classroom instruction (and/or assignments) will provide the proper educational preparation needed to make the trip meaningful. It is expected that student cooperation will follow.

1. A school permission form, signed by the parent/guardian, and *non-refundable fee* is necessary before the student is permitted to participate in a field trip.
2. All volunteer drivers for field trips must complete a 'Volunteer Driver's Statement' form supplied by the school office before transporting any St. Mary student.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL WEEK (CSW)

Every year St. Mary Catholic School is proud of its heritage and will celebrate it by participating in Catholic Schools Week sponsored by the NCEA. A variety of activities will be planned with the parents and students in order to show our appreciation and excellence.

STUDENT SERVICE PROJECTS/ STEWARDSHIP

All students at St. Mary Catholic School participate in a Stewardship Program where they reach out in the community to lend a helping hand. Stewardship may include clothing drives, food drives, community chores, working with the blind and disabled, helping veterans, etc. In addition, the junior high students perform service hours within the school by tutoring, assisting with primary class projects, or assisting with setting up chairs for school assemblies.

ALTAR SERVERS

Boys and girls are eligible to be altar servers after completing grade five. St. Mary Catholic Church staff coordinates this program.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Each year all the children will have their pictures taken for the school records. It is not mandatory that the children purchase these pictures. Children are not required to wear uniforms on this day and are asked to "dress up" in appropriate clothes suitable for a Catholic School.

COMMUNICATION

We believe in the importance of parent communication. Opportunities will be provided throughout the school year for parents to conference with teachers. All faculty members have emails and will generally return a response within two school days. Communication is fostered through our website with postings of monthly newsletters, menus, Student/Parent Handbook, automated phone messages, and emails. In addition, written notices of meetings and activities requiring either student or parent involvement may be sent home each week in the Friday Family Folder.

SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS

Though the principal's door is always open', the time before morning classes is hectic and the principal is not always available. If you would like to schedule an appointment, to see the principal, please call the school administration office.

Prior to requesting an appointment with the principal, regarding a specific classroom problem, please try

to resolve the situation with the classroom teacher. Appointments may be made to speak with a teacher by sending a note, email, or voicemail to the teacher. This will give the teacher time to prepare and in the end will prove to be advantageous to you and your child.

VISITATION

No one is permitted to visit a classroom during school hours without the permission of the principal. Any messages are to be given to students through the school office. This includes any treats brought in for special occasions. Parents are requested to not be in the school building between the hours of 8:00 AM and 3:30 PM unless arrangements have been made in the school office.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

St. Mary Catholic School asks parents to volunteer their time in the cafeteria. (Please call the office for days you would like to volunteer).

Classroom volunteers require permission, from the classroom teacher. Parents volunteering for more than four (4) hours per month, in the classroom, will require a background check and fingerprinting.

PTO – PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

The PTO members will consist of parents with children enrolled at St. Mary Catholic School. Parents will choose PTO Board members who will facilitate and direct all activities. All parents are encouraged to be involved and attend PTO meetings. All administrators, faculty, and staff will be cooperative and helpful whenever possible.

The goals of the PTO are:

1. To develop a cooperative effort in organizing activities that take place annually, i.e., Hayride, Mother/Daughter Tea, Father/Daughter Dance, Father/Son Day, etc.
2. To promote and organize fundraising activities throughout the school year.
3. To promote positive attitudes and appreciation for the St. Mary Catholic School community. The minutes of PTO meetings will be posted. Concerns/comments should be directed to the Board.

RETENTION

Retention for Grade Kindergarten through Grade 2

St. Mary Catholic School policy is to instill an attitude of success in every child. The curriculum is geared as much as possible to meet the needs of each child. It is for this reason that retention is greatly discouraged unless the child is in Preschool, Kindergarten, First Grade or Second Grade. Children in Grades Three through Eight usually do not profit from being retained, since there are many psychological issues involved as the child matures and forms friendships. When parents desire their child in Preschool, Kindergarten, or Grade One to be retained, we will place him/her in a classroom at SMS.

When primary teachers recommend retention and parents choose to place their child in the next grade, a “Refusal to Retain Contract” must be signed to allow advancement into the next grade. Parents may choose to sign a “Refusal to Retain Contract” only once. If the child cannot meet satisfactory progress after the school provides academic interventions or does not comply fully to his/her Service Plan, the

parents will be asked to withdraw the child and relocate to a school that can meet the child's educational needs. *(Please refer to the "Refusal To Retain Contract" for further clarification)*. When a child in Second through Eighth Grade needs to be retained, we encourage the child to attend another school and not repeat a grade at SMS.

Many times retention has been profitable for a primary child who is immature and unable to handle the work. This is difficult for some parents (especially Preschool and Kindergarten parents) to understand, and many times they do not want to cooperate with this suggestion. It has been necessary for us to form a policy stating that if the principal, teacher, SMILES coordinator (when he/she has been involved), and psychologist have decided a child should be retained, the child will be retained if he/she remains at SMS. The parents will be consulted and informed of this decision. If a child attends SMS Preschool and is not recommended for our Kindergarten by our evaluation team, they may repeat Preschool at SMS. If the parent intends on placing the child in another school for Kindergarten and returning to SMS for the First Grade, admission will not be granted.

Retention for Grade Three through Grade Eight

The final decision to retain the child will be made by the principal after consultation with the teacher and parents of the child. A child should be retained only if it is presumed he/she will profit by it.

Note: According to the philosophy of St. Mary Catholic School, retention is not recommended in Grades 3 through 8. Retention may be considered for the following reasons:

1. Failure in 3 or more major subjects. The Major subjects are Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. Failure in an individual subject is defined as receiving a grade of F for more than two quarters. Daily work should consistently show failing marks.
2. Failure to master the fundamental skills of reading in the primary grades.
3. Retention for other good and sufficient reasons such as immaturity.

Absence in itself is not acceptable cause for retention if the child can make up the work that has been missed. The principal has the right to determine the number of days a student may be absent before retention is advised. This is done on an individual basis after consultation with the student, parents, and all pertinent staff taking into consideration the needs and abilities of the student in continuing the learning process while absent from the school setting. Reference should be made to the most recent truancy law in Ohio regarding chronic truancy.

