



ST. MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

ACCREDITED BY THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF
COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION
AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT (SACS CASI)



PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2023 - 2024

St. Mary Catholic School
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DAILY SCHOOL SCHEDULE:

Students May Arrive/Enter Building	7:55 A.M.
Tardy Bell/Prayer/Announcements	8:10 A.M.
Classes Begin	8:15 A.M.
Begin Morning Break	10:00 A.M.
End Morning Break	10:15 A.M.
Pre-K (Half Day) Dismissal	12:00 P.M.
First Lunch Shift (Grades 3-5)	11:45 A.M. – 12:05 P.M.
Recess (Grades 3-5)	12:05 P.M. – 12:25 P.M.
Second Lunch Shift (Grades K-2)	12:10 P.M. – 12:30 P.M.
Recess (Grades K-2)	12:30 P.M. – 12:50 P.M.
Third Lunch Shift (Gr. 6-8)	12:35 P.M. – 12:55 P.M.
Recess (Middle School)	12:55 P.M. – 1:15 P.M.
Kindergarten and Pre-K (Full Day) Dismissal	2:45 P.M.
Bell for Prayer/Announcements/Dismissal	2:50 P.M.
School Dismissal	2:55 P.M.
Early Dismissal	12:00 P.M.

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MESSAGE TO PARENTS

Welcome to a new school year at St. Mary Catholic School! I am blessed to have the opportunity to lead the St. Mary Catholic School community as a beacon of light of Catholic virtues and academic rigor. As we begin the new year, I have great hope for the plans God has for our little powerhouse school! Thank you for your continued commitment to providing your children with a Catholic education. Sending your children to SMCS is not only a choice, it is a statement and demonstration of your expectations, values and beliefs of an exceptional education for your children. We are a school whose foundation rests on the Truth's of Catholic teachings. We look to develop our learners in an environment that is steeped in the Love of Christ modeling charity and patience along with justice and mercy. The commitment of our teachers goes beyond a job, but rather, a calling to serve our students with exceptional classroom instruction. We understand the sacrifices that you make to provide your children with this educational opportunity and we value our worth as an institution. Therefore, as a community, we must continue to call on the Holy Spirit and utilize our time, talent and treasure to collaborate as a team of parents, teachers, parishioners along with pastor and principal to provide the best educational experience for our students.

Pope St. John Paul II stated that *"Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth."* The work we do as Catholic educators is to empower our students to use both faith and reason to discern and uphold Truth . During this time of cultural shifts and relativity, children are seeking guidance and assurance. Jesus has assured us that He is The Truth, The Life and The Way. As a Catholic school, we are equipped to give children the tools to know the Love of God and to navigate through a world of wonder and challenges!.

This Parent/Student Handbook has been developed as a guide to the expectations, policies, procedures, and practices of St. Mary Catholic School for our school families. Participation and cooperation of parents and students is key to the effectiveness and success of our mission. As the Handbook is not exhaustive of every area we may need to address throughout the school year, our administration will keep families informed of updates, clarifications, additions, etc. as needed.

I look to all of our families to engage in continuing the long history of St. Mary Catholic School as an exceptional place for learning. Every child has the right to feel safe to learn, grow and thrive simply because each one is made in the image and likeness of God. We have the great responsibility to provide a secure environment where all our students can achieve. And as a community of learners, we must all help each other to become the best versions of ourselves. With Christ as our strength, let's lean into this work together, to provide for our children the best school year yet!

Sincerely in Him,

Michelle Smetanick, Principal

The Family Icon - The Rights and Responsibilities of Parents

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) provides guidance in Truth to be holy men and women of God. The verses and statements which make up the Catechism are biblically, traditionally, spiritually, and reasonably sound. We have high expectations for all children and adults in the St. Mary Catholic School community of learners. We are All called to learn, understand and live Catholic teachings.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds parents:

2221 The fecundity of conjugal love cannot be reduced solely to the procreation of children, but must extend to their moral education and their spiritual formation. "The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute."²⁹ The right and the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable.³⁰

2223 Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery - the preconditions of all true freedom.

2229 As those first responsible for the education of their children, parents have the right to choose a school for them which corresponds to their own convictions. This right is fundamental. As far as possible parents have the duty of choosing schools that will best help them in their task as Christian educators.³⁸ Public authorities have the duty of guaranteeing this parental right and of ensuring the concrete conditions for its exercise.

We are blessed and honored that you have entrusted your child's education to us. We cannot be exceptional without you! In enrolling your child in a Catholic School, you agree to certain important responsibilities.

Parents of St. Mary Catholic School must:

1. be a partner with the school in the education of your child
2. understand and support the Catholic mission and identity of the school
3. read all communications from the school and to request clarification when necessary
4. know who your child's teachers are and to observe parent-teacher conference dates and any special requests for meetings
5. discuss concerns and problems with the person (s) most directly involved
6. be as actively involved as you can be in the life of the school and to volunteer assistance when possible
7. promote your school and to speak well of it to others to include, but not limited to, social media platforms.
8. meet your financial obligations in a timely manner and to support the fundraising efforts of the school when possible
9. appreciate Catholic education and the benefits of attending a school in a Christ centered environment.
10. keep the school updated regarding your child's health conditions and to provide current physician's orders and required medications in a timely manner.
11. provide the school with any updates regarding a change in family life or living conditions (divorce, change in custody, or change in address or phone contacts)

So welcome to our Catholic school. The entire school community pledges its support to you. May Jesus, the model of all teachers, be our encouragement in this important ministry of Catholic education. Surely, He who said, "Suffer the children to come unto me," will bless the efforts in His name.

ABOUT ST. MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mary Catholic School empowers children in their faith journey and promotes academic excellence and life-long service inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a nurturing community.

VISION STATEMENT

St. Mary Catholic School will continue to be a school of excellence with a strong focus on its Catholic identity and academic distinction. A dedicated, faithful and caring faculty will be the hallmark of its academic excellence.

St. Mary Catholic School will actively work to build a sense of rapport with the faith-based communities and to encourage support from all local parishes for the school's future needs. It will be a strong spiritually-centered community, living the Catholic faith as expressed in her timeless teachings, her worship and service.

St. Mary Catholic School will create a campus environment that ensures the best use of all its facilities in a positive atmosphere that reflects and supports family values. It will endeavor to create a modern facility to offer the best educational experience for its students.

St. Mary Catholic School will encourage the support of the alumni who value the school's strong commitment to academic excellence and spiritual formation.

HISTORY

For one hundred forty nine years there has been a Catholic school in Hagerstown. On August 28, 1874, the Sisters of St. Joseph arrived to open the first school. Named St. Joseph Academy, it was the first mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Maryland.

Although there was little ready money in the parish. Father Jones raised funds and purchased property for \$6,750.00 on March 31, 1874. This property was used for both the convent and the school. Later in the same year additions were made to the second and third stories. The Sisters of St. Joseph departed the parish in 1885 due to financial difficulties. On August 10, 1885, five School Sisters of Notre Dame arrived at St. Mary from Baltimore. School opened with the new Sisters in charge on September 4, 1885, and ninety children registered. Enrollment steadily increased each year. By 1914, a total of 262 pupils in grades one through eight were taught by Sisters. The school was not restricted to Catholic children. A commercial school was added and the graduates of this school were always in demand by the business community of the town. In 1930, Archbishop Michael J. Curley recommended that high school grades be added to the school. This was accomplished by the addition of several rooms to the original building. In 1931, the name of the school was changed from St. Joseph Academy to St. Mary Catholic School.

The high school opened on September 12, 1932, with eleven juniors, twenty-three sophomores, and thirty-one freshmen. In 1943, a kindergarten was started in the Hamilton House adjacent to the school. Because of increased enrollment in the school, in 1955 a new Catholic high school, known as St. Maria Goretti, was built in the north end of Hagerstown on property purchased by Monsignor Francis Leary. In 1959, an addition was attached to the original building. It housed a cafeteria, kitchen, all-purpose room, kindergarten, and four primary classrooms. This addition was built on the site of the Hamilton House and Gordon Building. A renovation of the original building was undertaken in 1980. The classrooms were reconfigured; the first floor of the convent was converted into school offices and a library. The convent was moved to the second floor of the building.

The final addition to the primary building was completed in 2002. A third floor was added to the existing building housing four new classrooms. In 2012, SMCS added a pre-kindergarten program for four-year-olds.

In September 2017, St. Mary Catholic School was recognized as a 2017 National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U. S. Department of Education. The School's commitment to promoting academic excellence and to providing students with a technology-rich environment was influential in SMCS receiving this honor. Following this designation, as part of the school's strategic plan, SMCS widened its focus to include improving the current physical activity space. Therefore, during the summer of 2018, plans were put in motion that converted the current cafeteria (Pangborn Hall) into a gymnasium and turned the current physical education area (the Msgr. Passarelli Room) into the students' dining area. The higher ceiling and increased space in Pangborn Hall lend itself to a more robust physical education program. In order to switch the uses of Pangborn Hall and the Msgr. Passarelli Room, the school kitchen was modernized with new appliances and redesigned to accommodate a new flow pattern for serving students since the students will be eating across the hall from the kitchen instead of in Pangborn Hall.

Today the school draws students from many areas, contributing a uniqueness to the community. The faculty and staff strive to meet the challenges and changing needs of the students. Each child is seen as an individual with individual wants and needs.

