

## **St. Mary School Mission Statement**

**St. Mary Parish School follows the examples of our patroness, Mary, and her Son, Jesus Christ, by serving others, by preparing academically for our future, and by respecting all of God's creation.**

## **St. Mary Church Mission Statement**

**As a people of God on the pilgrim journey to the Kingdom, we, the people of St. Mary benefiting from a rich tradition of faith, are a Christ-centered community blessed by a diversity of talents and gifts.**

**As a Catholic, Christian community we value the teachings of Jesus Christ and the sacraments of the Church which call us to justice and love.**

**As a people of hope, led by the Spirit, we continue the mission of building the Kingdom. Through our ministry, service and outreach, we strive to welcome all into a warm, caring parish family.**

## **PHILOSOPHY OF ST. MARY SCHOOL**

### **Elyria, Ohio**

St. Mary School exists so that the Catholic heritage may remain a lived reality in the city of Elyria. We strive to “integrate religion with the rest of learning and living.”

We share with the parents the responsibility to develop the human dignity of each individual and to stress all aspects of total human formation: fostering spiritual, intellectual, moral, physical, emotional, social, and cultural growth.

Every school year we commit ourselves anew to the growing challenges of maintaining academic excellence while building a Christian community founded on the Gospel message of peace and justice for all and rooted in service that extends beyond our own Christian community.

In light of our philosophy and in an effort to provide quality education, St. Mary School community endeavors to:

- Encourage and inspire spiritual, intellectual, and social growth.
- Provide every student with an education and spiritual growth opportunity to become successful adults.
- Prepare students to live in a diverse global society.
- Participate in the stewardship of God’s creation.
- Place value on respect for students, teachers, and parents.
- Encourage and challenge student learning.
- Enhance the idea to live as a family in God’s house.
- Emphasize treating everyone equally and with kindness.
- Challenge the students to take personal responsibility for their own actions and education.

In addition, St. Mary School strives to support, strengthen and encourage parents in their role as primary educators.

The St. Mary School Parent-Student Handbook provides the policies and procedures for the governing of the school. However, not all circumstances and situations can be covered in a booklet of this size. The pastor and/or principal reserve the right to change and/or amend the handbook to govern particular situations or circumstances.

## PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The primary responsibility for the education of children belongs to the parents. This idea is basic to the American way of life and the Christian concept of the family as the fundamental unit of society. Although this responsibility is shared with schools as a matter of practical necessity, parent responsibility remains paramount.

The attitude of each parent toward sharing this responsibility with the school is important to the child as a person and to the community. Attitudes formulated at an early age in the home are more important than ability. The greatest single factor in building a child's intellectual, moral, and spiritual attitude is the example you provide in the home.

As role models for your children, it is important to provide a positive and supportive attitude toward the school and its staff. What children experience at home is the attitude which they will reflect in school. Education requires a positive and trusting relationship based on respect.

Research has shown that students are successful in school when parents are involved in the religious, academic, and social activities of the students. Involvement in field trips, fund raising activities, and social events of a school year provide the positive support needed for the successful education of children.

The conscientious parent will try to plan thoughtfully not only for the child's first entrance into school life, but also for his continued success in school.

As your child's primary educator, we ask that you cooperate with the following:

1. Place primary value upon the place of God in the life of the child. One means of doing this is to attend church services each weekend.
2. Teach the 3 R's of **respect, responsibility, and right judgment.**
3. Encourage conscientious completion of assignments.
4. Insist that your child(ren) obey the regulations and principles of good behavior.
5. Avoid criticism of teachers and school policy in front of your children. Discuss classroom problems directly with the teacher and other problems with the principal.
6. Actively encourage the growth of the school by positively marketing the school in the community and volunteering your talents and time for its benefit.

## **FACULTY AND STAFF**

St. Mary School is staffed by professionals who are certified according to Ohio State standards. Professional competency and efficiency are stimulated through attendance at in-service workshops and faculty meetings.

State auxiliary funds to non-public schools provide remedial reading, math tutoring, speech and hearing therapy, psychological and counseling services, learning disability services, medical assistance, and an enrichment teacher.

## **CONTACTING THE FACULTY**

Faculty members can be contacted at (440) 322-2808 Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 2:50 p.m. An appointment to confer with parents can be made if desired. Since teachers are on duty during the school day, they will not be called to the phone during these hours unless there is an emergency. **Teachers should not be contacted at their home or on their cell phones.** Teachers and their classes should not be disturbed during the school day. All visitors must report to the main office in the Marian Building; this protects each child and provides a quality education—free of disturbances.

## **REGISTRATION**

Admission to St. Mary School is on a year-to-year basis. Registration for the next school year is ordinarily held from January-March. At this time, payment of the Education Fee is expected.

Our school population is composed of students from such outlying districts as Oberlin, Grafton, Amherst, Wellington, LaGrange, Litchfield, North Ridgeville, Columbia Station, Sheffield/Sheffield Lake, as well as urban and suburban Elyria.

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

St. Mary School's Admission Policy respects all faiths and nationalities, but recognizes that as a parochial elementary school, we exist first to serve members of this parish in the Diocese of Cleveland. A parishioner is defined as one who is registered, attends, and contributes to the parish; therefore, while there is room, students will be accepted in this order:

1. Parishioners with others in school or to be enrolled in school
2. New parishioners entering from another Catholic school
3. New parishioners from a public school
4. Non-parishioners

## 5. Non-Catholics

Upper grade students (Grades 6-8) are accepted on an individual basis considering faith, former school record, and expressed motives.