CODE OF CONDUCT (Applies to all students)

St. Mary Catholic School is dedicated to provide learning opportunities that enable each child to develop his/her full potential. Our school philosophy of discipline is rooted in Christian values, the inherent dignity and worth of each person, and the importance of freedom with responsibility. Viewed in the context of these values, school rules are meant to ensure the safety and rights of all students and to foster a positive reinforcement of appropriate behavior, as well as, outlining the consequences of negative behavior. The education of your child is a partnership between the parents and the school. If, in the opinion of the administration, the partnership is irrevocably broken, the school reserves the right for parents to withdraw your child. One of the primary objectives of our school is to help students achieve self-respect and self-discipline. This objective will be reached by providing learning experiences that enable students to:

1. Develop Christian attitudes of respect toward themselves and others and their property.
2. Accept responsibility for their actions.
3. Develop a cooperative attitude in working with others.
4. Understand the need for personal safety and the safety of others.
5. Understand and apply school rules.

Helping students achieve self-respect and self-discipline is more than a set of rules. It depends on a cooperative interaction among students, parents, and school personnel. We, therefore, declare the following ST. MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL RESPECT CODE.:

1. We believe that every person has the right to learn and work in a comfortable environment.
2. We expect a positive attitude and respectful behavior from everyone. Respectful behavior will be encouraged by:
 - a. Treating teachers, parents, students, and staff, as we want to be treated.
 - b. Accepting others' responses and ideas with an open mind and polite attention.
 - c. Practicing common courtesy and friendliness at all times.
 - d. Being cooperative, attentive, and supportive in class, lunch, hallways, playground, church, the bus, at Extended Care, and at school functions, so as not to disturb others.
 - e. Being supportive of one another in our efforts to be the best in academics, activities, and personal goals.
 - f. Following school-wide and classroom rules as stated throughout the Student/ Parent Handbook and by the teachers.
 - g. Adhere to the Acceptable Use Policy.

St. Mary Catholic School is a community of caring people. Behavior demonstrates our belief in each person's worth as a human being. Students, faculty and staff are held to strict standards of conduct whether inside or outside the school. Abuse of others, in language (both written and oral), in pictures, or in physical actions, is not permitted.

Behaviors that will not be tolerated in classrooms or in the halls include:

1. Inappropriate language, put-downs, and ridicule that negatively affect a Person's self-esteem, including, but not limited to, teasing, bullying, or threats.
2. Obscene language, gestures, or pictures.
3. Talking back.
4. Name calling.
5. Negative comments and actions that affect the climate of the classroom.
6. Vandalism, destruction or defacing school building, school materials or personal property. Violations are subject to consequences of the school Discipline Code.
7. Stealing.
8. Cheating on schoolwork and tests as determined by the teacher.

The **Code of Conduct** is designed to foster self-respect, self-discipline, to promote learning, to maintain order, and to ensure the equitable handling of disciplinary situations. It identifies acceptable & unacceptable behavior, and the consequences of unacceptable behavior, during the school day, at school activities, and during travel to and from school. Since proper discipline plays an important role in creating and maintaining a positive learning climate, the "Code" is

flexible. Each teacher will deal with behavior on precipitating factors, the seriousness of the offense, the number of times the offense has been committed, and the age of the student. Violations of any one or more of the rules of conduct will result in discipline, including, but not limited to, such actions as:

1. Assignment of demerit
2. Assignment of detention
3. Student behavior contract
4. Parental contact
5. Conference
6. Removal from class
7. Suspension & possible expulsion.

The administration reserves the right to search any book bag, backpack, cell phone, electronic devices, vehicles, etc.that are on the school property.

CHEATING / PLAGIARISM POLICY

Cheating is defined as talking during a test or quiz, looking at another classmates work, copying from another student, using cheat sheets, giving another student answers during a test, quiz, or assignment. Plagiarism is defined as:

- A. Taking someone's words or ideas as if they were your own or changing the order of someone's words.
- B. A piece of writing that has been copied from someone else and is presented as your own work.

If cheating/plagiarism occurs, the following actions may take place:

1. No credit will be given to the student for the assignment.
2. A detention may be issued. (In some circumstances, more disciplinary action will be taken)

GENERAL DISCIPLINE PLAN

St. Mary Catholic School Discipline Plan is established to assist students to be the best they can be academically and to help each student grow in faith and in the knowledge of God. These educational purposes are accomplished best in a climate of student behavior that is acceptable and conducive to the teaching/learning process. Student behavior that stops the teacher from teaching, prevents other students from learning, and violates the best interest of any individual in the school will not be tolerated. Disciplinary action for violating school-wide or classroom rules may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Teacher – student conference.
2. Time-out in the classroom or office.
3. Individual classroom consequences.
4. Lunchtime detention.
5. Communication with a parent via a letter, email, telephone call, or conference.
6. Before or after school detention.
7. Referral to the Principal or administrator.
8. Loss of a classroom privileges, such as a field trip.
9. Individual behavior plan.
10. In-school suspension.

11. Out of school suspension.
12. Expulsion.

CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

Each teacher develops a classroom discipline plan that communicates to students and parents the behavior expected in the class. This plan will be made available to students and parents at the start of each school year.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Detention

Detentions may be issued for the following offenses outside the normal classroom discipline plans:

1. Gum chewing.
2. Improper conduct in church.
3. Disruptive hallway behavior.
4. Unacceptable field trip behavior.
5. Disregard for classroom, cafeteria, playground, or school rules and procedures.
6. Eating outside the lunchroom without permission.
7. Having a cell phone, I-Pod, CD player, or any other electronic devices.
8. Possession of inappropriate literature and/or music

If a student is caught with a disallowed electronic device on their person, a detention will be issued and the device confiscated until a parent comes to school. Once a cell phone or other device is in the possession of a school authority (principal, administrator, teacher, teacher assistant, secretary), the contents contained on the device may be accessed and reviewed. (*Refer to the Cell Phone Policy for further information regarding student cell phones.*) ****NOTE** Under no circumstances will the school, and/or school employees be held responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged disallowed devices.

Lunchtime detention – Lunchtime detention is defined as eating lunch out of the cafeteria and missing recess, under supervision. Student will complete work analyzing the reason for receiving a detention and setting down strategies for improvement. (i.e. 3 dress code violations in one semester = lunchtime detention.)