PHILOSOPHY

St. Mary Catholic School, located in Hagerstown, Maryland, provides an education for grades Pre-K-8 rooted in the high standards of Catholic educational tradition. Our unique status as the only Catholic elementary school in Washington County calls us to fulfill the mission of the Catholic Church, which is to form disciples of Jesus Christ. This message is shared with students of all faiths. Our Catholic identity is affirmed by our beliefs in the teachings of the Universal Church established by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our faith community is comprised of our students, staff, parents, and our priest and pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church. The goal of guiding the whole child toward academic excellence and holiness, is supported by the collaborative effort of teachers, and instills Catholic virtues; the love of learning; and the desire to seek Truth. Saint Mary's Catholic School challenges the students academically with a structured, well-rounded body of courses with an emphasis on the mastery of basic skills. Curricular and extracurricular activities promote and provide balance in the spiritual, intellectual, social, personal, and physical development of the child. Our Catholic culture fosters Catholic faith and Catholic virtue as well as values of honesty, empathy, charity, service, responsibility, respect, and patriotism. Intellectual development progresses through problem-solving activities in a social context, logical presentation of organized subject matter, and the development of strong critical thinking skills. The queen virtue of charity is the core of all social interactions at St. Mary's Catholic School. The faculty and staff cultivate academic prowess for our students to function within the various authority systems of our country, our community, and our school while modeling and building virtues which are necessary in navigating through an ever-changing moral culture. Students are encouraged to be role models fostering an attitude of mutual respect and responsibility. Structured physical activities promote good sportsmanship, social skills, and an active, healthy lifestyle.

The policies of *St. Mary Catholic School*, which are clearly stated in the Parent/Student Handbook, are determined through the joint efforts of the pastor, the principal, the faculty, and the school board. Strong cooperation between home and school ensures that the policies are upheld and enforced. Curricular and extracurricular activities support the concept of the "whole child." The Archdiocese of Baltimore guides curriculum development. Supportive textbooks, teacher-generated materials, and technological resources enhance the curriculum, which is periodically reviewed and revised to ensure

consistent scope and sequential learning. Constructive evaluations by the administration enhance professional growth. A variety of assessment tools is used to evaluate student progress. *St. Mary Catholic School* educators live and express their faith. The teacher is minister, mentor, role model, motivator, and cheerleader, recognizing individual accomplishments in the school and community. The teacher inspires the students to achieve their potential by creating a positive learning environment. Recognizing that parents are the primary educators, *St. Mary Catholic School* fosters a mutually supportive relationship between parents and teachers. An active Home & School Association supports and uplifts the parent-teacher relationship. The close, caring relationship among the students, staff, and parents fosters a family environment at *St. Mary Catholic School*. The spiritual atmosphere, enriched by active participation in Mass and prayer, supports every member of our school community in making a successful faith journey and gaining a deeper knowledge of God.

OBJECTIVES

God Country Family Excellence

- To educate each child in virtue and in his/her duties to God, to neighbor, and to self
- To develop a respect and loyalty for our country and its principles and values
- To develop a habit and tradition of prayer in daily experience and praying with others
- To foster an appreciation of the richness of our Catholic heritage
- To provide opportunities and encouragement for each student to develop fully his or her God given gifts
- To promote the continued development of the whole child by increasing academic achievement through effective study habits; engaging in rigorous classroom instruction and interacting with diverse perspectives.

ACCREDITATION

St. Mary Catholic School is accredited by Cognia through June 2027. In accordance with standards set by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, *St. Mary Catholic School* met the requirements established by the Cognia Accreditation Commission and Board of Trustees and was thereby accredited by the SACS Council on Accreditation and School Improvement. This recognition identifies *St. Mary Catholic School* as a community of integrity and high educational standards with a commitment to ongoing self-improvement.

ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE MISSION STATEMENT

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore provide a Christ-centered education that is academically excellent and empowers students to reach their full potential—spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, and morally. Fostered through robust collaboration among all stakeholders, the mission is accomplished through accountable leadership at all levels, ongoing and coordinated strategic planning, centralized efficiencies, and financial sustainability.

ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE VISION STATEMENT

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore nurture and sustain the God-given gifts of every person, especially students, to be used in service to the Mission of Jesus.

2023-2024 FACULTY AND STAFF LIST

ADMINISTRATION

Pastor:	Father James Boric
Pastor Emeritus:	Father George Limmer
Principal:	Ms. Michelle Smetanick, B.S., M.S.Ed.
Administrative Assistant:	Mrs. Theresa Falcone
Tuition Coordinator:	Mrs. Jenny Beck
School Nurse:	Mrs. Kristy Wentz, RN, BSN, NCSN
Student Support Specialist:	Dr. Lana Early, B.A., B.S., M.S., Ed.D
Director of Admissions & Development	Mrs. Audi Lebedda

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FACULTY

Pre-Kindergarten Lead Teacher:	Mrs. Penny Abe
Kindergarten Teacher:	Mrs. Mary K. Barger
Grade 1 and Lead Teacher:	Miss Mary Poffenberger
Grade 2 Teacher:	Mrs. Bonnie Poffenberger
Grade 3 Teacher:	Mr. Connor Lilly
Grade 4 Teacher:	Mrs. Diane McCormick
Grade 5 Lead Teacher:	Mrs. April Nitzell

MIDDLE SCHOOL FACULTY

Grade 6 Teacher:	Ms. Pamela Ward
Grade 6 and Lead Teacher:	Mrs. Marisa Bowers
Grade 7 Teacher:	Mrs. Cathy Ellis
Grade 8 Teacher:	Mrs. Stacey Renkin
Mathematics Teacher:	Mrs. Faith Mentzer

SPECIAL AREA FACULTY

Art Teacher: Grades Pre-K – 8	Mrs. Melissa Gibson
Library: Grades Pre-K – 5	Mrs. Leslie Kocovar.
Music Teacher: Grades K – 5	Mr. Breton Abbondanzio
Physical Education: Grades Pre-K – 8	Mrs. Stacy Lowe
Spanish Teacher: Grades 3 – 8	Mrs. Stacey Renken
Technology Support	Mrs. Cathleen Ellis
Computer, Language Support & Enrichment	Mrs. Susanne Harbert

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT STAFF

Instructional Assistants:	Mrs. Lisa Stoner
	Mrs. Jennifer Flanagan
	TBD
	Miss Charlee McNeil

SCHOOL STAFF

Cafeteria Manager:	Andrew Capobianco
Cafeteria:	Mrs. Theresa Stottlemeyer
	Mrs. Dana Weaver
Facilities:	Mr. James Renken

SCHOOL BOARD

Rooted in prayer, discernment, and the contemporary vision of the Church for Catholic education, the SMCS School Board serves as an advisory board to the Pastor and Principal. The School Board makes recommendations to assure that the assets and personnel of SMCS are used to promote and strengthen the school and the parish community. The school board works with the Pastor and Principal on policy development and implementation in specified areas such as finance, development/institutional advancement, facilities, community (school/parish), and public relations/marketing.

MEMBERS OF THE SMCS BOARD ARE:

- Father James Boric, Pastor
- Ms. Michelle Smetanick, Principal
- Mrs. Rhonda O’Malley, SMCS School Board President
- Mr. Kevin Beck
- Mrs. Kelli Knight
- Mr. David McGinley
- Mr. Jonathan McGreevy
- Mr. John Norberg
- Mr. Edward Schaefer
- Mrs. Mary Riggs

**HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION
(PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION)**

Generating parental support to assist the administration and teaching staff in fulfilling the mission of *St. Mary Catholic School* is the major function of the Home & School Association. Providing our students with “little extras” to enhance their learning experience or to just create a “little extra” fun are benefits of the HSA Executive Board’s careful planning and fundraising efforts. Every parent who has a child enrolled in *St. Mary Catholic School* is automatically a member of the association which exists to support the school. The Association provides assistance to the school, both financially and physically. Meetings are held regularly. Family membership is \$50.00 per year. A discounted rate of \$45.00 is available if paid **before** September 16.

HSA EXECUTIVE BOARD:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Co-President: | Mrs. Sarah Campbell |
| Co-President: | Mrs. Sarah Warner |
| Vice-President: | Mrs. Tracy Evans |
| Corresponding Secretary: | Mrs. Amanda Davis |
| Recording Secretary: | Mrs. Kelly Byrne |
| Bookkeeper: | Mrs. Crystal Strother |
| Treasurer: | Ms. Cassie Kinna |

ADMISSIONS

ADMISSION POLICY

St. Mary Catholic School is a co-ed elementary school for grades Pre-Kindergarten through Eighth. It does not discriminate based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process). The school is not required to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings. Requests for reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability may be directed to the Principal and Admissions Team. Religion is required for each year a student attends *St. Mary Catholic School*. All students enrolled in *St. Mary Catholic School* must attend religion classes and services. **Admission is provisional based on the information included in the application.**

The State of Maryland requires the following statement in the Student Handbook:

"It is the policy of the State of Maryland that all public and publicly funded schools and school programs operate in compliance with:

- (1) Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; and
- (2) Title 26, Subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code, which states that public and publicly funded schools and programs may not:
 - (i) Discriminate against a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability;
 - (ii) Refuse enrollment of a prospective student, expel a current student, or withhold privileges from a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student because of an individual's race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; or
 - (iii) Discipline, invoke a penalty against, or take any other retaliatory action against a student or parent or guardian of a student who files a complaint alleging that the program or school discriminated against the student, regardless of the outcome of the complaint."

The State of Maryland does not require a nonpublic school that is religiously affiliated to enroll, retain, or extend privileges to a student or prospective student who does not meet the usual and regular qualifications, requirements, and standards of the program or school or to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with the program or school's religious or moral teachings provided that the denial, rule, regulation, or policy is not based on discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

The Catholic church, in her divine wisdom teaches, that we are all God's children made in His divine image and likeness.

The body, and it alone, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and the divine. It was created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden since time immemorial in God [God's love for man], and thus to be a sign of it.

– Theology of the Body February 20, 1980

This Truth inspires all people of goodwill to seek God's purpose and to serve Him body and soul. The struggle of our fallen world is a burden that must be met with compassion, understanding and truth for each individual. Inviting Christ to help carry our cross transcends our suffering making us a better version of ourselves. As a community, we welcome all of God's children while cooperating with church teachings to aid in coping with personal struggles and inviting in Christ by walking in His Truth.

The school reserves the right to deny attendance to anyone whose behavior is contrary to the teachings and ideals of the school or whose behavior or attitude is disruptive to the functioning of the student body.

St. Mary Catholic School reserves the right to amend the Parent/Student Handbook and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be notified of any changes made. This Parent/Student Handbook is an informative booklet for parents and students setting forth the rules and policies of the school and is not intended as an expressed or implied contract.