### **TUITION POLICY**

The tuition policy for St. Mary School is determined by carefully studying the enrollment and financial situation of the school by the Parish Finance Council. It gives its recommendations to the pastor.

All parishioners may also request financial assistance by completing the PSAS Financial Aid Form and the Endowment Trust Scholarship Form.

Families who are parishioners of another Catholic parish are to contact their pastor regarding what assistance your parish provides for children attending St. Mary School. Please have him complete the "Other Parish" Assistance Form.

All non-parishioners and non-active parishioners may also request financial assistance by completing the PSAS Financial Aid Form. No scholarships or grants will be considered unless a PSAS Form is filled out and mailed to their address.

A deduction of \$100.00 per family is offered for full payment of tuition for students in **Grades K-8** by the close of the current school year.

### **TUITION PAYMENT & TUITION DELINQUENCY POLICY**

Monthly payments are automatically withdrawn from parent's financial institution by Tuition Management Systems. Ten monthly withdrawals begin in July and continuing through April.

Tuition Delinquency Policy:

1. At the beginning of the school year, tuition payments must be current for child/children to begin school. Extenuating circumstances need to be discussed with the pastor.
2. Tuition payments past 30 days due will be considered delinquent.
3. Tuition Management Services (TMS) will assess the designated account monthly. If there are insufficient funds in the bank account, TMS will assess a service charge. The banking institution will also assess a service charge for insufficient funds. These service charges cannot be waived once they are accessed. It is the responsibility of the parent to call TMS to notify them if funds will not be available on the normal withdrawal date.

4. After 30 days past due, a phone call will be made by the pastor or his delegate to the parents to inquire about the circumstances that have caused the delinquency in payment. Parents will be informed that within seven days; it is their responsibility to make the delinquent payment **OR** contact the pastor to explore options for payment. If the parent does not call or make payment by the seventh day, a process for withdrawal and transfer from St. Mary School will begin to take place.
5. Student interim reports, report cards, and permanent records will be held for all unresolved delinquencies.

### **LUNCH PROGRAM**

A hot lunch program is available to the children at St. Mary School. Information concerning this program is sent home at the beginning of the school year. Please have order forms and payment in on time. Late payments will not be accepted due to the ordering process under the diocesan program.

### **EXTENDED DAY CARE**

St. Mary School offers an extended day care service from 2:20 to 5:30 p.m. or from 1:00/1:30 to 5:30 p.m. on early dismissal days. Activities include games, movies, crafts, drawing, quiet study time, storytelling, and outside playtime, weather permitting.

The amount of payment is prorated according to time and days needed. Children must be picked up by 5:30 p.m. Application forms are available in the school office.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL**

St. Mary School will close for inclement weather when the Elyria City School District closes. Listen to the television stations and/or local radio stations for the announcement of the closure. Please do not call the school or parish offices. We are waiting for the same announcement.

For other emergency closings, such as heat or water problems, St. Mary School will notify the television and radio stations to announce the closing.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Religious guidance in the elementary school is integral to the education program and should be incorporated into all areas of the curriculum. The major focus of all guidance activities in Catholic elementary schools is the development of the whole child in an atmosphere of a caring Catholic community. Woven throughout the curriculum strands is Catholic identity. Character education and programs that promote healthy relationships are encouraged.

Sacramental preparation is in conjunction with the parish catechetical leader. Second graders prepare for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Eighth graders receive Confirmation preparation.

All-school liturgy is celebrated monthly as well as grade level Masses. Religious education guidance, along with faculty help, is used to assist student liturgy preparation and participation. Prayer services are held at different times throughout the year. Training as an altar server is available for students in grades 5-8.

Christian formation in sexuality is incorporated in grades K-8 following curriculum guidelines and the Call to Protect program.

## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT**

The school:

- Operates an instructional program that has been developed from best practices to ensure that each student is encouraged to reach his/her potential.
- Cultivates partnerships with key stakeholders to support the educational program.
- Designs and implements educational programs and experiences that provide a high quality Catholic education for all students.
- Provides students with sufficient time and opportunity to meet diocesan and school performance requirements and objectives measured by required state-mandated tests.

School support services foster Catholic identity and create a safe and healthy environment for students.

Instruction includes intervention that is designed to meet student needs.

Instruction and instructional activities:

- Are consistent with educational research and proven best practices.

- Are appropriate to student ages, developmental needs, learning styles, abilities, and English proficiency.
- Are designed so that each student reaches his/her academic potential and eases the transition as a student moves from one educational environment to another.
- Are designed to include additional time for the teaching of according to the directive of the Catholic Office of Education for all grade levels.
- Are based on diocesan approved school curriculum that is consistent with the requirements of the Ohio Revised Code and the Ohio Catholic School Accrediting Association.

All grades, including preschool and kindergarten, follow state and diocesan curriculum guidelines.

In grades 1-6, the children study: religion, mathematics, English, language arts, science, health, social studies, physical education, computer science, music, and art.

The junior high program is directed toward the specific needs of young teenagers to prepare them for high school. The required subjects are taught on a modified departmental basis and include: religion, mathematics, computer science, English, science, literature, social studies, health, physical education, music, and art.

State law requires all students to participate in physical education classes. Only an excuse from a doctor stating the reason and the length of time the student is to be excused will exempt a student from participating in physical education classes.

## **HOMEWORK**

A reasonable amount of homework will be given. The assignments will be an outgrowth of class work: 1) to supplement learning, 2) to review independently what was taught in class, and 3) to provide opportunity to use research skills.