Before or after school detention – Defined as attending a pre-scheduled detention period for disciplinary reasons from either 7:45AM-8:30AM or 3:30PM-4:15PM

- a. Detentions will be issued on the day of the offense.
- b. Detention forms are signed by the parent and returned to the teacher the following day. This procedure assures the school that the parent is aware of the detention and the necessity to provide transportation either to school by 7:45 a.m. or from school at 4:15 p.m.

Student receiving three school detentions for behavior infractions, a conference will be held with the teacher, principal/administrator, student, and parent and a Behavioral Contract may be initiated. Reception of a fourth detention may warrant an in-school suspension depending on the severity of the offense, the number of times the offense has been committed, the factor precipitating the behavior and the age of the child.

Suspension

In-school suspension

- a. Student will be isolated from their classes/ activities for a minimum of one day
- b. Student will complete assigned lessons and homework for that day.
- c. Student will complete a behavioral contract which documents needed improvement and expectations for behavior change.
- d. Parents must agree to follow the behavioral contract. (Anyone who is given a school initiated behavioral contract will be evaluated by the principal and/or pastor at the end of each quarter, to determine the student's future placement at our school).
- e. Student may not participate in school activities: including sports, music, club or others

Out of school suspension

- a. Student does not have permission to attend school.
- b. Student may not participate in school activities.

Grounds for suspension (in-school or out of school) may include, but are not limited to:

1. Tobacco or alcohol possession, usage, transmission, or sale on school grounds, at school-related activities, or on public school buses. (*Please refer to our policy statements in the Parent/Student Handbook*)
2. Profanity or obscene language, written, oral, or pictorial directed to school personnel/ students. This includes obscene gestures or signs.
3. Insubordination in refusing to comply with the directions of school personnel or school volunteers.
4. Theft of school property, personal property of another student or school personnel.
5. Falsifying by using, in writing, the name of another, or changing records of school data including report cards.
6. False alarm – fire or false 911 call.
7. Bringing any weapons, fireworks, smoke bombs, stink bombs, lighters or matches to school.
8. Fighting.
9. Misconduct after an in-school suspension.
10. Bullying of another student or adult.

Emergency Removal

Results if a student's presence poses a clear and present danger, or if the student is inherently disruptive to person, property, or the educational process. The student will be denied permission to attend school and participate in any school activity.

Expulsion

Expulsion of a student from school is a serious matter. In some cases, the principal and/or pastor may deem an action by a student so severe that it would result in immediate expulsion from school. This decision is the right and responsibility of the principal and/or pastor. If expulsion is contemplated, notification will be provided to parent(s). A conference may be held with the student, parent, pastor and principal/ administrator.

Expulsions include but are not limited to the following cases:

- a. Disruptive or immoral behavior that presents a clear and present danger to oneself or others or is continually disruptive to the learning environment.

- b. Possessing, handling, transmitting, selling fireworks, explosive devices, weapons, drugs or drug paraphernalia. *(Please refer to our policy statements in the Parent/Student Handbook.)*
- c. Repeated violation of school or classroom rules after disciplinary actions have been attempted.
- d. Assault and battery or sexual harassment to any school personnel or student while on school property, including buses, or any school sponsored activity.
- e. Damage to school or private property on school premises, as well as any damage to private property of any school/parish personnel. Total retribution is required for any repairs or replacement costs.
- f. Failure to comply with the behavioral contract.

SCHOOL-WIDE POLICIES (Strictly Enforced)

NO STUDENT may be on school property prior to 8:30AM or after 3:30PM unless under the supervision of a Faculty/Staff member or attending the Extended Care Program.

Absence

In the interest of safety, parents **MUST** call the school office **before 9:15AM** to report absence of any student in Preschool through Grade 8 (Attendance: 440-243-4555 ext. 10). If the school office does not receive a call, you will be contacted at home or at work.

If your child is to be excused from school during any part of the regular school day, a written note stating the reason is required before the student is released. Parents should pick your child up in the school office. The child must check back in at the main office prior to returning to the classroom. Please avoid doctor and dental appointments during school hours, as this practice is detrimental to scholastic progress. Absence is excused in case of illness, death in the family and other reasonable cause. Absence is unexcused for vacationing, truancy or parental neglect. Students must be fever free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school. Students must receive at least a full 24 hours of antibiotic dosages before returning to school. Students sent home from the clinic should not return to school for 24 hours or until symptom free.

Birthdays

Parents of primary children may send a wrapped treat on the occasion of a birthday. Please check with the teacher for students with food allergies. The birthday child may 'dress-down' on his/her birthday (Refer to the "Dress Down" dress code).

Lost and Found

Children are strongly encouraged to label all items. The school stores lost items in an area where students have daily access. Lost items are displayed in the hallway quarterly for students to claim. Unclaimed items are donated to the needy quarterly. The school is not responsible for unclaimed and lost items.

Use of the Telephone

NO student is permitted to use a school telephone without permission from a teacher or administrator. The school telephones are business phones and therefore limited in the number of calls permitted. **(CELL PHONES ARE NOT PERMITTED DURING SCHOOL HOURS.)**

Items NOT Permitted On School Campus

Items NOT permitted on the school campus include all electronic equipment, i.e., iPods, games, and any inappropriate literature/music. These items will be confiscated and must be retrieved by a parent.

Damage to Textbooks & School Property

Students are responsible for all textbooks and school property loaned to them. Writing in, mishandling, or destruction of textbooks is not permitted. Students are obligated to pay a fine for lost, damaged, or defaced books. Failure to meet this financial obligation will result in withholding of report cards, transcripts, and diplomas. Amount of the fine will depend upon the book and the amount of damage. Damage will include the following: broken spine, ripped pages and writing in the book.

Truancy

Truancy includes the following:

1. Leaving school without permission.
2. Being absent from school without a parent's knowledge.
3. Being absent from class without permission.
4. Obtaining a pass to go to a designated area and failing to go directly there or to report here at all.
5. Excessive unexcused tardiness to homeroom or to classes. *Morning tardiness is defined as a child not being in their homeroom upon the first morning bell.*

Truancies may result in but are not limited to the following consequences:

1. Teacher – student conference.
2. Notification to parent/guardian.
3. Student – principal/administrator conference.
4. Student – parent – principal/administrator conference.
5. Before or after school detention.
6. Suspension.
7. Referral to proper court authorities and/or Department of Child & Family Services.