FAITH

In addition to the wide range of academic and special courses that are taught, students are reminded daily of the importance of prayer in their lives and the importance of living their lives as God asks. Since 1874 students have been taught by trained, dedicated, caring, and loving teachers who are proud of the Catholic heritage found at St. Mary Catholic School. Students of all faiths and ethnic backgrounds come together to comprise the St. Mary Catholic School student body.

RELIGION CLASSES/ACTIVITIES POLICY/ SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

St. Mary Catholic School is first and foremost a CATHOLIC school; therefore, all students who attend St. Mary Catholic School are required to participate in our daily religion classes, study the tenets and practices of the Catholic Faith as taught in the Archdiocesan curriculum, participate in regular church services and all church-related activities, including weekly Mass on Friday.

As stipulated by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, reception of the Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation takes place in the parish where the child is registered. It is the responsibility of the parents to contact their parish for the requirements of the reception of these sacraments.

CATECHESIS FOR FAMILY LIFE

As an integral part of our faith formation curriculum, we will be teaching Catechesis for Family Life. This age-appropriate program about Christian living, chastity, character formation and safe environment training promotes communication between you and your child. You are encouraged to review the program materials that the teacher will be using in the classroom, as well as the materials you will receive for home discussion. After examining the program, if you have any questions or concerns about your child participating in this program, please contact the Principal, in the school office.

DAILY SCHOOL PRAYERS

St. Mary Catholic School begins each day with the following morning offering:

Dear Lord,

*We offer to you today all our thoughts, words, actions, efforts,
goodwill and love.*

Open our minds and hearts to knowledge and wisdom.

Help us to be the best persons we can be.

*Give us the courage and strength to stand up for what is right,
and to treat each other with kindness and gentleness.*

We thank you for all you have given us.

*We ask you to bless our parents, our teachers, and ourselves,
as we begin this new day at St. Mary Catholic School.*

St. Mary Catholic School ends each day with the following prayer:

*Angel of God, my guardian dear,
To whom God's love commits me here.
Ever this day be at my side
To light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.*

SCHOOL SONG

SAINT MARY

*Saint Mary, Saint Mary,
You've always been true.
Your colors shine brightly
The white and the blue.*

*You show us our God
such mercy, such love;
You show us Sweet Mary,
enthroned above.*

*Our faith ever tested
Our love freely shown.
Saint Mary, sweet mem'ry
Forever our own.*

*Community of learning
And friendship abound
At Saint Mary School
Our devotion is found.*

*Saint Mary, Saint Mary,
You've always been true.
Your colors shine brightly
The white and the blue.*

Lyrics by: Dolly Keller
Music by Pamela Miller

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES

ALTAR SERVING / GUARDIANS OF THE ALTAR

Guardians of the Altar include boys and girls, grades four through eight will meet after school, once a week, with Father James who will train them to serve the Mass for liturgies and special events. This program develops an understanding of the importance of the liturgy of the Mass and the traditions that honor the Word of God and the Holy Eucharist.

CHORUS

Students in grades four through eight who wish to participate will meet once a week after school to prepare songs to sing for liturgies and special events.

ALL SAINTS DAY

November 1 brings a special spotlight on the heroes of the Church, the Saints. Each SMCS sixth grader takes on the responsibility of researching the life of a saint, dressing as the saint, and sharing the saint's life with the school community.

CHRISTMAS PRODUCTIONS

SMCS students acknowledge the true meaning of Christmas by giving glory to God through song and celebrating the beauty of the Nativity. Pre-Kindergarteners perform a play. Kindergarteners perform a Christmas Pageant. First Graders perform a Christmas Alphabet. Grades two through five perform a musical play.

DAILY MASS

Students in Grades K-8 attend weekly 8:30 A.M. Friday Mass at St. Mary's Catholic Church. During this time, upper grade level students support and model for the younger grade level students, the manners, traditions and devotions practiced during the Mass. Also, during the Mass, Children's Choir leads the music and the Guardians of the Altar serve the Liturgy. We encourage families to join us each Friday!

HOLY DAY MASS

Students attend Mass on Holy Days such as All Saints (Nov. 1st) and Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8th) at 10:30 A.M. This is an opportunity for the SMCS community to celebrate a high Mass followed by a special event recognizing the love of God through His Church's Traditions!

RECONCILIATION

SMCS students in grades three through eight are given the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation following a rotating schedule throughout the academic year. In preparation of confession, students participate in prayer and private examination of conscience in the Adoration Chapel.

ROSARY

In honor of our patron saint, St. Mary Catholic School students pray a decade of the rosary each morning during the months dedicated to the Blessed Mother, October and May. The Rosary is considered to be the one of the most powerful forms of prayer second only to the Mass!

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

On Fridays during Lent, students in grades three through eight participate in the Stations of the Cross. This prayer and tradition of the Catholic faith teaches us the immense love and sacrifice demonstrated in our Lord's Passion. And upon entering into His Passion, we are given guidance on ways to collaborate with God in our own struggles.

PRAYER SERVICES

Student-led prayer services are held for Thanksgiving, Advent, Lent and other high holy days and events that are celebrated throughout the year. The involvement of

ACADEMICS

The St. Mary Catholic School faculty and staff through developing a strong partnership with parents and guardians, parish and community are dedicated to offering the exceptional possible to each student entrusted in their care.

CURRICULUM

The core curriculum for SMCS is prescribed by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, aligned with National Standards, rooted in Catholic theology and virtues, and complies with the Maryland State Department of Education regulations for non-public schools. Students learn the following content throughout their academic tenure: Religion, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Art, Computer, Library, Music, Physical Education, and Spanish. Technology is integrated throughout all curriculum areas and grade levels. The foundation of curriculum and instruction is based on clear, rigorous, and engaging learning opportunities that teach students to seek the truth in all parts of their lives. Pupils are challenged to think critically in order to discern the Truth

with both faith and reason. These learning opportunities advance the higher order thinking skills necessary for academic achievement and builds the capacity to know, love and serve God.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

All Archdiocesan schools administer the achievement test designated by the Department of Catholic Schools in prescribed grades. Standardized test score results are used to guide curriculum, instruction, and program decisions and also to assist with identifying local and Archdiocesan-wide professional development needs. Elementary school students in grades 2-8 are administered the MAP Assessment three times a year to measure growth. Pre K and Kindergarten students are administered the BRIGANCE developmental screenings. Parents are given feedback as to how their child is scoring at the end of the year.

St. Mary Catholic School students take the following standardized tests:

MAP GROWTH ASSESSMENTS

The MAP Growth will be administered three times each year in fall, winter, and spring to students in grades 2 through 8 in core content areas. An assessment for learning, the results from the Performance Series are used to identify students' ability levels, demonstrate academic growth over time, and place your child in appropriate instructional programs.

THE ACRE EXAM

Each year, in compliance with the requirements of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, *St. Mary Catholic School* administers the ACRE, the Assessment of Catholic Religious Education Test. This test is written and published by the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA). The assessment is administered to the entire eighth grade class in the fall of the school year and to the fifth grade class each spring.

The NCEA returns to the school a school report highlighting areas of strength and areas of concern in our religion program and instruction. No individual student scores are given. These results help the school assess the students' understanding of some basic Catholic truths, doctrines, understanding or perception of God, worship, sacraments, scripture, and Church.

THE BRIGANCE SCREENING

The Brigance Screening is administered to all students enrolled in our Pre-K program and all incoming kindergarten students new to SMCS in the spring prior to the start of their kindergarten experience. The Brigance is used to identify a child's areas of strength and weakness, to plan appropriate instruction, and to implement effective and developmentally appropriate instructional activities.

PROGRESS REPORTS/INTERIMS/GRADING SYSTEM/PROMOTION/RETENTION

All elementary schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore are required to use *PowerSchool*, the leading web-based student information system (SIS) for K-12 schools and school districts. *PowerSchool* offers a more comprehensive picture of each student's progress. Parents of students in grades 3-8 who attend a training meeting and who are current with tuition and other fees owed to the school will be granted Parent Access enabling them to view their child's progress routinely during the trimester. The purpose of Parent Access is to provide an additional means of communication about students' academic progress to parents. The intent is not to replace direct communication between parents and teachers.

PROGRESS REPORTS

St. Mary Catholic School uses the Archdiocesan Progress Report. Students in grades Pre-K through 8 will receive Progress Reports at the end of each twelve-week trimester. (Please refer to the school calendar). Marks are based on actual achievement of the student according to his/her grade level of instruction. These grades are based on the student's daily performance, homework assignments, weekly tests, unit tests, projects, and papers.

INTERIM REPORTS

Interim Reports are reports to the parents indicating their child's progress at midterm. Interims are issued to all students in October, January, and April. Notices of Concern in conduct or effort will be included with the interim report if the student needs improvement in these areas. The first interim will be issued during a scheduled parent/teacher conference in October.

TEST PAPERS

Primary students (grades 1-5) bring home a weekly packet of their work for your signature and comments. All papers within the packet require a parent/guardian signature. Students in middle school are to follow the policy of their individual teachers. However, in general, all tests marked "D" or "E" must be signed by a parent/guardian. All mistakes on tests should be corrected. Any other papers need to be signed if so requested by a teacher. In case of sickness, a student on his/her return to school should check with all teachers, within three (3) days, to see what tests have been missed. An "E" will be given if no effort is made. If a child is out of school for an education trip which has been approved by the principal, then the student may be able to make up any missed tests. Principal reserves the right to make this decision.

GRADING SYSTEM

Grades Pre-K-2: Progress Codes

The following three codes will be used to indicate student progress to meeting standards. A fourth code NA: not assessed at this time; is used if that standard has not been assessed during the current trimester.

Independent: 93-100

- The student understands concepts/skills and works with little or no reinforcement or assistance.
- Students show the ability to apply the knowledge or perform the skill accurately without instructional support. Student is able to do more challenging work.
- *Mastery: Concept is consistently evident.*

Progressing: 75-92

- The student's understandings of concept/skills are developing and are in need of occasional reinforcement and assistance.
- Student is retaining material and shows the ability to apply the knowledge or skill with little instructional support.
- Student has some understanding of outcomes but has not mastered it.
- *Developing: Student needs more time and instruction to master.*

Emerging: 74 and below

- The student's understanding of the concept/skills are still at the beginning level and/or need reinforcement and assistance.
- Student is being introduced to the skill and is beginning to use the skill in context with extensive instructional support. Student needs re-teaching/reinforcement.