Time allotment for homework depends on the type of assignment and on the age and grade level of the student. No definite time limit can be determined for all, since children work at different rates of speed. If parents feel that the homework assignments are excessive, privately discuss this with the teacher.

## EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

### Report Cards

Report cards are issued quarterly to all students. They should be signed and returned to the school within one week with the exception of the fourth quarter report card. The fourth quarter report card is mailed.

### Progress Reports

Approximately halfway through a grading period, reports are issued to parents to inform them of their child(ren)'s progress. They should be signed and returned to the school within one week. In addition to the progress reports, grades are updated on your family's Edline account.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

In the case of the individual child, there is nothing more helpful to the child, to the teacher, or to the parent than a meeting to discuss ways of cooperatively helping the child. All families are required to attend the annual November parent-teacher conferences. Information surrounding scheduling is sent home a couple of weeks in advance. Conferences can be scheduled with the teacher any time throughout the school year.

### Honors and Awards

Honors are given at the end of each quarter. An honors assembly is held at the end of the school year. The honors requirements for grades 4-8 are listed below:

First Honors	<b>A</b> average	3.80-4.0+
Second Honors	<b>B+</b> average	3.40-3.79
Third Honors	<b>B</b> average	3.00-3.39

## EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

### Auxiliary Services

These programs are paid for with State of Ohio funding which provide students extra support and services. St. Mary School has a school psychologist, math and reading tutors, school nurse, speech therapist, Title I reading tutor, LD tutor, and enrichment teacher.

## **Library**

Grade P-6 have an assigned library period each week during which students check out books, have book reviews, and/or library instruction. Students in grades 7 and 8 may access the Library any day that it is open with approval from homeroom teacher.

Reference books and periodicals are available to students for home use. Students are responsible for books checked out to them. Lost books should be reported immediately. Students shall be charged the replacement cost of lost and/or damaged books.

## **Computer Lab**

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 have one computer lab class period each week. SmartBoards have been installed in most classrooms for teachers and students to use as an educational resource. To aide in technology integration, iPads are available to be used in the classrooms.

## **Band**

Opportunities for instruction in instrumental music and participation in our school band are provided for students in grades 4-8. A qualified music/band instructor gives music lessons during the school day. An introduction to instrumental music using flutophones is provided in the third grade. No previous musical experience is necessary. Fees are paid at the school office.

## **Educational Field Trips**

Educational field trips are pre-planned experiences related to the curriculum. Written parent permission is obtained prior to each field trip.

Resident Outdoor Education is available for the fifth grade students. Specific information regarding the program is sent home to parents at the appropriate time.

Parents are often asked to accompany students on field trips. Their role is to act as supervisors under the direction of the teachers to provide for the well-being and safety of the students.

Transportation for field trips is either by bus or car, depending on availability and distance. If a car is used, the driver must present to the office his/her driver's license and proof of insurance, one week prior to the field trip. When students are

transported by car, parents must provide a car seat/booster seat for each child in accordance with current state law.

### **Testing Programs**

Students entering Kindergarten are given a Kindergarten Screening Test. Students in Grades 1, 3, 5, and 7 are given the Cognitive Abilities Test (CAT), and grades 1-7, the Iowa test of Basic Skills (ITBS).

The Cognitive Abilities test seeks to measure the individual student's innate ability. The ITBS measures the pupil's achievement in various curricular areas.

Students in grades 5 and 8 are given the ACRE test. ACRE stands for Assessment of Catechesis of Religious Education.

Students in grades 3, 5, and 7 are given the Ohio Off Grade Proficiency Test for Writing.

### **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance and punctuality are important in developing habits and attitudes of responsible behavior. Throughout the entire day foundations are learned upon which the child builds and develops skills and habits that will ensure his or her progress.

It is the responsibility of the home to have students in regular attendance. In accordance with the Missing Child Law 90.R.C. 3313.205), THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE WILL BE IN EFFECT: the parent and/or legal guardian must notify the school by 8:30 a.m., if the child is absent (not in school at 7:50 a.m.) with the reason for the absence. If a call is not received, the school will try to contact you. Messages can be left on the school's voicemail. The school telephone number for reporting absences is (440) 322-2808 extension 242. A student is considered truant until the parent/guardian contact has been made. O.R.C. 3313.1205 requires the parent/guardian to provide the school with the current address, telephone number, employment number, and an emergency number. Failure to comply with attendance procedures will result in disciplinary action or referral to the Lorain County Juvenile Court.

It is especially important to notify the school if a child has contracted a contagious disease; this includes a strep infection. Students absent from school all day will not be permitted to participate or spectate in ANY extracurricular activities for that day.

After an absence, a **written excuse with the specific reason for the absence must be presented** to the teacher on the day of the child's return to classes.

This is **in addition** to the phone call to the school office. A doctor's note is required for three or more missed days due to illness. When a child is absent three or more days, please contact the school office by phone or note to make a request for work. Please allow a reasonable amount of time for the teacher to gather books and assignments.

### **TARDINESS**

Students in grades K-8 who report after 7:50 a.m., will be marked tardy. Latecomers must stop at the secretary's office (Marian Building, Room 102) for a tardy slip. Students who arrive after 8:00 will be considered absent one half day.

Since tardiness interferes with the child's progress in school and disrupts the classroom routine, the cooperation of the parents in cultivating the habit of punctuality is earnestly requested. Anyone arriving at school but goes home **BEFORE 11:00 a.m.**, will be considered absent one (1) whole day. Students who attend school but go home **AFTER 11:00 a.m.** will be considered absent one-half day.