Specific Procedures - Suspension (In-school and out of school)

1. Parents or guardian will be notified of the suspension and the reasons.
2. The student will remain at school until the close of regular classes that day.
3. Make up work after an out of school suspension will be graded at the teachers discretion.

Removal (Principal/Administrator)

1. The student is removed from the classroom or activity and placed in the principal or administrator's office.
2. Parent/guardian will be notified of the action and reason(s).
3. The student can explain his/her actions in regard to the disciplinary removal.
4. Disciplinary action will be made based on the facts of each individual case.

Other Disciplinary Actions

No corporal punishment will ever be administered as a disciplinary action.

TRANSPORTATION

Walkers/ Bike Riders (St. Mary School is not responsible for lost or damaged property)

All walkers and bike riders **MUST**:

1. Obey traffic regulations.
2. Do not ride bicycles on campus.
3. Use bike rack.
4. Use sidewalks on campus.

Skateboards/scooters are not allowed at any time on the school grounds. Skateboards/scooters will be confiscated.

Buses

Provided for children living more than 1.5 miles from St. Mary Catholic School. Questions concerning the schedule and availability of buses should be directed to the Berea Transportation Office at (216) 898-8301, Strongsville Transportation (440) 572-7060 and Olmsted Falls Transportation (440) 427-6350. The school cannot give a child permission to ride another bus or change their designated bus stop. Special arrangements may be requested by contacting your transportation department.

Students riding the bus must obey the rules of good conduct:

1. Loud talking and laughing are unnecessary. Riders should talk quietly.
2. Children should not tamper with the bus, outside or inside, or with any equipment.
3. The child's parents will pay for any damage done to the bus, by a child.
4. Throwing anything in or out of the bus is not permitted.
5. Eating is prohibited on the bus.
6. While on the bus, the children are under the authority of the bus driver.
7. Children must remain seated and keep their arms inside the bus when the windows are open.
8. Books, musical instruments, or any items are to be kept out of the main aisle on the bus.
9. Be on time for the bus.
10. Refrain from rough playing or damage to nearby property while waiting for the bus.

If a child is reported, the bus driver will issue a Misconduct Report and copies will be sent to the Transportation Department, the principal, and to the parents. Discipline for misconduct is left to the discretion of the principal.

Should a major offenses occur, such as smoking, vandalism and safety hazards, **NO WARNING** will be given and the principal may suspend the student from bus riding privileges.

PARENT DRIVERS *SLOW DOWN!*

It is imperative that the 10 mph speed limit on school grounds be observed for the safety of our children. Be alert at all times. *SLOW DOWN! Leave home early enough for safe driving!*

Parents who drive their children to and from school **MUST** observe the following:

1. Do not enter the bus depot.
2. Follow the posted route and proper procedure. Parents who must get out of the car to assist their children **MUST** use a designated parking space and not block the quick drop off lane.
3. At dismissal time, park your car in a designated spot when waiting for your child.
4. Do not block traffic lanes.
5. Parents are asked to escort their children through the parking lot area.

6. Do not park on or block sidewalks.
7. Only SMS parents and parent-authorized parties are eligible to be on the school campus to drop off and pick up a student at school.

Our faculty/staff supervisors are on duty during arrival and dismissal for the safety and security of our students and to ensure that students will only be released to the appropriate adult. These procedures have been designed for the purpose of student safety and to alleviate congestion in the parking lot area. Guests of SMS may NOT be in the parking lot area or on the school campus during the school day, 8:30 a.m. through 4:00 p.m., unless they are registered with the school office and have been issued a Visitor's Pass. All unauthorized individuals will be asked to leave the campus.

LUNCH & PLAYGROUND

Cafeteria

Kindergarten through Grade 8 will eat lunch in the cafeteria except on special occasions when it will be taken to the classrooms. Lunchtime is part of the educational program and provides an opportunity for all to show good health habits in eating. Table etiquette is a true test of children's manners and an indication of refinement taught at home and school. Lunches brought in a brown bag/lunch box should be marked plainly with name and homeroom.

Parent volunteers & teachers are used to supervise students during lunch and recess. Parents may not deliver restaurant food to the cafeteria during the lunch hour. Parents may only supply food to their own child.

Lunchroom Rules

1. Each grade level will have designated tables.
2. Speak in a normal voice. Display table manners.
3. Follow directions given by lunchroom monitors.
4. Follow signal given to quiet down or to be seated.
5. Clean off tables.
6. Place lunch box in classroom crate.
7. No student may leave the cafeteria to return to classroom w/out a note from the teacher.
8. No student may go back to the classroom to return or get anything w/ out permission and supervision of a faculty/staff member.
9. Remain in the cafeteria until dismissed by lunchroom monitor.
10. Students must ask permission to use restrooms or drinking fountain.

Consequences for breaking rules include but are not limited to:

1. Loss of recess time.
2. Before or after school detention.
3. Removal from lunchroom.
4. Parent conference.

Milk Program

St. Mary Catholic School participates in the U.S.D.A. Government Milk Program. Milk orders will be taken the first Friday of each month.

Hot Lunch Program

A hot lunch is prepared daily by the cafeteria staff. Students in Grades 1-8 may purchase lunch on a daily basis beginning with the first day of school. Kindergarten students must pack a lunch for the 1st semester and may participate in the pizza program in the 2nd semester on a limited basis. A menu will be posted on-line with the monthly newsletter.

Playground Rules

1. Play in designated areas only.
2. Follow the directions of playground supervisors.
3. Use only authorized playground materials in a safe manner.
4. Allow others to play without disruption or exclusion.
5. NO contact sports.
6. No hanging on any of the basketball rims or trees.
7. No sitting on concession stand counter.
8. Obey playground rules.
9. Speak respectfully to all adults on duty and to fellow students.
10. Avoid rough playing, kicking, tripping, jumping, fighting, tackling, and tearing clothes.
11. During winter – NO climbing on snow piles or throwing snowballs.
12. Treat each other kindly by sharing.
13. Take no food outside.
14. Remain outside until the bell rings to come in. Permission to re-enter the building must be obtained from playground supervisor.
15. Avoid playing near parked cars.
16. Do not go over the fence or enter the property on either side of the school.
17. Do not run in and out of the building.
18. Do not return to your classroom once you have been dismissed for lunch/recess unless accompanied by an adult supervisor.
19. **Dress properly for the weather.**

Consequences for violating rules include but are not limited to:

1. Recess detention and/or loss of playground privileges for one day.
2. Before or after school detention determined by administrators.
3. Loss of playground privileges for one week plus a parent conference.
4. In-school suspension.
5. Out of school suspension.

SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP/ RECORDS/ MEDICAL FORMS

Each student, at St. Mary Catholic School, has an individual permanent record file. The contents are a compilation of the family history, academic grades, academic reports, annual photographs and testing scores. This information is **confidential**. Transfers to a new school are granted with written parental/guardian approval only. Records will only be transferred if tuition and fees are current.

Every year, **on the first day of school, parents/guardians must complete and return an Emergency**

Medical Form for their child(ren). This form will list the necessary information needed to contact the parent, in case of an emergency. It will also give permission for a physician to administer immediate medical treatment to the child. Psychological forms are kept on file by the auxiliary staff for children who have been tested. **Please inform the school of any change in phone number or address that might take place during the school year.** These corrections will be made on the records.

HEALTH

Required Immunization

1. DPT (minimum of 5)
2. Polio Vaccine (minimum of 4)
3. Measles, mumps, rubella (min. of two) The first vaccine must be administered on or after the first birthday.
4. Hepatitis B Vaccine (3 doses)
5. Varicella (1 dose)

Illness in School

Once a student has reported to the clinic, the Nurse/Health Aide will assess the illness/injury. Basic care will be administered when warranted, i.e., applying a bandage, taking temperature. When further treatment is warranted, the first available parent will be contacted. The parent will make the decision as to what further treatment is necessary and if the child should remain in school or be sent home. The Nurse/Health Aide will send a student home if the child is displaying obvious signs of illness/injury, i.e., elevated temperature, vomiting, or bleeding.

***STUDENT MUST BE TAKING ANTIBIOTICS, FOR 24 HOURS, TO RETURN TO SCHOOL IF CHILD HAS:**

- Fever
- Pink eye
- Hand, foot, mouth disease (as well as, written doctor permission)
- Vomiting (due to illness)

Medication

In addition, the school clinic keeps a medical record file of each student. Any medication brought to school must be sent in the original container and accompanied by two school medical forms signed by the parent/guardian and physician. Medication brought to school must be properly identified. The school clinic will keep medication under lock and key. Administration of medicine, as directed by the child's physician, can only be issued at the clinic. No student is to have medication on their person. Any questions concerning this matter should be directed to the school nurse. It is important that parents inform the school concerning any illness or sickness. This should be listed on the medical form. Parents are requested to report all communicable diseases to the school office. State law requires proper immunization for admittance into the school.

Head Lice

Exclusion from school and treatment of infested individuals is the most important factor in controlling head lice. The protocol, at St. Mary Catholic School, once lice have been detected:

1. Parent is notified and the child is sent home to receive treatment.
2. The child's locker is emptied, bagged, and sent home with the child.

3. The affected locker and classroom are thoroughly cleaned and sprayed.
4. Once the child returns to school he/ trained personnel must check her before entering the classroom in the morning for five school days of being lice/nit free. We suggest that parents accompany their child to school during this time in case they are not cleared to enter the classroom.
5. It is advisable to have girls wear their hair up at school. Students should not share any hair accessories, combs, brushes, or clothing.
6. Many products are available at the drugstore to deter lice, such as special shampoos. Check with your pharmacist or physician.

What parents can do:

1. Check every member of the family. Lice are hard to spot, so look for tiny white eggs (nits) on hair shafts, near the scalp, especially at the nape of the neck and behind the ears. Head lice are small, wingless, grayish-tan insects. Any family member with lice or nits must be treated.
2. Use an effective head lice treatment. Several are available without a prescription. Contact your physician.
3. Remove all nits. Gently comb the child's hair with the special nit removal comb. The combs are provided with most lice treatment products. Schools require students to be nit- free before returning to the classroom.
4. Wash clothes, bed linens, and towels. Use hot water, then dry on the hot cycle for at least 20 minutes. Items such as stuffed animals, headphones and hats that are not machine washable must be dry-cleaned or stored at room temperature in a tightly sealed plastic bag for at least two weeks.
5. Soak combs, brushes, etc. in hot water. The hotter the better, but the temperature should be at least 130 degrees. Items should soak for at least 20 minutes.
6. Vacuum everywhere. You should vacuum carpets, pillows, mattresses, and upholstered furniture, even the car seats.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS / CALAMITY DAY/ BLIZZARDBAG

When St. Mary Catholic School cancels due to bad weather or any other environmental calamity, parents will be notified via email and automated phone message. Parents may also refer to radio and television announcements. If the Berea Public Schools close, St. Mary Catholic School will also close.

When SMS is OPEN but surrounding districts are closed, the closed bus departments will cancel service to SMS. In this instance, parents will be required to provide transportation for their child. If your child does not come to school, he/she will be marked absent, and all missed work must be made up.

When surrounding districts have their buses on a *TWO-HOUR DELAY* and SMS is open, be aware that SMS will *still begin classes at 9:00AM*. In this instance, parents are asked to provide transportation for their child to school. If parent transportation is not available, your child can wait for the delayed bus and will not be marked tardy. However, your child will be required to make up all missed work. The school day will end at the normal time with buses running as usual.

When SMS is called off for a CALAMITY DAY (snow day), three Blizzard Bags are available on Progress Book. They can be accessed through the homeroom teacher's **HOME PAGE** in **PARENT ACCESS**. Under the **HOMEWORK** column, choose **TEACHER COMMENTS**. Please download and complete the assignments for the appropriate day. Students are expected to complete Blizzard Bags after the 12th Calamity Day. Each Blizzard Bag may contain several assignments. The assignments must be returned, to the teacher,

on the next day school is in session. Once all Calamity Days have been used, SMS will add days to the school year in June as required by the State of Ohio.

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

St. Mary Extended Care Program will provide supervised before and after school care, for students enrolled at St. Mary School, from grades Kindergarten through Grade 8. This program is not an extension of the school day and formal classes will not be held. We will provide a caring atmosphere and activities to make your child feel safe and secure during the hours he/she is in our care and not in the classroom. All activities will take place at St. Mary Catholic School facility. A staff member will provide homework sessions.