In **Grades 3-8** students will receive the following letter grades/achievement codes:

- **Grades 3-5:** Students will receive letter grades in the areas of Religion, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Academic Achievement Codes will be given in the areas of Foreign Language, Physical Education, Art, Music, Library, and Computer. Effort and Conduct will also be noted.
- **Grades 6-8:** Students will receive letter grades in the areas of Religion, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Academic Achievement Codes will be given in the areas of Foreign Language, Physical Education, Art, and Computer. Effort and Conduct will also be noted.

The following codes are used:

MARKING CODES:

- A+ = 97-100
- A = 93-96
- B+ = 89-92
- B = 85-88
- C+ = 80-84
- C = 75-79
- D = 70-74
- E = 69 and below

ACHIEVEMENT CODES:

Descriptors to indicate student progress towards meeting Archdiocesan Curriculum Standards used on the Grades 3-4 and 5-8 Progress Reports.

I= Independent/Proficient

- Always applies skills or processes with ease and confidence in completing grade level and above academic performance tasks
- Always demonstrates a thorough understanding of AOB grade level appropriate curriculum strands and objectives taught this trimester
- Always uses knowledge to skillfully communicate complicated ideas and concepts within the content area
- Always completes and turns in accurate class work and homework

V= Very Good Progress

- Consistently applies skills or processes with ease and confidence in completing grade level appropriate academic performance tasks
- Consistently demonstrates an above average understanding of AOB grade level appropriate curriculum strands and objectives taught this trimester
- Consistently demonstrates the ability to use knowledge to effectively communicate difficult ideas and concepts within the content area
- Consistently completes and turns in above average class work and homework

P= Progressing

- Demonstrates above average uses of skills or processes in completing required grade level and appropriate academic performance tasks
- Demonstrates above average understanding of AOB grade level appropriate curriculum strands and objectives taught this trimester
- Demonstrates above average understanding of important information
- Usually accomplishes purposes of academic tasks
- Demonstrates average ability to use required knowledge to communicate important information
- Completes and turns in above average class work and homework

S=Satisfactory

- Demonstrates average application of skills or processes required to complete grade level academic performance tasks
- Demonstrates average understanding of AOB grade level appropriate curriculum strands and objectives taught this trimester
- Demonstrates average knowledge of important information
- Demonstrates average ability to use required knowledge to communicate ideas
- Completes and turns in average class work and homework

N= Needs Improvement

- Makes many errors when applying skills or processes required to complete grade level academic performance tasks
- Demonstrates an incomplete understanding of AOB grade level appropriate curriculum strands and objectives taught this trimester
- Demonstrates an incomplete knowledge of important information
- Unable to use acquired knowledge to correctly communicate important ideas
- Performance is markedly below grade level
- Class work and homework fail to meet teacher criteria

U= Unsatisfactory/Not Progressing

- Unable to perform any understanding of skills or processes required to complete grade level academic performance tasks
- Demonstrates no understanding of AOB grade level appropriate curriculum strands and objectives taught during this trimester
- Demonstrates no knowledge of important information
- Unable to use acquired knowledge to correctly communicate ideas
- Class work and homework fail to meet teacher criteria

EFFORT CODES:**O=Outstanding**

- Immense amount of effort put forth
- Highest level of class participation
- Class work/project/assignment criteria meet highest standards

G= Good

- Admirable amount of effort put forth
- Above average level of class participation
- Class work/project/assignment criteria meet above average standards

S=Satisfactory

- Adequate amount of effort put forth
- Adequate level of class participation
- Class work/project/assignment criteria meet standards

N= Needs Improvement

- Below average amount of effort put forth
- Below average level of class participation- almost always called on, rarely volunteers
- Class work/project/assignment criteria sometimes meet standards/not all criteria met

U=Unsatisfactory

- Little or no effort put forth
- Little to no class participation - always called on, never volunteers
- Classwork/project/assignment criteria rarely meet standards/criteria barely met

PROMOTION REQUIREMENTS

Students are promoted to the next grade upon successful completion of all subjects in a given year. Diplomas will be issued to those eighth grade students who have successfully completed the Course of Study described by the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

RETENTION

Students who do not successfully complete the required educational program may be retained at the current grade level. This decision is made by the principal in consultation with the parents after following the timeline described below.

Teachers should communicate with parents on a regular basis regarding the child's progress. By mid-February, the teacher, principal, parents, (and student) review the student's work performance to date and discuss his/her educational needs for the remainder of the year and the possibility of failure and/or retention. This meeting is followed by a written communication to the parents reviewing the content of the meeting, including the educational plan.

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

Students in grades 6-8 who demonstrate high academic achievement and who positively impact the learning environment are placed on Honor Roll based on the following criteria:

Principal's Honor Roll – All A's and Satisfactory or better in all special classes, standards, effort, and conduct including unstructured time

Second Honors – all A's and B's (more A's than B's) and Satisfactory or better in all special classes, standards, effort, and conduct including unstructured time

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

The Reverend George A. Limmer Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) of St. Mary Catholic School is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of the NASSP, a prestigious national organization. Membership is open to middle school students who meet the required standards in five areas of evaluation: scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character. Standards for selection are established by the national office of NJHS and have been revised to meet our local chapter needs. Students are selected to be members by a five member Faculty Council, appointed by the principal, which bestows this honor upon qualified students on behalf of the faculty of our school each spring.

IEP PROCESS

If a child is not progressing academically, the school may ask the parents/guardians to initiate or the parents/guardians may initiate on their own the process to request a professional consultation and/or evaluation through the local public school system. The evaluative process is generally called the IEP Process (Individual Educational Plan) and begins when a parent/guardian calls 'Child Find'. Following the initial phone call to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) Child Find, parents/guardians are given an initial meeting date within 30 days. At this initial meeting, parents/guardians and school faculty are invited to share their concerns, present information, and discuss whether an evaluation will take place. Catholic school staff, in particular the student's teacher, are a vital part of the process.

If an evaluation is deemed warranted and takes place, recommendations and an academic plan are developed and given to the parents/guardians at the summative meeting following the academic evaluation.

If such a plan is developed and the test results determine that there is a need for accommodations and/or modifications within a student's learning environment, the

school administrator will consult with the parents/guardians to determine what accommodations, resources, plans, and school placements may be implemented. When appropriate, a Student Accommodation Plan is developed at your child's Catholic School.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

St. Mary Catholic School will not excuse a lack of awareness or understanding of what constitutes academic dishonesty. Any attempt to commit any of the following infractions also constitutes academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

PLAGIARISM

Failure to acknowledge ideas, phrases, data, music, or images used in any paper, examination, quiz, report, presentation, exercise or project submitted in a course but gained from another person. Guidelines for proper documentation are available from many sources.

Misrepresentation or falsification of data in any coursework.

Cooperative or collaborative effort in coursework without the explicit permission of the instructor. Assume collaboration and/or cooperation are not permitted unless you are expressly informed that they are. This is not meant to inhibit discussion and debate of academic subjects either inside or outside the classroom.

CHEATING ON EXAMINATIONS OR TESTS

To give or receive assistance from written material, another person, his or her paper, or any other source, including electronic sources, or to attempt to do so, during an examination or test is considered cheating. The only exceptions will be at the explicit instruction of the teacher of the course.

- The submission of work as one's own that has been prepared by another person.
- Stealing, altering, redirecting, or otherwise tampering with the form or content of digital media created or presented by another person without explicit permission of that person.
- Forgery or falsification of academic documents.

TESTING-RELATED PENALTY: This measure may involve subtracting points from a student's test score, confiscating a student's test paper, or lowering a student's test score or grade.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance and punctuality are considered essential for learning at *St. Mary Catholic School*. Students need to develop the work habits and responsibilities required of all of us as we go through life. Schoolwork continues even though your child is absent. "Making up" the work can never replace the teacher-pupil interaction that occurred while the subject matter was being taught. Parents are *urged to* see that their children are in school at all times unless actually ill. All absences and tardiness become part of a student's permanent record.

School policy regarding absences is as follows:

- When a student is absent from school, a parent/legal guardian must telephone (301-733-1184) or email the school receptionist between 7:30 A.M. and 8:30 A.M. to report the reason for absence.
- Parents and guardians may notify their child's homeroom teacher as a courtesy, by e-mail or note, but absences must still be reported by phone each day the child is absent.
- **SMCS asks parents to keep sick children home and a child must be fever free without the use of medication for 24 hours.**

- On the day the student returns to school, a note stating the reason for the absence signed by the parent or guardian must be presented to the homeroom teacher. The telephone call does not replace the written note. Please use the SMCS notepad for all special excuses (absences, tardiness, appointments during school hours, etc.).
- Maryland State Law requires that students absent for five (5) consecutive days must obtain a doctor's release and present it to their teacher upon return to school.
- A child may not be permitted to return to school until he/she is well enough to participate in school activities, including recess at lunchtime. Since there is no indoor monitor, a student must be well enough to fully participate in outdoor play.
- In case of extended illness, contagious disease, or hospitalization, please notify the school office at once. A doctor's statement must be obtained indicating that the child may return to school. Parents should consult with the administration regarding appropriate support of the student in fulfilling the school curriculum or alternative arrangements such as home and hospital services through the local public school district.
- Students who are absent from school may not participate in any after school or evening school-sponsored activities such as middle school dances or sports programs.
- Absence from school during the academic year due to family vacations is strongly discouraged. Missed work and assignments may only be obtained upon return.
- Virtual instruction will not be provided.
- Parents are reminded that the children are required to be in class for all instructions unless they are ill or weather is inclement and school is not in session.
- If parents are going to be away from home and unable to be reached during school time, school should be notified as to who is in charge of the child/ren and where they can be contacted if needed.
- If a student will be out of school for an extended period, whether continuous or intermittent, parents should consult with the administration regarding appropriate support of the student in fulfilling the school curriculum or alternative arrangements such as home and hospital services through the local public school district. Per Student Policy 1.0 More than 20 days absent in one school year is considered excessive. When a student has a chronic or intermittent health problem, parents should contact administration.
- In order to qualify for perfect attendance, a child must be on time for school each day and must remain in school throughout the day until dismissal. A student will not receive a mark against his/ her attendance record if he/she is visiting another school for an interview. Twenty-four hour written notice must be given if a student will be shadowing at another school.
- Exemplary attendance will be recognized for students who have been absent, tardy or left early no more than one day during the school year.
- *All absences and tardiness become part of a student's permanent record.*

TARDINESS

An important and necessary part of demonstrating respect for our place of education is adhering to the instructional schedule. Missing any instructional time has an impact on the learning process. Frequent tardiness chips away at instructional time for the student who is late and is disruptive to the classroom. We encourage our students to be responsible for their learning and to be on time to school.