### **DISMISSAL FOR APPOINTMENTS**

Permission for appointments can be obtained from the principal, but such absence should be kept to a minimum. A note from the parent or, if needed, the doctor should be presented at school before the day of the actual appointment. Parents are to come to the school office to pick up children.

Any student absent from school for more than two (2) hours due to a medical or dental appointment, will be considered absent one-half day. If students have appointments during school hours, they will be marked tardy if they arrive in school after school starts or absent for one-half day if they arrive after 8:00 a.m.

Appointments should not be made during the time of final exams or during standardized testing times.

### **ABSENCE/REPORTING ABSENCE**

If a student is absent, state regulations require parents to notify the school office by phone (440) 322-2808 extension 242. Please call before 8:30 a.m. In addition to the call, the student is **required** to bring a note on the day of return stating the reason for the absence. All schoolwork must be made up following the absence.

## **EARLY DISMISSALS**

If a student must leave school early, it is necessary for the office to have a signed note from the parents stating the reasons for the early dismissal. Please send this note through the classroom teacher so he/she will be aware of the early dismissal. All students dismissed early must be picked up in the school office by the parent or parent representative. This person must sign the student out. No student is permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day without the written permission of the parent. When returning to school, the parent should come to the office and sign the child in. Missing part of the school day for appointments (60 minutes or more of the day) will affect the child's attendance record.

## **VACATIONS**

Family vacations should be planned to coincide with the school calendar, because missing school is detrimental to the child's education. If children are absent from school for a vacation, it is the complete responsibility of the student and parents to see that assignments and tests are made up. Parents should contact the principal as soon as possible to request that students be absent for a vacation. After the vacation, the student and/or parent should contact the teacher regarding the work missed. Time will need to be arranged to teach the new concepts that were taught, to schedule the evaluations which must be done, and to complete the assignments missed. This may require that the student stay after school or miss recess. This is at the discretion of the teacher.

Vacations should not be scheduled during standardized testing time and exam week.

## **MEDICINES – PRESCRIPTION & OVER-THE-COUNTER**

The Ohio Legislature has set up definite guidelines concerning the dispensing of medicine to children. If it is necessary for your child to take ANY medication during school hours, please request a medication form from the school office or school nurse. One is also sent home in the back-to-school packet in August. This form includes both prescription and over-the-counter medication.

All medicines must come to the office and the school nurse will dispense them at the appropriate times. Children may not be in possession of ANY medication (prescribed or over-the-counter drugs) while in school.

## **IMMUNIZATIONS**

At the initial entry or at the beginning of each school year, every student must present written evidence that he/she has been immunized following the directives of the Ohio Department of Health against various diseases, including, mumps, measles, poliomyelitis, diptheria, pertussis, tetanus, and rubella.

Written proof of immunizations must be shown within fifteen (15) school days. If it is not, the student will be removed from classes.

## **CONTAGIOUS DISEASES**

Parents are asked to contact the school office when their child has been diagnosed or suspects their child as being contagious. This includes step throat, pink eye, head lice, chicken pox, etc.

If a child is sent home with a fever and/or vomiting at school, please keep him/her home for twenty-four (24) hours. Please do not send children to school who are sick. This is unfair to the child, his/her classmates, and the teacher.

When a child returns to school, a written excuse is necessary. This is required even though a phone call has been previously made to the school.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY REGULATIONS**

In regards to all methods of students' departure for home at the end of the school day, a note to the teacher or a phone call to the office is required for a student to change his/her normal mode of transportation. If we do not have one of these, the student is required to take the normal transportation home.

### **Walkers**

Children who walk to school or ride their bikes are to go directly home when they are dismissed. They are to use Fourth Street, not St. Mary's Way, to go to either Middle Avenue or East Avenue. Students should arrive no earlier than 7:30 a.m.

### **Car Riders**

Please follow the traffic pattern that is distributed at the beginning of the school year in the back to school packet. If other family members or friends are asked to pick up your child during the course of the year, please make them aware of the traffic pattern. This is for the safety of your child and every child.

After school, cars may park in the far end of the playground up as far as the back fence. Do not park by the east entrance of the St. Joseph building. Cars pick up

in this area. Do not park in the area in front of the Marian Building, as this is the area where the children walk to cars and staff member's park.

Please be considerate and cautious. A small child is difficult to see when behind a car. Drive very slowly on the playground and through St. Mary's Way. **A FEW MINUTES OF INCONVENIENCE IS WORTH ONE CHILD'S SAFETY . . . ONE CHILD'S LIFE.** If for any reason one has to cross a street, especially St. Mary's Way, use the crosswalk for everyone's safety.

### **Bus Riders**

A request for bus transportation for all new students must be obtained in the school office.

Pupils should conduct themselves as they would in school while on the bus. In the event of misbehavior, the child will receive a warning from the driver to be signed by both the principal and the parent. We cannot endanger the welfare of the pupils on the bus due to the misbehavior of a few. **THEREFORE, MISBEHAVIOR ON THE BUS MAY RESULT IN THE LOSS OF TRANSPORTATION PRIVILEGES, SUSPENSION, OR EXPULSION FROM SCHOOL.**

Only authorized students are permitted to ride the school bus. The principal, teachers, or office staff may not give permission to ride a different bus. Permission must be requested from the bus district.