The program will operate daily when school is in session, from 6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. Extended Care will be open on most free days, and a summer camp is also available.

PRESCHOOL DAY CARE

Preschool Day Care operates under the same guidelines as the Extended Care Program. The Preschool Day Care will operate Monday through Friday when school is in session, from 6:30AM – 6:00PM. Preschool Day Care will also be open on most free days.

SAFETY, SECURITY, CRISIS PLAN

Tornado, lockdown and fire drills are intended to develop prompt and orderly evacuation and safety procedures. Ohio State Law requires practice drills. All children and adults will participate in these drills. *The school doors are locked all day – everyday.* A security system and safety procedures are in place to promote a quick response to any problem that may occur. A Safety Plan has been developed with consultation from both the local police and fire departments. Safety forces frequent our campus and have used our facility for police and fire department drills.

BEREA SCHOOL SYSTEM

We believe in the importance of good communication with the Berea Public School System. Whenever possible, we encourage parents to get involved in activities provided by the System. We believe that the children at St. Mary Catholic School can greatly profit from the many opportunities available through the Berea System, and whenever possible we desire to be included in these events.

LEGAL CUSTODY/ GUARDIANSHIP

In cases of legal separation or divorce, it is necessary for the school to have on confidential file a certified copy of the custody document indicating legal guardianship of students. Should this be the case, please submit a complete copy of the document to the school office. A complete copy consists of court-generated records showing all case numbers and bearing official signatures and court stamps.

St. Mary Catholic School is finding an increasing number of families experiencing transitions in parental custodial relationships. In addition, laws governing divorce settlements and custody have been recently changed. For this reason we find it necessary to clarify and restate the usual procedures followed by the school administration and faculty in dealing with parents in such situations.

In two-parent families, it is assumed that both parents are living at the same address unless we have been notified otherwise. St. Mary Catholic School personnel will, therefore, send home notices, communications, etc, with the child. It is assumed that both parents are communicating regarding the child and that all information is shared by and between the parents. This information includes, but is not limited to, conference appointments, report cards, mid-quarter reports, and discussions with school personnel.

In families experiencing separation of parents, or pending divorces, the above information will be sent home with the child to whichever parent currently has care of the child. It is assumed that this information is shared by the parents and between the parents. Since this situation frequently impacts a child's achievement and interactions at school, parents are asked to inform both the principal and teacher so appropriate support can be given to the child. St. Mary Catholic School personnel cannot proceed on hearsay, rumors, or demands of a parent, but only with the appropriate documentation detailed below.

In cases of an actual divorce decree involving clear custody by one parent, the principal is to be informed by the custodial parent of this fact. A copy of the entire decree bearing the case number, and all pages referring to custody and the relationship with the school, and the final page bearing the judge's signature are to be submitted to the principal. Unless the decree indicates otherwise, school communications will be sent home to the custodial parent. Custodial parents should understand, however, that unless the divorce decree specifically limits the non-custodial parent's right to access to records and school information, the non-custodial parent has a right to the same access to school information as the custodial parent. We will, unless instructed by a court order, release such information upon request to the non-custodial parent. However, we ask the custodial parent to cooperate with the school and share information, correspondence, and conference appointments directly with the non-custodial parent. This avoids time-consuming duplication of services.

Further, you should realize that unless restricted by court order, any non-custodial parent has the right to attend any school activity of their child, which includes sports activities and class programs. Parents should keep each other informed as to these activities to avoid duplication of communications and to allow the school to better attend to the duty of teaching your child.

In cases of "joint custody" (shared parenting agreements) entitling both parents access to school personnel and activities, it is assumed that one copy of communications and information will be sent home with the child and that this will be shared by and between parents.

Regarding parent's conferences in all custody situations: It is preferred and will be the general procedure at St. Mary Catholic School that one conference appointment will be scheduled 'jointly' if both parents wish to be present. It is assumed that parents are able to set aside differences and to come together on behalf of their child for this time. A joint conference further insures that both parents are given the same information at the same time, thereby avoiding misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

In cases where joint conferences are clearly neither possible nor desirable by all parties involved, alternate arrangements may be discussed with the principal, subject to approval of both parents, and further

reviewed by St. Mary Catholic School legal council. Every effort will be made to keep communications open with both parents while at the same time avoiding duplication of services and excessive demands on the teacher's time.

Visitation should begin at the home of one of the parents, not at school. It is hoped that visitation arrangements would reflect the sensitivity of both parents, and to the consistency of routines that foster security in a child, including completion of homework.

If there are questions concerning this re-statement of procedures or circumstances you feel necessitate other arrangements, please contact the principal personally.

POLICY STATEMENTS

Policy For Early Entrance

A child who is five years of age on or before August 1st is eligible to enter Kindergarten at the beginning of school in August of that year. A child who is six years of age on or before August 1st is eligible to enter the first grade at the beginning of school in August of that year. Early entrance to Kindergarten may be permitted if the following requirements are met:

1. The child's fifth birthday should be between August 1st and November 30th of the year requested for early entrance.
2. The child's mental age must be between 14 to 16 months above his chronological age as determined by standardized tests.
3. During the screening process for early entrance, the child must score in the top 10% of the existing students currently enrolled in that class in order to be advanced to the next phase in which they meet with the school psychologist for further evaluation. If the child does not meet this requirement, the student is not accepted for early entrance.
4. The child's I.Q. is at least 125-130 on a deviation scale as determined by standardized testing.
5. The child possesses and demonstrates social and emotional characteristics that will permit conformity with the pattern of behavior commonly expected of children in Kindergarten.
6. The school psychologist and building principal recommend admission based on the above evidence.
7. It is recognized that although I.Q. is not the single predictor of success, I.Q. must always be considered in terms of physical, social and emotional factors, which interact with it. Thus, the above I.Q. ranges may be mitigated in response to additional standardized test performance requirements.
8. It is also recognized that there exists extremely exceptional children who could benefit from early entrance. Furthermore, for some such children it may be in the judgment of professional staff members detrimental to such child's overall welfare if (s)he is denied early entrance. Under such conditions additional early entrance exceptions may be made from August 2nd of the year requested for early entrance by the building principal, school psychologist, kindergarten teacher or other appropriate school staff.