It is the responsibility of all parents to ensure their children arrive on time for school. Students may enter their homerooms at 7:55 A.M. The school day begins at 8:10 A.M. Any student arriving after 8:10 A.M. is considered late and must report to the office for a late slip. Tardiness is entered on a student's permanent record. It is the responsibility of the student to check with the homeroom teacher to receive the necessary communication or work that may have been missed due to lateness.

- Only a scheduled appointment can be accepted as an excused tardy.
- A required note explaining the reason for tardiness must be presented.

Excessive unexcused tardiness will result in the following actions: Primary/ Intermediate students: four late arrivals within a four-week period will result in a parent meeting with the principal; Middle School: three late arrivals within a four-week period will result in a detention. If a student is consistently tardy the administration has the right to consider retention for the following academic year.

HALF DAYS

A half day will be noted on a student's attendance record if the student arrives at school after 9:30 A.M. or leaves school before 1:30 P.M.

TRUANCY

Truancy is defined as a student absenting him/herself from school without parent/legal guardian permission, or leaving school grounds without permission during the school day. Truancy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

EARLY DEPARTURES

The school discourages early departures and requests that families arrange medical and dental appointments, etc. either after school hours, or during vacation periods. Check the calendar for days when school is not in session. In case of an emergency, the student must submit a note to the office, signed by the parent(s)/legal guardian(s), on the day of dismissal. The note should include the reason for the request and the time the student must leave school. The parent/guardian must sign the student out in the office. The student is counted absent from classes missed and must make up the work at the discretion of the teacher. Excessive unexcused departures within a four-week period will result in a meeting with the principal.

HIGH SCHOOL VISITATION POLICY

Students in the eighth grade are allowed one day (marked as an excused absence) to visit the high school they are interested in attending. A note from a parent or guardian needs to be given to the homeroom teacher at least a day before the scheduled visit and the school office should be called on the day of the absence. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any missed assignments and complete them within a reasonable amount of time. The child's teacher(s) should be consulted for that time frame.

ABSENCE - HOMEWORK

Regular school attendance is important and required by Maryland Law and the Archdiocese of Baltimore. ALL absences are counted.

Excused absences include:

- Illness of student
- Medical appointments
- Death in immediate family
- Court Summons
- Other special reasons

Homework missed during absence should be made up within three days of returning to school. It is the student's responsibility upon his/her return to school to check with each teacher and find out what classwork/homework needs to be completed. Having a homework "buddy" helps the child who is absent keep up with missed work. Arrangements should be made for the work to be sent home with a sibling or a friend. Assignments may be picked up after dismissal.

EXPECTATIONS AND DISCIPLINE

St. Mary Catholic School is committed to creating an environment that affirms the dignity of all persons within the school community. SMCS is dedicated to nurturing spiritual growth through seeking truth; strengthening moral values through the understanding of Catholic virtues; and developing academic excellence within the practice of rigorous instruction for all learners. SMCS strives to develop the virtues of diligence, kindness, charity and self-control in our learners so that they may demonstrate the love of Christ towards themselves, their parents, their school, and their community.

This journey of spiritual, emotional and academic growth requires modeling the consistent practice and demonstration of thoughtful, responsible behavior during these formative years. Students are taught and patiently reminded "we are all created to love and be loved" and that our choices and actions have significant impacts on our community and environment.

The ultimate purpose is to develop virtues in our young souls and a sense of responsibility and awareness of the impact of our choices; to establish an atmosphere conducive to academic rigor and appreciation of diverse learners where all students can access curriculum; and to protect the welfare of the individual, as well as the school community.

In order to empower our learners to grow into people of goodwill, disciplinary actions will be prayerfully discerned for any student conduct that occurs on school premises or at school-sponsored events, or for other conduct that adversely affects the interests or reputation of the school regardless of where the conduct occurs.

DEVELOPING VIRTUES AND ACADEMIA

Each student at SMCS will:

- develop clarity and understanding of the true teachings of the Roman Catholic Church
- engage authentically in daily religion classes, prayer, and school liturgies
- mature in virtues developing the skills to discern and reflect on choices through prayer and meditation.
- continue to discover and cultivate gifts that help in the well-being of the SMCS community
- continue to grow in respect for the diversity of cultures and perspectives within the community
- demonstrate respect and appreciation for the history, opportunities and blessings of our country
- demonstrate effective and responsible use of digital platforms
 - develop skills to determine the accuracy of information
 - develop skills to discern choices of kindness and dignity in social media
- grow in the development of self-worth through the building of a strong work ethic and effective study skills
- develop sufficient oral and written communication skills and appreciation for free speech and the consequences and responsibilities this right entails.
- strive to always work up to one's potential within God's perfect plan
- act and speak in a manner that demonstrates good-will as well as the mission of SMCS, whether in school or out in the community
- advance and develop as a learner toward academic excellence

GUIDANCE PROGRAM -

The SMCS Student Support Specialist is on campus each school day. The counselor strives to foster the educational, career, and social/emotional development of students throughout their academic journey. The goal is to support students in reaching their full academic potential while enjoying a positive school experience. The counselor works with students, parents, and fellow staff members to help students receive the support needed

to be successful. Monthly classroom guidance lessons that focus on values, PBIS, character education, decision-making, and social skills are scheduled. The counselor also meets with individual students based on challenges that may arise throughout the school year that could be hindering their academic progress. Students can see the counselor via a self-referral, parental request, and/or teacher or administrative referral. In addition, the counselor is available to meet with groups of students on an as needed basis. Any child may be sent to the guidance counselor at the recommendation of the School Administration/faculty for support in resolving or improving a school incident.

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has implemented an evidence and research-based Anti-bullying Program, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS). PBIS is a comprehensive framework in which schools focus on our Christ-centered teachings and values to create nurturing, safe, positive, and supportive learning environments. Consistent school-wide expectations are visible throughout the school and students' positive behavior is acknowledged and celebrated. The PBIS framework adopts behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that is designed to enhance academic and behavioral outcomes for every student.

St. Mary Catholic School has identified three expectations for behavior in the entire school – the classroom, areas outside the classroom (such as hallways, restrooms, offices, cafeteria, playground, school grounds, etc.), field trip outings, after-school care, middle school socials and dances, and HSA-sponsored events. All faculty, staff, and SMCS volunteers will be made aware of the behavioral expectations and will work to ensure students are consistently getting the same message, regardless of the setting or the adult involved.

The SMCS Keys for Success (our expectations for behavior) are:

- **Be Kind and Gentle**
- **Be Respectful**
- **Be Responsible**

The *SMCS Keys for Success* are taught to all the students in the school through direct teaching. Students will be acknowledged for using appropriate behaviors and will be awarded keys throughout the year that may be traded in for various rewards.

The entire school community is needed to be actively involved in order to make PBIS successful at *St. Mary Catholic School*.

CODE OF CONDUCT

MORAL TRAINING TO DEVELOP MEN AND WOMEN OF GOODWILL

Children are a work in progress and it is our goal to help each child to develop and grow in virtue. Along with compassion and understanding, a clear and consistent disciplinary policy is a necessary component for any school program for the teaching-learning process to be effective. The Code of Conduct reflects the observance of the necessary rules and regulations established by the school. *St. Mary Catholic School* expectations begin with clear boundaries including the practice of Christian virtues during school day. In order for our students to grow, it is imperative for them to reflect on the impact of their choices. As a cohesive Catholic community we all are called to model and patiently guide our learners to make good choices that reflect the teachings of Christ. As a learning community:

- We must create and maintain a learning environment where all students can access exceptional and rigorous instruction.
- We must help our students grow and develop into holy men and women of goodwill.
- We must work, in partnership with parents, to problem solve and encourage virtuous choices.

As our students grow throughout their years at SMCS, we address behaviors in developmentally appropriate methods. In order to implement our expectations, we will adhere to the following processes:

Pre K - Grade 2 Developing Self-Control and Self-Awareness

Pre K - 2 Identify Behavior and Coach Student

Rationale - Our youngest members are learning so much and growing so quickly! During these important years, our students begin practicing ways to communicate boundaries and respect boundaries. We must model and guide our learners to be aware of their feelings, their bodies, their thoughts, their words, etc.

1. **Acknowledge Behavior** - Teacher identifies and addresses student behavior. Teacher models expected behaviors while coaching the student to work toward appropriate behavior.
2. **Re-visiting Behavior** - Teacher continues to assess and address behavior with student. If behavior persists, the teacher will share observations and actions with parents and include our Student Support Specialist (guidance counselor).
3. **Patterns of Behavior** - If an emergent pattern of negative behavior is evident data will be collected and used to create an organized and collaborative plan of action with parents, teachers and Student Support Specialist. Outside resources may be recommended.
4. **Administrative Input** - If persistent behaviors significantly impact the learning or safety of the classroom, administrative decisions, that facilitate what is best for all of our children, will be discussed with the team of caring adults: parent, teacher, and Student Support Specialist.

Grade 3 - Grade 5 Developing Responsibility and Empathy

3 - 5 Identifying Student Behavior

Rationale - As our students continue to grow and learn, they develop executive functioning skills in organization and taking responsibility for their homework, sports, chores, and so much more! During these important years, our students grow in empathy as they learn different perspectives and cultures that may differ from their own experiences.