### **Bike Riders**

Bike riders are to **walk** their bikes through the yard and park them in the bike racks. Remind your child to be courteous toward those who are walking. Be sure that students are provided with good locks and keep bikes locked at all times.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

In all areas of Christian formation and learning at St. Mary School, the infusion of Gospel values into the school environment is a priority. With the Gospel as a guideline, the school community is strengthened by a Code of Conduct and Discipline Code which has as its purpose:

- To bring about self-discipline
- To provide a school atmosphere that helps all students learn
- To protect the rights of each individual
- To form children who will respect life and authority

- To promote conduct in conformity with the rules and regulations of a Catholic school community
- To give honor and glory to God

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which may arise, faculty members and administration will issue appropriate discipline measures for any action which violates the spirit of the system, even though not specified here.

It is the policy of St. Mary School that **the teacher, principal, and/or supervisory adult handles all problems. NO STUDENT** may take matters into his/her own hands. If a problem arises, the student must notify the adult responsible for him/her at that time.

The students at St. Mary's are encouraged to take responsibility for their decisions. They are expected to accept the consequences of their decisions . . . negative or positive. This is considered an important lesson for life not just during the years spent here at St. Mary's.

Any behavior contrary to the spirit and mission statement of St. Mary School will be dealt with on the basis of: the students involved, the factors precipitating the behavior, the seriousness of the offense, and the number of times this type of conduct has taken place.

Desks and lockers are the property of St. Mary School and are made available for the use of the students. The school maintains the right to inspect desks and lockers on a regular basis or whenever it is deemed necessary.

The students shall:

- Show respect in both word and action for all adults.
- Show respect in both word and action for all students.
- Show respect for school property and the property of others.
- Accept responsibility for their actions/decisions.
- Be responsible for their learning by thoughtful attention in class, completing all assignments and sharing their knowledge and gifts to help others.
- Conform to the dress code.
- Observe the rules of the school, the classroom, the gym, the cafeteria, and playground. Violations of behavior standards may result in loss of privileges such as, but not limited to, recess, field trips, classroom treats, etc.

### **SUSPENSION, EXPULSION**

Discipline may be given for

- Bullying and harassment of anyone

- Fighting or rough play of any kind
- Using foul and inappropriate language
- Disruptive behavior
- Disrespect to any faculty member or adult in authority
- Failure to follow school or classroom policies
- Vandalizing of property

Suspension may be given at the discretion of the principal and/or pastor. Parents will be notified. Suspension may be used for behavior such as, but not limited to:

- 1) Deliberate serious fighting at any time
- 2) Truancy
- 3) Physical or verbal abuse or threats toward staff member(s) or other student(s)
- 4) Repeated violation of school rules and regulations
- 5) Unauthorized leaving of the school grounds
- 6) Marring, defacing, or destroying school property. Financial restitution for any deliberate damage caused to school property will be expected. The student responsible for this may be asked to repair or restore to good order what has been carelessly used or deliberately defaced.

Suspensions will be served on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m.-12:00 noon, as scheduled by the principal. The student will receive work to be completed, which will be graded. Because supervision by a faculty member is necessary, a fee of \$25.00 will be assessed. A student who has been suspended must meet with the principal before returning to classes.

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. There will be no appeal.

A student may be expelled for serious negative behavior such as, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) Possession and/or use or attempted use of tobacco, alcohol, drugs (including look-alikes) or attempted sale or sale of such items
- 2) Repeated violations of school and classroom rules and regulations after disciplinary actions have been attempted
- 3) Any kind of gang-related activity
- 4) Actions detrimental to the physical, moral, emotional or spiritual welfare of others

Complete policies on threats, weapons, drugs, and gangs are on file in the principal's office.

## **CAFETERIA AND PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION**

The cafeteria and playground areas are supervised by adults. A list of playground and cafeteria rules are made known to the students along with periodic reminders. Respect for these supervisors and the rules is essential to ensure the students' safety and the continued privilege of enjoying recess.

### **LUNCH and RECESS RULES**

The following rules are to be followed in the cafeteria during lunch times:

1. The students are to sit in their seats the entire lunch period.
2. Students should use indoor voices.
3. The students are to stand when told to do so by the lunch monitor.
4. No throwing food or garbage on the floor or at each other.
5. The students are to use the restrooms before or after the lunch periods begin.
6. The students are responsible for their garbage and keeping their eating area picked up.
7. The students are to respect the lunch monitors.

The following rules are to be followed in the classrooms during indoor recess:

1. Students are to stay in their classroom seats.
2. Students should use indoor voices.
3. Students are to play board games, read books, draw, or play-organized games at their seats.
4. No electronic devices are permitted
5. The students are to use the restrooms before or after recess breaks.
6. The recess monitors will dismiss the students.
7. The students are to respect the recess monitors.

### **EXTRA-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS**

Extra-curricular activities available for our students are: altar servers, Student Council, band, choir, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, CYO sports, including football, volleyball, cross country, cheerleading, basketball, track, Future Catholic Teachers Club, Academic Challenge, Power of the Pen, Journalism Club, Paw Prints (literary magazine), Yearbook. These programs may take place before, after, or during the school day.

Students who participate in after-school sports will not be supervised by faculty and/or staff members. Coaches should schedule times when they will be present AT ALL TIMES to supervise the children.

### **ST. MARY SCHOOL UNIFORM REGULATIONS**

Appearance tells us a great deal about ourselves. Good grooming and cleanliness are virtues extolled at St. Mary School. We believe there is a correlation between how we dress and look and how we behave and work. Students are expected to dress and groom themselves neatly in well-maintained clothes as outlined in the dress code.

### **ST. MARY SCHOOL UNIFORM REGULATIONS - Revised August, 2011**

Uniforms are a requirement for students in Grades K-8. Girls' uniform skirts, jumpers, skorts, and vests must be purchased from Schoolbelles.