Legislation Regarding Early Entrance to Kindergarten and Giftedness

Early entrance to Kindergarten is a subject typically addressed through gifted education. It is covered in the State of Ohio's *Model Student Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners*. According to the Ohio Revised Code (3324.01), "gifted" means students who perform or show potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared to others of their age, experience, or

environment and who are identified under Division (A), (B), (C), or (D) of Section 3324.03 of the Revised Code.

Kindergarten Expectations

The Ohio Department of Education's website contains useful information about Kindergarten, in particular, the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment for Literacy (KRA-L). There is a family guide on the Early Learning and School Readiness (SLR) link about the KRA-L.

Procedure for Applying for Early Entrance into Kindergarten

The principal will follow these steps:

1. The principal will interview the parents and child to discuss the request for early entrance.
2. The application for early entrance must be completed by the parent and be received no later than March 1st in the year for which admission is being requested.
3. During the screening process for early entrance, the child must score in the top 10% of the existing students currently in that class in order to advance to the next phase in which they meet with the school psychologist for further evaluation. If the child does not meet this requirement, the student is not accepted for early entrance.
4. The parent will then complete all St. Mary Catholic School registration forms and pay the non-refundable registration fee prior to the child attending the St. Mary Catholic School Kindergarten Screening. If the child scores exceptionally well, on the St. Mary Catholic School screening, additional testing will then be arranged with the school psychologist.
5. Prior to the school psychologist administering a cognitive abilities test, the non-refundable registration fee must be paid. The child must score above the 125-130% percentile on this test to be considered for Kindergarten.
6. If additional data is needed to determine early entrance an observation by a school representative of the child in a preschool setting may need to be scheduled. Parents will be contacted if this is required. While some children may be cognitively ready for Kindergarten, they may not be developmentally ready. This additional information may be needed to assess the social and emotional skills necessary to be successful in a school environment. The school has up to May 1st to complete the evaluation.
7. Once all the evaluations are completed, the committee will convene for the purpose of conducting a fair and thorough evaluation of the child. This committee may include the following: the principal, program director, kindergarten teacher, and services teacher, parent/guardian of the student, education coordinator, intervention specialist, psychologist, and counselor.

Aids August '97

St. Mary Catholic School, directed by the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, has adopted the following regarding our 'AIDS Policy ': As Church and educators, we call ourselves to charity and compassion for the sick and concern for the person. We recognize that as educators we have an obligation to the common as well as to the individual welfare of our pupils and personnel. This requires that we make wise decisions that respect both the person with AIDS and the welfare of the school community served at St. Mary Catholic School. In the same spirit, we expect that persons who have AIDS and whose condition can potentially put others at risk will inform the school, and together decisions can be made to manage the situation for the good of all. St. Mary Catholic School principal and pastor/ecclesiastical liaison will confer with the appropriate persons and consult with the Diocese of Cleveland before decisions concerning any individual infected with AIDS are made. When a child with AIDS is admitted to school,

only those school personnel who need to be aware of this condition will be notified to assure proper care and confidentiality.

Guidelines:

1. The health of a child, as documented by his/her physician, allows participation in regular academic school activities.
2. The child behaves acceptably; in a manner that would not cause spread of the disease or in any way put others at risk.
3. The child does not have open sores, skin eruptions, or any other conditions that prevents his/her control of bodily secretions.
4. There are periodic evaluations of the child's physical condition with written certification from his/her physician allowing continuing participation in regular academic school activities.

Abuse of Alcohol and Other Drugs August 97

St. Mary Catholic School, directed by the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, has adopted the following policy regarding the Abuse of Alcohol and Other Drugs:

1. St. Mary Catholic School principal and pastor/ecclesiastical liaison have adopted a 'zero' tolerance policy regarding the abuse of alcohol and other drugs. This policy is effective on school property or at school-sponsored activities and events.
2. Students may not possess, use, manufacture, transmit, dispense, distribute, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamines, anabolic steroids, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, or other controlled drug as defined by state law.
3. Students reporting to school or school activities under the influence of any of the above substances are susceptible to immediate expulsion from school.

Youth Gang Issues

St. Mary Catholic School, directed by the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, has adopted the following policy regarding Youth Gangs and Gang-Related Activity: St. Mary Catholic School principal and pastor/ecclesiastical liaison define a gang as any non-sponsored group, possibly of secret and/or exclusive membership, whose purpose or practices include the commission of illegal acts, unlawful or antisocial behavior, violation of school rules, establishment of territory or 'turf' or any action that threatens the safety or welfare of other students or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. Gang and gang activities can include but are not limited to the following:

1. Recruitment
2. Initiation, a manner of grooming, hair style and/or wearing of clothes, jewelry, head coverings, or accessories by which virtue of color, arrangement, trademark or other attribute which denotes membership
3. Fighting, assault, hazing, gang tattoos, literature that indicates gang membership, extortion, establishing turf, use of hand signals, gang vocabulary and nicknames
4. Possession of beepers or cellular phones, possession of weapons and explosive materials
5. Possession/use or sale of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia
6. Attendance at functions sponsored by a gang or known gang members, association with or conviction of crimes with known gang members, or any other action directly resulting from membership, interest in, promotion or furtherance of a gang.

Consequences

If a student is suspected or identified as being a member of a gang, shows interest in joining a gang, initiates or participates in any gang related activity, or has been approached for recruitment, any or all of the following steps may be taken: .

1. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately and appropriate intervention initiated.
2. Behavioral contract will be prepared stating the conditions of the student remaining in the school.
3. Student may be referred to counseling (personal and/or family).
4. Student may be referred to the Department of Human Services or other welfare or childcare agencies of the respective county.
5. Student may be referred to outside agencies or programs for treatment when the use of drugs and/or alcohol is involved.
6. Students may be referred to the Task Force on Violent Crime.
7. Police, Juvenile Court and other appropriate authorities will be notified of violence and/or illegal activities.
8. Student may be suspended and/or expelled as already outlined in the school discipline policies.
9. Parents/students will be held liable and financially responsible for all forms of vandalism.