1. **Acknowledge Behavior** - Teacher identifies and addresses student behavior. Teacher models expected behaviors while coaching the student to be empathetic to others; take responsibility for actions and to work toward acceptable behavior..
2. **Re-visiting Behavior** - Teacher continues to assess and address behavior with student. If behavior persists, the teacher will share observations and actions with parents and include our Student Support Specialist (guidance counselor).
3. **Patterns of Behavior** - If an emergent pattern of negative behavior is evident data will be collected and used to create an organized and collaborative plan of action with parents, teachers and Student Support Specialist. Outside resources may be recommended.
4. **Administrative Input** - If persistent behaviors significantly impact the learning or safety of the classroom, administrative decisions, that facilitate what is best for all of our children, will be discussed with the team of caring adults: parent, teacher, and Student Support Specialist.

3 - 5 Consequences of Actions

Rationale - All human choices have a consequence. Our objective is to help our young learners to develop wisdom in predicting outcomes to decisions they make. As our students develop into fourth and fifth graders, our expectations of student responsibility and empathy increases as we help them to prepare for important peer relationships and higher levels of learning in middle school.

Please refer to 6 - 8 Consequences of Actions

Grades 6 - 8

Developing Independent Young Adults

Rationale - We at SMCS work to teach our middle school students wisdom, prudence and independence as they develop into young adults.

6 - 8 Identify Behavior and Coach Student

Rationale - We hope to provide adolescent learners opportunities to reflect on choices and their impact on others in the learning environment. We strive to coach the individual to learn and grow in virtue.

- **Acknowledge Behavior** - Teacher identifies negative behavior and begins coaching student to strategize on impact and improvement.
- **Re-visiting Behavior** - Teacher continues to assess and address negative behavior. If it persists, the teacher will share observations and actions with parents. Additionally, a Reflection Form will be sent home to be completed, signed and returned to the teacher. The Student Support Specialist will be included to support the process.
- **Patterns of Behavior** - If an emergent pattern of negative behavior is evident data will be collected and used to create an organized and collaborative plan of action with parents, teachers and Student Support Specialist.

6 - 8 Behavior Plan of Action

Rationale - There are many reasons why a child may exhibit negative behaviors. As a team of caring adults, we will collect information to assess next steps in assisting the student to be his or her best self.

~ Team of Caring Adults:

- **Teachers and Student Support Specialist:** Over the prior coaching period, the expected process will include data collection, teacher(s) and Student Support Specialist meeting to discuss persistent patterns of behavior.
- **Parents and Student Support Specialist:** Student Support Specialist will organize and lead a parent conference which may include the student and one or more teachers to problem solve and develop a strategic plan moving forward. This behavior plan will include a timeline of agreed upon measurable, observable and achievable expectations that will be assessed, documented and regularly communicated with parents.

~**Assessing Behavior:** If behaviors persist, recommendations for further resources outside of school will be provided. Consequences of actions may be added.

6 - 8 Consequences of Actions

Rationale - All human choices have a consequence. Our objective is to help our young learners to develop wisdom in predicting outcomes to decisions they make. Any student who does not show reliability in demonstrating safe and respectful behaviors will be referred to the principal to develop appropriate decision making.

God calls us all to be virtuous men and women of good will. The Lord desires us to know and follow His will. Jesus stated "A tree is known by its fruit." (Lk 6:43) When the following behaviors occur, the fruit becomes either a disruption to the learning environment and/or harm to others:

- Disruptive behavior in school

- Disruptive behavior in Church
- Disruptive behavior during school assemblies
- Forging another's name
- Showing disrespect by word or action toward school personnel or fellow students of others
- Language/behavior unbecoming a Christian
- Cheating/plagiarism
- Chewing gum
- Defacing school property, including books
- Visible or audible cell phone during the school day
- Failure to follow school rules
- Failure to respect personal space

A student who shows patterns of unwillingness to comply with expectations and/or policies of *St. Mary Catholic School* shall, **in the sole and absolute discretion of the principal**, be subject to **one or more** of the following disciplinary/remedial measures:

- **Detention:** student remains after school until 3:40 P.M. on a specified day
- **Loss of Privileges:** denial of a student's permission to participate in field trips, school dances, school socials, or other extracurricular activities
- **Probation:** monitoring of a student's conduct during a particular period for the purpose of determining whether any other disciplinary measure is warranted

Should circumstances warrant, the parent and/or the Administration involved will be consulted. In cases of serious or repeated violations, students may be subject to disciplinary suspension or expulsion. Suspension is a serious disciplinary measure imposed for major violations of school rules and policies. The type and length of the suspension is determined by the principal after considering the seriousness of the violation. Listed below are some behaviors that are unacceptable and may merit suspension (**and/or expulsion**):

- Disrespect for manner and/or language
- Rowdiness
- Dishonesty
- Disruptive Behavior
- Dangerous Play
- Rudeness
- Vulgarity
- Dress code violations
- Defacement/destruction of school property
- Harassment of any kind by word or manner
- Possession or consumption of any drug or look-alike drug while at school or while attending a school function.
- **In-School Suspension:** separation of a student from classmates during school hours, requiring that the student perform all assigned work outside the normal classroom environment and/or excluding the student from participation in school activities.
- **Out-of-School Suspension:** denial of a student's permission to attend school, requiring that the student perform all assigned work at home and/or excluding that student from participation in school activities.

While on suspension, the student is still responsible for missed work. After the specified amount of time for suspension, which shall not exceed three consecutive school days, the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will meet with the Administration for reinstatement. The Administration reserves the right to determine the conditions for reinstatement.

- **Expulsion/Dismissal:** permanent expulsion/dismissal of a student from the school
- **Restitution:** requiring a student to pay school the value of any property damaged or destroyed by that student

EXPULSION POLICY

The school reserves the right to expel any student in cases of serious or repeated violation(s) of school rules and regulations or policies. Any illegal activities, including but not limited to the possession, use of, selling, or distribution of alcohol/drugs, may be grounds for expulsion. Any serious infraction that could cause harm to people or property or any threats of violence against a member of our school community may result in immediate expulsion. The Principal reserves the right to expel any student at any time when his/her conduct warrants it. An expelled student forfeits all privileges of the SMCS student. The Principal reserves the right not to re-admit an expelled student at a later date. If a student is to be expelled, the student is entitled to a prompt review procedure established by the Department of Catholic Schools. A written request for review must be submitted to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools within 10 working days of the notice of intent to expel. Parents are given the option to withdraw the student in lieu of expulsion.

LEAVING SCHOOL PROPERTY

Once a student has arrived for school, it is a **Suspension Offense** to leave school property without permission from the school office. No student is permitted to visit area establishments once on school grounds. Any student found in violation of this rule will be subject to suspension.

INAPPROPRIATE SIGNS OF AFFECTION

The display of inappropriate signs of affection will be handled as follows: First offense = warning; Second offense = parent notification/conference and in-school suspension; continued displays of such unacceptable conduct could result in dismissal from school.

TRANSFER/WITHDRAWAL POLICY

If you decide to transfer or withdraw your child(ren) from St. Mary Catholic School, a parent must in writing inform the school principal. Please include the date the transfer/withdrawal will be effective, the reason you are withdrawing, and the name of the new school your child(ren) will be attending. All books and school-owned materials must be returned to the homeroom teacher. ALL financial obligations must be met before your student(s) records will be released to the new school. See FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS for further details.

FEDERAL DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE ACT'S APPLICABILITY TO CANNABIS USE IN SCHOOLS

There have been significant legislative changes at the state level around the use of cannabis in recent years. This year, the Maryland General Assembly enacted legislation that will allow individuals 21 and older to purchase cannabis products legally from a licensed dispensary, beginning on July 1, 2023. However, it is important to keep in mind that, despite these changes, cannabis continues to be classified as a Schedule 1 controlled substance under federal law, and its use remains illegal under federal law.

The policies and regulations set forth by the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act apply directly to the use of cannabis in schools, including childcare facilities located in schools, even if such use might be permitted under State law. All employees, contractors, volunteers, and visitors are required to comply with this law and may not distribute, possess, use, or be under the influence of cannabis while in schools or during working hours, including but not limited to while transporting students or attending school-sponsored activities.

STUDENT LIFE

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES

Students should not arrive on the school grounds before 7:55 A.M. There is no provision made for supervision of students before 7:55 A.M. The school day begins at 8:05 A.M.

Students arriving after 8:10 A.M. will be considered tardy and should report to the school office. Students who are habitually late are subject to disciplinary referral.

Full day dismissal will begin at 2:55 P.M. All students should be picked up outside the School Building. Seventh period physical education classes will not end until 2:45 P.M. Therefore, the gates will not be opened until students are inside the building. If you arrive early, you must park on the Walnut Street lot and wait until the gates are opened. You may not line up in the alley and block traffic.

DAILY SCHOOL SCHEDULE:

Students May Arrive/Enter Building	7:55 A.M.
Tardy Bell/Prayer/Announcements	8:10 A.M.
Classes Begin	8:15 A.M.
Begin Morning Break	10:00 A.M.
End Morning Break	10:15 A.M.
Pre-K (Half Day) Dismissal	11:30 A.M.
First Lunch Shift (Grades 3-5)	11:45 A.M. – 12:05 P.M.
Recess (Grades 3-5)	12:05 P.M. – 12:25 P.M.
Second Lunch Shift (Grades K-2)	12:10 P.M. – 12:30 P.M.
Recess (Grades K-2)	12:30 P.M. – 12:50 P.M.
Third Lunch Shift (Gr. 6-8)	12:35 P.M. – 12:55 P.M.
Recess (Middle School)	12:55 P.M. – 1:15 P.M.
Kindergarten and Pre-K (Full Day) Dismissal	2:45 P.M.
Bell for Prayer/Announcements/Dismissal	2:50 P.M.
School Dismissal	2:55 P.M.
Early Dismissal	12:00 P.M.

Early Dismissal: Early Dismissal will generally be at 12:00 P.M. The purpose of these days is to make it possible for our faculty to have meetings for professional improvement.