#### **GIRLS: Grades K-4**

##### **At all times:**

School plaid jumper **or**

School plaid or Navy traditional uniform-style pants **or**

Navy traditional uniform-style corduroy pants **or**

School plaid or Navy traditional uniform-style walking shorts

##### **Must be worn with:**

Shirt (choose one) Must be tucked in

- a. White collared button-up blouse (long or short sleeve)
- b. White collared knit polo (long or short sleeve)
- c. White turtleneck

One of the following **must** be worn with shorts and pants:

- a. Navy or white sweater (v-neck, crew neck, or cardigan)
- b. Navy vest
- c. St. Mary School sweatshirt
- d. "Cougar" sweatshirt - NO HOODS ON SWEATSHIRTS

Socks (choose one)

- a. White or navy ankle socks (**MUST COVER ANKLE**), knee socks or tights
- b. No nylons permitted

#### **GIRLS: Grades 5-8**

##### **At all times:**

School plaid or Navy uniform split skirt **or**

School plaid or Navy uniform skorts **or**  
School plaid or Navy uniform pleated or kilt skirt **or**  
School plaid or Navy uniform-style pants **or**  
Navy uniform-style corduroy pants **or**  
School plaid or Navy uniform-style walking shorts

**NOTE: HIP HUGGERS & EXCESSIVELY TIGHT PANTS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE. THE LENGTH OF SKIRTS/JUMPERS WILL NOT EXCEED TWO INCHES ABOVE THE KNEE.**

**Must be worn with:**

Shirt (choose one) Must be tucked in

- a. White collared button-up blouse (long or short sleeve)
- b. White collared knit polo (long or short sleeve)
- c. White turtleneck
- d. Undershirts must be white

One of the following **must** be worn with skirts, skorts, shorts and pants

- a. Navy or white sweater (v-neck, crew neck, or cardigan)
- b. Navy vest
- c. St. Mary School sweatshirt
- d. "Cougar" sweatshirt - NO HOODS ON SWEATSHIRTS

Socks (choose one)

- a. White or Navy ankle socks (**MUST COVER ANKLE**), knee socks or tights
- b. No nylons permitted **EXCEPT** on dress-up days

**BOYS: Grades K-8**

**At all times:**

Navy traditional uniform-style pants (no rivets, extra big pockets or side leg pockets) **or**

Navy traditional uniform-style corduroy pants **or**

Navy traditional uniform-style walking shorts

BOYS: Grades K-8 Continued on reverse side

**Must be worn with:**

Shirt which **must** be tucked in (choose one)

- a. White tailored, dress oxford (long or short sleeve)
- b. White collared knit polo (long or short sleeve)
- c. White turtleneck
- d. Undershirts must be white

One of the following **may** be worn

- a. Navy sweater (v-neck, crew neck or cardigan)
- b. Navy vest

- c. St. Mary School sweatshirt
- d. "Cougar" sweatshirt - NO HOODS ON SWEATSHIRTS

Socks

- a. Solid navy, solid white, or solid black - **MUST COVER ANKLE**

**In addition to the above regulations, please observe the following:**

**SHOES:** Black gym shoes OR brown, black or navy solid colored school shoe with non-marring soles , **Closed** heel and toe, **Heels not to exceed 1 inch from the sole**; refer to the Schoolbelles catalog for acceptable shoe suggestions.  
(Saddle shoes are acceptable for girls)

**WAISTBAND:** The waistband of the girls' uniform and the belt of the boys' uniform **must be visible at all times**;  
**Grades 2-8** - If there are belt loops on pants, a black, navy or brown belt **MUST** be worn and **MUST** be visible.

**MAKE-UP:** No make-up of any type. This includes nail polish, lipstick, lip gloss, blush or any eye make-up.

**JEWELRY:** Only the following will be permitted: wrist watches (no alarms please), a single religious medal such as a cross, crucifix, or saint medal, **ONLY ONE** "charity bracelet" may be worn (color of your choice), **GIRLS** may wear one set of small post earrings in the lobe - **ONE IN EACH EAR.**

**HAIR:** Boys' hair length should be above the shirt collar and should not be shaggy

Boys & girls - No extreme hairstyles such as "carvings"

Boys & girls - No chemically altered hair color including highlights or bleaching

**WINTER WEATHER:** Students must be dressed appropriately for the weather conditions (i.e., hat, gloves, boots, and scarves).

**EXTREME STYLES:** Extreme clothing styles or "SAGGING" are **NEVER ALLOWED** whether in uniform pants, slacks, or on any dress down days.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Schoolbelles has the correct style of pants for girls and boys. If you can find a better price of the same style, they will be acceptable. When shopping for school clothes, please refer to the Schoolbelles catalog for the proper style of school clothing.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION - The uniform must be ordered through St. Mary School**

**Boys & Girls - The REQUIRED uniform for Physical Education classes is:**

Shirt

- a. Dark gray shirt with St. Mary logo

Bottoms

- a. Longer legged navy cotton shorts with St. Mary logo
- b. Navy blue sweatpants with St. Mary logo for cold weather

Socks

- a. White crew socks which cover the ankle

Shoes

- a. Tennis shoes which are only for physical education classes (**Please.....No black-soled gym shoes**)

**ST. MARY SPIRIT DAY DRESS CODE**

The dress code for St. Mary Spirit Days is as follows:

- Any St. Mary shirt may be worn
- Jeans may be worn or the school uniform pants
- No sweatpants may be worn
- Only navy school shorts may be worn
- All other aspects of the dress code still apply
- A student may always wear his/her school uniform
- St. Mary Cougar Wear

**DRESS DOWN DAYS**

On dress down days, the students are to wear clothing appropriate for a Catholic school setting. No tight slacks or shorts, no revealing blouses or shirts, no shirts with inappropriate language, no clothing with rips or holes, etc.