Weapons Policy August 97

St. Mary Catholic School, directed by the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, has adopted the following policy regarding Weapons:

1. Prohibits the use, possession, sale, or discharge of any weapons, dangerous ordinances and instruments or explosive devices in the school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities.
2. This policy shall apply to all students in the school or parish.
3. This policy includes, but is not limited to
 - a. Firearm (this shall include any loaded or unloaded gun of any caliber or type. This prohibition also includes any pistol, rifle, or other device that uses air or gas propelled projectiles).
 - b. Knife, razor blade, box cutter
 - c. Deadly weapon,
 - d. Or explosive or incendiary device. As defined by state law, a deadly weapon is “any instrument, device, or thing capable of inflicting death, and designed or specifically adapted for use as a weapon, or possessed, carried, or used as a weapon: (O.R.C.2923.11A).

Violations of this policy may warrant notification of the police, immediate suspension, and possible expulsion. If possession of a weapon is suspected, the principal or the administrator should immediately contact the police department and the Diocesan Education Office (216) 696- 6525 ext. 3280 before confronting the individual. If it is determined that this policy has been violated, the parents of the offender shall be immediately contacted and must cooperate with the disciplinary process.

The disciplinary process will include immediate suspension, pending investigation and resolution. If the student’s infraction does not warrant immediate dismissal, then the parents may be required to sign a probation contract that includes all conditions of the student’s retention at the school. Possible terms of

this probation agreement may include professional counseling, participation in a community program addressing youth violence, suspension from extracurricular activities, and any other conditions deemed appropriate by the administration, pastor, or Diocesan Education Office.

Harassment

St. Mary Catholic School, directed by the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, has adopted the following policy regarding Harassment:

1. St. Mary Catholic School is firmly committed to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for everyone in the school. For this reason, and in keeping with the goals and objectives of Catholic education, St. Mary Catholic School expressly prohibits harassment in the school environment.
2. The pastor, administration and staff of St. Mary Catholic School believe that all employees and students are entitled to work and study in school-related environments that are Christ-centered and free of harassment.
3. St. Mary Catholic School will not tolerate harassment of any type. If harassment occurs, the appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Disciplinary action may include suspension or expulsion. For the purpose of this policy, examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Verbal or written taunting;
 - b. Bullying; other offensive, intimidating, hostile or offensive conduct;
 - c. Jokes, stories, pictures, cartoons, drawings or objects, which are offensive, tend to alarm, annoy, abuse, or demean an individual or group.

Sexual Harassment April 98

St. Mary Catholic School, directed by the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, has adopted the following policy regarding Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence:

St. Mary Catholic School is firmly committed to providing a safe, positive learning and working environment for everyone in the school. For this reason, and in keeping with the goals and objectives of Catholic education, St. Mary Catholic School expressly prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence in the school environment. This policy re-emphasizes the personal dignity of the individual and fosters positive sexual attitudes and respect for others.

For the purpose of this policy, sexual harassment includes the following specific instances:

1. Verbal;
2. Sexual abuse; disseminating obscene or sexually explicit material, whether in the form of music, written lyrics, pornographic pictures or other literature, or having such material in one's possession in the school, on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities;
3. Obscene or sexually explicit graffiti anywhere in the school or on the school/parish grounds, continuing and unwanted written or oral communication directed to another of a sexual nature;
4. Spreading sexual rumors/ innuendos;
5. Obscene T-shirts, hats, or buttons;
6. Touching oneself sexually in front of others;
7. Obscene and/or sexually explicit or obscene nature that demeans or offends the recipient.

The above list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but is intended to provide guidance as to what may

constitute sexual harassment.

Isolated, trivial incidents are not sufficient to constitute harassment and will be handled according to the student behavior code.

Allegations of sexual harassment (as defined above) are to be reported to the teacher and the principal. Parents of both the offender and the victim will be informed of the allegations. The matter is to be kept confidential by all parties involved, and every effort will be made to protect the alleged victim from retaliation. The parents of both the offender and the victim are obligated to cooperate in remedying the situation.

If the allegations are substantiated, disciplinary actions will be taken. These will depend on the nature, frequency & severity of the action, the age of the offender and victim, the history of similar actions by this individual, and the circumstances in which the harassment occurred. Possible disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to any or all of the following:

- a. Verbal warning/reprimand and apology to the victim.
- b. A parent/student/principal conference
- c. Written warning/reprimand and parent notification, entered in the student's file – detention or removal from selected school activities and/or extracurricular activities.
- d. Behavior/probation contracts, possibly requiring professional intervention
- e. Suspension or Expulsion

Cell Phone Policy

We understand that some students carry a cell phone for before and after school use. The policy, at St. Mary Catholic School, is one which the cell phone must be **TURNED OFF prior to entering the school building** and should be kept in the student's book bag until after dismissal and he/she is off school property. **At NO time should a cell phone be available to a student during the school day.** If a cell phone is seen, heard, or used during the school day, it will be confiscated and a detention will be served. The administration has the right to review the contents on the confiscated cell phone. It will be the responsibility of the parent to retrieve the cell phone from the principal during regular school office hours. *(Any student carrying a cell phone must register that phone in the school office by completing a Cell Phone Policy form that includes a parent signature).*

Bullying Policy

Bullying is defined as a deliberate and repeated attempt to make someone scared, embarrassed, or hurt another person. Any student who is a victim of bullying should notify the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher will inform the Principal and/or Program Director. Normal disciplinary procedures as outlined in the Code of Conduct will be utilized in dealing with incidents of bullying. The age of the student, the severity of the incident, and the frequency of bullying will determine consequences.

PROFILE OF A CATHOLIC SCHOOL GRADUATE

A faith filled disciple of Christ who is:

Called by baptism and nourished by the Eucharist Active in the sacramental life of the Church
Centered in gospel values Prayerful

A Christian Leader who is:

A decision maker whose conscience is formed by the teachings of a Catholic Church A witness to the faith A person of integrity Respectful Committed to justice Collaborative A community builder A steward of the environment Active in parish life

A centered well-rounded graduate who is:

Self-confident Self-disciplined Open to growth Responsible An active and productive citizen

A loving graduate who is:

Compassionate Kind Forgiving Appreciative of diversity Welcoming A peace filled mediator
Respectful of the talents and abilities of others

A life-long learner who is:

Articulate Creative Technologically literate Academically and spiritually competent A critical thinker A problem solver

A healthy graduate who is:

Respectful of life Practicing good health habits Committed to reaching full potential A good sport