Morning Arrival: Students are to arrive between 7:55 and 8:05 A.M., enter through the Primary Doors, and go directly to their homerooms. Only students may enter the building through the Primary Doors. (All visitors must enter through the front office.) After the 8:10 A.M. late bell, students must enter the school through the front office. If a child is late, you must bring him or her through the front entrance door (218 W. Washington Street), where the child will be given a tardy slip to take to his/her teacher.

MORNING DROP OFF PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS - PRE-KINDERGARTEN – 8TH GRADE

There are two locations for parents to drop off their child(ren) in the morning before school. For reasons of safety, and traffic flow, we are identifying each drop off location to be assigned for the capacity and maturity of a child to quickly and independently unfasten themselves, gather their belongings and exit the vehicle safely. In no way are teachers and staff members responsible in helping a child exit a vehicle. For safety reasons and respect for personal property and boundaries, we are insisting that parents and siblings help our smallest members to exit the car with their belongings.

1. WAREHAM ALLEY FOR OLDER GRADES 3 THROUGH 8

In the morning, students **grades 3 - 8** may be dropped off in the Wareham Alley behind the school no earlier than 7:55 A.M. along the sidewalk between the first gate and the second gate. No Parents should be getting out of their car while in the Wareham Alley for safety reasons as well as to keep the line of cars moving. Families who have children in both younger and older grades may choose this drop off as long as an older child can quickly and independently assist in the exiting process.

2. WALNUT STREET/CHURCH PARKING LOT FOR YOUNGER GRADES PREK - 2

The Walnut Street parking lot is most viable for those travelers who need more time

and assistance without impacting traffic. Parents of children PreK - 2 are to drop off their youngsters in Walnut Street Lot and **walk** their child(ren) across to the school playground area. This can also be an option for older siblings to walk the younger children across. For more independent travelers, parent may drop off and allow their child to walk across safely. There is a crossing guard to assist with crossing Walnut Street.

AFTERNOON PICK UP PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS -

PRE-K – EIGHTH GRADE

Dismissal of our students will begin at 2:45 for our members of PreK and Kindergarten. Grades 1 through 8 will be dismissed at 2:55. For the purpose of safety and traffic flow, upper and lower grade levels will be received at one of the two assigned lots.

- **Primary Lot - Warcham Alley**

Students and siblings in Grades PK - 2: When parking in the primary lot, please fill in the area in front of the parish center, and then make five (5) rows across the parking lot stopping at the yellow poles. Please fill the lot completely without blocking the gates and keeping the alley clear at all times. **NO IDLE ENGINE ZONE:** For cleaner air, please turn off your engine if waiting longer than five minutes. **PATIENCE IS A VIRTUE:** Driver patience is needed while teachers help our youngest members safely reunite with their parents/guardians.

- **Walnut Street Parking Lot**

Students and siblings in Grades 3 - 8. Our older students who do not have siblings in PK - 2nd will be supervised to safely walk across to the Walnut Street parking lot. **NO IDLE ENGINE ZONE:** For cleaner air, please turn off your engine if waiting longer than five minutes.

SUPERVISION RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE AND AFTER THE OFFICIAL SCHOOL DAY

There is no provision for supervision of students before 7:55 A.M. School is dismissed at 2:55 P.M. All students must be picked up by 3:00 P.M. on regular school days (12:00 p.m. on early dismissal days) unless previous arrangements have been made by note or phone call to the principal. The school is not responsible for supervision of students before or after the times stated above. The school is not liable for any injuries or accidents, which may occur before or after the times, stated above. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or dismissal of the student. Parents are required, therefore, to follow the times stipulated when dropping off or picking up students. If the student is participating in a scheduled, supervised activity before or after the hours noted above, specific arrangements must be made for drop-off and/or pick-up at the designated times. If children are participating in After-School Care, parents must comply with the rules established by the program for pick-up.

CHANGE IN PICKUP

If your child is to be picked up by someone other than you or his/her regular carpool, a written note must be sent to the school with details of this arrangement. We must know who this person is, description, and type of vehicle, if known. No child will be allowed to go with a person unfamiliar with the school. School reserves the right to require identification be provided by person picking up child.

AFTER-SCHOOL CARE

The After-School Care program is offered on REGULAR FULL days of school from dismissal until 5:30 P.M. There is no after-school care on early dismissal days, holidays, or any day there is no school. If there is an early dismissal due to inclement weather, there will be no after-school care provided. EpiPens or inhalers that are required for your student must also be supplied for your child when he/ she is utilizing After-School Care. For fee and other information, please call the school office.

BOOK BAGS

Each student is REQUIRED to carry all books in a book bag to and from school. If a student in grades 1 through 4 has a bag with wheels that does not fold, the bag MUST fit into a locker that measures 8" x 10".

BOOKS

Students are responsible for the proper use and care of all books they use during the school term. Students will be charged for lost or damaged books and will not receive their report cards until settlement is made. Book covers are required.

CELL PHONES

Students should not bring cell phones (or any personal electronic device) to school. There is absolutely no reason for the students to have access to these while they are in school as there are phones available in the school office when necessary for a student to call home. If parents wish their children to have a cell phone for use after the school day ends, devices must be kept in the student's backpack (not on his/her person) and powered off during the school day or at a school function including field trips. Students violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to expulsion. Visible and audible cell phones are also considered violations. St. Mary Catholic School will not be responsible for loss, damage, or theft of any electronic device brought to school.

The School reserves the right to search the call log, photo gallery, text message history, email or any other data contained in the device. The confiscated device will be returned the next day ONLY to the child's parent or guardian.

Consequences for violating these rules are:

- First offense: The cell phone/device will be confiscated and may be picked up by the parent the next day. The child will receive detention.
- Second offense: The cell phone/device will be confiscated and may be picked up by the parent the next day. The child will receive detention. The privilege to bring a cell phone will be revoked for the remainder of the school year.

Any subsequent offenses will be punishable with consequences up to and including suspension and expulsion. Students are not permitted to use these or have these items on their persons during the school day (7:55 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.). Cell phones may only be used after 3:00 in the case of an emergency or when a student is still waiting to be picked up. Students must receive permission from a member of the SMCS staff to use a cell phone at this time. Otherwise, students are not to power on for use until the student leaves the school premises.

Parents are asked to support this policy by not texting, calling, or otherwise electronically communicating with their child during the school day.

SMART WATCHES

Students are not allowed to wear Smart Watches during the school day. Electronic health monitoring devices, such as a *Fitbit*, will not be permitted if the device has the capability of accessing the Internet, text messaging capability, or has a camera, video, microphone, or Wi-Fi capability.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

HAGERSTOWN COMMUNITY COLLEGE (HCC) PARTNERSHIP

HCC partners with SMCS to enhance our middle school students' learning in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics through hosting a special STEM day for our students on the campus of HCC each March.

WASHINGTON COUNTY MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS PARTNERSHIP

Art classes in grades kindergarten through eighth grade visit the museum twice a year to engage in art appreciation. This partnership includes the museum sponsoring an art exhibit showcasing students' artwork as well as hosting a reception for these artists. The exhibit includes at least one piece of original artwork created by each student.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITIES

BOOK CLUB

Middle school students are invited to expand their reading repertoire and join the SMCS Middle School Book Club. The club meets monthly to discuss selected books based on student interest.

GEOGRAPHY BEE

SMCS middle school students participate in the National Geographic Bee. The school winner is given a seventy-five-question test that must be completed in one hour. The test is sent to the National Geographic Society Headquarters in Washington, D.C. to be graded. Then each state sends one hundred students to its state capital to compete to select one winner to represent the state. The final fifty winners compete in Washington, D.C. in the final contest.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPELLING BEE

SMCS students in grades six through eight participate in a spelling competition to determine who will represent the school in the Washington County Spelling Bee Competition sponsored by the Herald-Mail. The eighth grade winner of the Washington County Bee competes in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C.

INTERMEDIATE SPELLING BEE

SMCS students in grades three through five participate in the SMCS Intermediate Spelling Bee.

CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS OF AMERICA EDUCATION CONTESTS

St. Mary Catholic School students participate annually in the Catholic Daughters of America Education Contest which challenges students to use their talents through art, essay, poetry, photography, computer art, or music to express a given theme.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS POSTER CONTESTS

The Knights of Columbus sponsors poster contests highlighting a different theme each year for our students in grades one through eight.

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY AMERICANISM ESSAY CONTEST

Each year the American Legion Auxiliary, Morris Frock Unit 42, sponsors the Americanism Essay Contest for students in grades three through eight.

ACADEMIC FAIRS

St. Mary Catholic School alternates each year hosting a Technology, Science, or Social Studies Fair for middle school students. Technology projects are cross curricular with technology being the focus. Science Fair projects are based on the scientific method. Social Studies projects range from early man to present day. Awards are given to the top three projects at each grade level.

FINE ARTS ACTIVITIES

ART CLUB

Students are invited to enhance their art skills and assist our art teacher in preparing pieces of art for display around the school and for special events.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR CLUB

Students are invited to participate in the Children's Choir! They meet after school with our music director to practice songs which will lead our feast days and weekly Fridays school Mass.

SERVICE ACTIVITIES

STUDENT COUNCIL

The SMCS Student Council serves as the voice of the entire student body. Each spring, officers are elected from the middle school. Students in grades four through eight have homeroom representatives. SMCS Student Council sponsored activities include monthly Tag Days (out-of-uniform days); Middle School Dances; Thanksgiving Canned Food Drive; Salvation Army Adopt-a-Family; Read-a-thon; Catholic Schools Week Talent Show; and Fun Night.

PBIS STUDENT TEAM

A team of middle school students encourage and promote the SMCS Keys to Success. These representatives assist with assemblies and promote being kind and gentle, being respectful, and being responsible.

READ-A-THON & ADOPT-A-FAMILY

SMCS faculty and students read for 100 minutes in order to earn money to purchase Christmas gifts for needy families. Through total school participation in this READ-A-THON, this worthy endeavor enables our students to earn money to be used to make Christmas a happier time for families whom each grade adopts through the Salvation Army Adopt-a-Family program

CANNED FOOD DRIVE

The SMCS community reaches out to those in need by contributing canned goods during the month of November to a local food bank.