**FAMILY/CUSTODIAL SITUATIONS**

St. Mary 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 these reasons we find it necessary to clarify and restate the usual procedures followed by the 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 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-quarters, discussions with school personnel, and tuition statements.

In families experiencing separation of parents, or pending divorce, the above information will be sent home with the child to the parent who 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 of this fact so that appropriate support can be given to the child. St. Mary 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 residential parent of this fact. A copy of the **entire** decree bearing the case number, including the 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 residential parent. Residential parents should understand, however, that unless the divorce decree specifically limits the non-residential parent's right to access to records, the non-residential parent has a right to the same access as the residential parent. We will, unless instructed by a Court Order, release such records upon request to the non-residential parent. "Records" includes official transcripts, report cards, health records, referrals for special services, and communications regarding major disciplinary actions. It does not include daily class work and papers, or routine communications sent through the children to the home of residence. In these cases the custodial parent is asked to cooperate with the school and share this information 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-residential parent has the right to attend any school activity of their child that 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 children. 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 the parents.

Regarding parent conferences in all custody situations: it is preferred and will be the general procedure that *one* conference appointment 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 misunderstanding or 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 the approval of both parents, and further reviewed by St. Mary School's legal counsel. 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 generally begin at the home of one of the parents and not at school. It is hoped that visitation arrangements would reflect the sensitivity of both parents to the consistency and routines that foster security in a child and allow for school responsibilities and homework to be taken care of during the school week.

## **LEGAL CONCERNS**

St. Mary School conforms to the recommended policies of the Cleveland Catholic Diocese in regards to legal issues.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

Since all school employees are mandated reporters under Ohio law (ORC 2151.421), they shall report all known or suspected child abuse.

If such an individual, in his or her official or professional capacity, knows or suspects that a child under 18 years of age or a mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, or physically impaired person under 21 years of age has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, the mandated reporter must **immediately** contact one of the following authorities: The County Department of Children and Family Services Child Abuse Hotline, a sheriff/deputy sheriff, or a municipal peace (police) officer. With the revision to the reporting statute, the mandated reporter must **personally** make the call. All mandated reporters are required by Ohio law ORC 2921.22) to report child abuse and are under criminal consequences for failure to do so.

## **STUDENT THREATS**

1. Any and all student threats to inflict any harm to self or others must be taken seriously immediately.
2. Whoever hears the threat should report it immediately to the principal.
3. In appropriate cases, the police should be notified immediately.
4. If the police are notified, the student should be kept in the principal's office under supervision.
5. The parent/guardian of the student who has made the threat shall be notified immediately.
6. Any adult or the parent/guardian or any students who have been verbally mentioned as potential victims or listed in writing as potential victims shall be notified immediately.
7. The student may be suspended and not be considered for readmission to school until a comprehensive mental health evaluation/risk assessment has been conducted by a psychiatrist/psychologist (Ph.D.)
8. Counseling may be made available to children who are victims of the threatening behavior or who observed the threatening behavior if it is determined that such counseling is needed and parental permission is granted.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

The pastor, administration, and staff of St. Mary 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. St. Mary School will not tolerate harassment of any type, and the appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Disciplinary action may include suspension or expulsion.

Examples of harassment include but are not limited to: verbal or written taunting, bullying, other offensive intimidating, hostile or offensive conduct, jokes, stories, pictures, cartoons, drawings or objects which are offensive, tend to alarm, annoy, abuse or demean an individual or group.

### **PROCEDURE TO FILE A HARASSMENT COMPLAINT:**

Students or employees who believe they have experienced harassment shall report such matter to the principal, who shall be the investigator for harassment complaints.

1. A complaint of harassment is to be made to the principal or pastor, or assistant principal (if the principal is the alleged harasser) and shall be as specific as possible regarding details. If the complaint is made by an employee, it shall be in writing.

2. The principal shall immediately investigate the complaint and shall make written notations of the specific allegations.
3. Information to be acquired during the investigation of the complaint shall include names of witnesses, dates, times, and the specific charge of harassment.
4. Stress the need for confidentiality with due regard for the need to conduct a thorough investigation.
5. No reprisals will be tolerated against complainants, witnesses, or individuals involved in the investigation.
6. The principal shall make a prompt determination regarding any disciplinary action. Notice shall be made to the parties regarding the disposition of the investigation consistent with the privacy of student records.

### **HARASSMENT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE:**

Upon receiving a complaint from either a student or a school employee, the principal shall discuss the allegations with the complainant-victim to obtain a statement of the facts (e.g., what occurred, when, where, by whom, against whom, names of witnesses). It is the responsibility of the principal to investigate promptly all claims of harassment and to take actions as deemed appropriate.

Information regarding an investigation of harassment shall be confidential to the extent possible, and those individuals who are involved in the investigation shall not discuss information regarding the complaint outside the investigation process.

No one shall retaliate against any employee or student because he/she filed a harassment complaint, assisted or participated in a harassment investigation, proceeding or hearing regarding a harassment charge or because they have opposed language or conduct that violates this policy.

All complaints are to be taken seriously and shall be investigated.

If the investigator is the alleged harasser or a witness to the incident, an alternate investigator shall be designated.

When a crime has been committed, the designated administrator immediately notifies the local police department. After the investigation is complete, notice of the outcome shall be given to the complainant(s) and alleged harasser(s) consistent with the privacy of student records. Appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken when harassment has occurred, and appropriate efforts shall be taken to prevent reoccurrence of the harassment.

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

In furtherance of the overall philosophy, goals and objectives of the Catholic educational experience, St. Mary School expressly prohibits the use, possession, sale, or discharge of any weapons, dangerous objects, dangerous ordinances and instruments or explosive devices in the school, on school grounds, or at school-sponsored activities. This policy applies to all students, participants in parish programs, teachers, administrators, volunteers and other personnel in the school or parish.

This policy includes, but is not limited to, any firearm, knife, dangerous object, object used as a weapon, deadly weapon, or an object that is indistinguishable from a deadly weapons, or explosive or incendiary device. An object that is indistinguishable from a deadly weapon is prohibited if a person indicates that he or she possesses the object and further indicates that it is a deadly weapon or the person brandishes or displays the object and indicates that it is a deadly weapon. 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 and used as a weapon” (O.R.C. 2923.211A). Firearms 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.

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 other administrator should immediately contact the police department and your area assistant superintendent 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.

## **SEARCHES CONDUCTED BY SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

### **Searches of School Property**

All property of the school, including students’ desks and lockers as well as their contents, may be opened, searched or inspected at any time without notice. School personnel have an unrestricted right to search these structures as well as any containers, book bags, purses or articles of clothing that are left unattended on school property.

### **Searches of Student’s Person and Personal Property**

The search of a student’s person or handbag currently being carried is permissible when there is any suspicion that the student may be carrying

contraband. Contraband, for purposes here, shall be defined as any weapon, dangerous objects, illegal drug, drug paraphernalia, or other item, the possession of which is prohibited by law or by school policy.

## **AIDS POLICY**

The following policy was formulated through the Diocese of Cleveland and has been adopted by St. Mary.

Children with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) enrolled or seeking enrollment in grades K through 8 shall be permitted to attend school or parish religious education programs in a regular classroom setting provided:

- 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 condition which prevent his/her control of bodily secretions.
- 4) There are periodic evaluations of the child's physical condition with written certifications from his/her physician allowing continuing participation in regular academic school activities.

In parish elementary schools and parish schools of religion, the pastor and principal will confer with the appropriate persons and consult with the regional superintendent before the pastor makes the final decision on each case in the parish school.

Parents and guardians have the obligation to report to the school administration when any child has been diagnosed as having AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), ARC (Aids Related Complex) or other illness caused by HIV (Human Immune Deficiency virus, the virus that causes AIDS, also known as HTLVIII or LAV).

In order to protect confidentiality, when a child with AIDS is admitted to school, personnel who are made aware of the child's condition should be kept to the minimum necessary to assure proper care of the child.

Based on the condition of the child and the expected type of interaction with others, the principal, after consultation with the proper authorities may limit the child's participation in school activities.

A student with AIDS who is excluded from school or a Parish School of Religion Program shall be provided with an alternative means of catechetical instruction.

## **CELL PHONES, ELECTRONIC DEVICES, CAMERAS**

Student use of cell phones, electronic devices, and cameras of any type are **prohibited** at school, recess and on school-sponsored field trips. A request for permission for the use of cameras will or will not be granted by teachers or administration before the event. Please request permission at least a day before the event. Do not bring these materials on the day of the event with the request. These items may be confiscated and returned to the parents only after consultation with principal. Any deviation from this rule must be cleared through the office.

Bringing cell phones to school is discouraged. However, if (with parental consent) a student needs to bring a cell phone to school, the cell phone must be given to the homeroom teacher. Students' cell phones will be returned at the end of the school day. Failure to comply with this regulation will result in confiscation of the cell phone. A parent or guardian will need to meet with the principal who will then return the cell phone to the parent.

## **ST. MARY'S PARENT-TEACHER UNIT**

St. Mary's Parent-Teacher Unit is a supportive organization of the school. Through the proceeds of its activities, it offers speakers on educationally related topics, provides an annual library budget, a maintenance budget for art, music, and physical education equipment, and purchases educational materials and other items or services for the school as the need arises.

Any parent, guardian, or teacher who is interested may become an active member upon payment of dues as set annually by the Executive Board.

Some of the ways the PTU is involved in the school are as listed here:

- PTU Newsletter
- Room mothers
- Assistant teachers
- Sponsoring fund raisers
- Purchasing needed equipment, material, etc., for the school, the library, and classrooms
- Providing treats on specified occasions
- Baking for school activities
- Additional activities and services that provide learning opportunities and enhance the environment of the school

August, 2012

### **Addendum to St. Mary Parent/Student Handbook**

The following changes have been made to the handbook for the 2012-2013 school year.

#### **School Day**

The school day will now begin at **7:45 a.m.** and end at **2:30 p.m.**. Students who arrive after **7:45 a.m.** will be marked tardy. Students who arrive after **8:00 a.m.** will be considered absent one half day.

#### **Birthday Celebration Policy**

Ohio SB 210-Healthy Choices for Healthy Children Act became law on June 18, 2010. The law contains provisions to combat childhood obesity in the next several years by increasing students' physical activity and ensuring access to healthy meals, snacks and beverages in school.

After reviewing and discussing the guidelines provided in this bill we are requesting that NO FOOD items be brought to school for birthday celebrations.

Students may "dress up" to celebrate their birthday. Jeans, shorts, t-shirts are not acceptable "dress-up" clothes.

*Please place this page in the back of your handbook.*