JUMP ROPE FOR HEART

Sponsored by the American Heart Association, Jump Rope for Heart is an educational fundraising program that has students jumping rope while raising funds to support lifesaving heart and stroke research.

OPERATION RICE BOWL

SMCS families reach out each Lent to assist people around the world who are facing hunger and additional hardships by offering prayers, by fasting, by learning, and by giving. Middle school religion classes take the opportunity to teach younger students about our neighbors overseas who need our help. Operation Rice Bowl is sponsored by Catholic Relief Services.

TAG DAYS

Sponsored and planned by the SMCS Student Council, Tag Days are opportunities for students to make charitable donations and to come out-of-uniform to a variety of needy causes: Mary Center, REACH, and Cancer Research.

SAFETY PATROLS

Eighth grade students serve as safety patrols. Members of the patrol escort student lines out of the building, hold open the school doors as students are dismissed, and assist the

teachers in supervising students in both parking lots. The safety patrol program enables students to participate in promoting safety skills among their fellow students.

FLAG PATROLS

Members of the flag patrol are responsible for putting up the flags in the morning and taking them down in the afternoon each day.

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

CLASSROOM PARTIES

Homeroom parents plan parties throughout the school year in celebration of the various holidays.

TEN O' CLOCK BREAK

Students and staff take a break in the morning to enjoy a snack, fresh air, and conversation.

DAILY RECESS

A twenty-minute recess period is built into the daily schedule to allow students the opportunity for friends, fresh air, and exercise.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCES

Sponsored and planned by the SMCS Student Council, three dances are scheduled each year for middle school students. Music, dancing, and conversation are enjoyed by all!

ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

SMCS sponsors Crusader basketball teams for boys and girls (depending upon the interest level) who participate in the Washington County Basketball League, Volleyball team, a cheerleading squad, an Elementary Girls' Softball Team, and a Cross Country Running Club for boys and girls. Parent volunteers are needed to serve as coaches.

DRESS CODE POLICY

Uniforms are a trademark of our school and we believe that adhering to a clear dress code aids in teaching our students a sense of respect for our place of learning and a development of professionalism and self respect. The uniform promotes a strong sense of community and school identity. Clear boundaries foster learning and minimize distractions as the uniform creates a level playing field for all of our learners.

Our dress code has been established as part of our entire image and agreeing to it—in its entirety—is a prerequisite to attending St. Mary. Please read and become familiar with our rules and regulations with reference to the dress code. Students in Grades 5-8 will receive a demerit for dress code violation.

The complete uniform is to be worn **to school** and home **from school** every day. All articles of the uniform should be maintained in a clean and neat manner.

UNIFORM PURCHASE OPTIONS

All uniform items should be purchased from **Flynn O'Hara Uniform Company** - www.flynnohara.com or 1-800-441-4122. SMCS Logo sweatshirts may be purchased online – the link is on the school website (<https://stmarycatholicschool.org/uniforms/>, see section Enhanced Printing and Promotions). Items bought from other sources that do not comply with our uniform regulations will not be permitted.

USED UNIFORM CLOSET

The HSA oversees a Used Uniform Closet for SMCS families to trade and/or purchase school uniform items at a reduced price. Sales are held throughout the year. Please consider donating items that your child(ren) have outgrown.

GENERAL UNIFORM GUIDELINES

PRE-KINDERGARTEN REGULAR UNIFORM

Shirt	Pre-K logo T-shirt - 10 different colors available - order through Pre-K Teacher
Sweatpants	Navy sweatpants or Navy leggings
Sweatshirt	SMCS logo navy blue sweatshirt - order through SMCS
Socks	White ankle socks
Shoes	Sneakers - white or mostly white - no lights - no wheels

WARM WEATHER OPTIONS:

August 29th – October 28th & April 8th – Last day of school

Shorts	Navy gym shorts
Skort - Girls	Navy skort - Flynn O'Hara

BOYS: ELEMENTARY (K - GRADE 5) REGULAR UNIFORM

Shirt	Short or long sleeve powder blue polo shirt
Pants (K-3)	Navy dress slacks with waist band
Pants (4-5)	Navy dress slacks with waist band, zipper, and belt loops
Socks	Navy crew socks
Dress Shoes	Solid black, brown, or navy dress shoes having a neutral color sole
Belt (4 & 5)	Black or brown belt
Sweater	Navy untrimmed cardigan (v-neck or crew neck - no monograms) or a vest
Sweatshirt	SMCS Logo Crewneck Sweatshirt

WARM WEATHER OPTIONS:

August 29th – October 28th & April 8th – Last day of school

Shirt	Short Sleeve powder blue polo shirt
Shorts (K-3)	Navy walking shorts - no cargo shorts
Shorts (4 & 5)	Navy walking shorts with waistband, zipper, and belt loops
Socks	Plain White socks – no logos
Sneakers	See page 34 for restrictions

BOYS: MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8) REGULAR UNIFORM

Shirt	Short or long sleeve, powder blue or white, tailored oxford shirt, button down collar
Pants	Navy dress slacks with waist band, zipper, and belt loops
Socks	Navy crew socks
Dress Shoes	Solid black, brown, or navy dress shoes having a neutral color sole
Belt	Black or brown belt
Sweater	Navy untrimmed cardigan (v-neck or crew neck - no monograms) or a vest
Sweatshirt	SMCS Logo Crewneck Sweatshirt

WARM WEATHER OPTIONS

August 29th – October 28th & April 17th – Last day of school

Shirt	Short sleeve, powder blue or white, tailored oxford shirt, button down collar
Navy Shorts	Navy walking shorts with waistband, zipper, and belt loops
Socks	Plain white socks - no logos
Sneakers	See page 34 for restrictions

GIRLS: ELEMENTARY (K - GRADE 5) REGULAR UNIFORM

Shirt	Powder blue short or long sleeve polo shirt or Short or long sleeve powder blue or white Peter Pan collar blouse
Jumper	Plaid jumper - length no shorter than 2 inches above the knee
Pants (K-3)	Navy dress slacks - no contrasting or outside stitched pockets
Pants (4 & 5)	Navy dress slacks with waist band, zipper, and belt loops
Socks	Navy knee highs - pulled up
Tights	Navy tights - cold weather only – optional
Dress Shoes	Solid black, brown, or navy dress shoes having a neutral color sole
Belt (4 & 5)	Black or brown belt
Sweater	Navy untrimmed cardigan (v-neck or crew neck - no monograms) or a vest
Sweatshirt	SMCS Logo Crewneck Sweatshirt

WARM WEATHER OPTIONS:

August 29th – October 28th & April 17th – Last day of school

Shirt	Short sleeve powder blue polo shirt or Short sleeve powder blue or white Peter Pan collar blouse
Shorts	Navy walking shorts - no cargo shorts
Skort	Navy skort - Flynn O'Hara
Socks	Plain white socks - no logos
Shoes	Sneakers - see page 34 for restrictions

GIRLS: MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8) REGULAR UNIFORM

Shirt	Short or long sleeve, powder blue or white, tailored oxford shirt, button down
Skirt	Plaid skirt - length no shorter than two inches above the knee
Pants	Navy dress slacks - no contrasting or outside stitched pockets
Socks	Navy knee highs - pulled up
Dress Shoes	Solid black, brown, or navy dress shoes having a neutral color sole
Belt	Black or brown belt
Sweater	Navy untrimmed cardigan (v-neck or crew neck - no monograms) or a vest
Sweatshirt	SMCS Logo Crewneck Sweatshirt

WARM WEATHER OPTIONS:

August 29th – October 28th & April 17th – Last day of school

Shirt	Short sleeve, powder blue or white, tailored oxford shirt, button down
Shorts	Navy walking shorts with waistband, zipper, and belt loops
Skort	Navy skort - Flynn O'Hara

Socks	Plain white socks - no logos
Shoes	Sneakers - see page 34 for restrictions

P.E. UNIFORM FOR ALL GRADES (K-8)

Shirt	Gray T-shirt with SMCS logo
Sweatpants	Navy sweatpants with SMCS logo
Socks	Plain white socks - no logos
Tennis Shoes	Sneakers - see page 34 for restrictions - laces must be tied properly at all times
Sweatshirt	Navy crew neck or Hoodie Sweatshirt with SMCS logo

WARM WEATHER OPTIONS

August 29th – October 28th & April 17th – Last day of school

Shirt	Gray T-shirt with SMCS logo
Shorts	Navy mesh gym shorts with SMCS Logo

- P.E. uniforms are worn to school on P.E. day
- Students do not change at school for P.E.
- P.E. shirts must be tucked in at all times

IMPORTANT UNIFORM GUIDELINES

- Every student **MUST** own an SMCS sweatshirt
- ALL shirts must be tucked in (not folded over) at all times
- Colored shirts (other than white) may not be worn under school shirts
- Girls' shirts may **NOT** have ruffles, lace, or puckered sleeves on blouses
- Girls polo shirts for warm weather option may not be tailored or form fitting
- All undergarments must be white or beige
- Shorts may be worn under jumpers and skirts
- Hoodie style sweatshirt may **ONLY** be worn on gym days

SHOES

DRESS SHOES

- K-8 students are to wear **solid black, brown, or navy dress shoes having a neutral color sole** with their regular school uniforms
- No prints, stripes, plaid, glitter, or sequins may be on the dress shoe
- Flynn O'Hara sells the Dirty Buck as an option
- Sperry-style shoes must meet the guidelines for dress shoes

SNEAKERS

- Sneakers are to be worn only on gym days and with the warm weather uniform
- No roller skate sneakers, slip-on sneakers, or light-up sneakers are allowed
- Sneakers must have laces or Velcro
- **The laces must be tied at all times**

EXPECTATIONS of GENERAL APPEARANCE: It is important to promote cleanliness and a respectable appearance that fits the occasion and setting for learning while reflecting the dignity of a child of God. In keeping with consistent expectations of appearance, learners are less distracted as we provide clear boundaries that level the playing field; foster learning and provide a sense of professionalism.

JEWELRY

- Must be limited to a watch and ring.
- Girls with pierced ears may wear ONE SMALL STUD PER EAR. NO OTHER TYPE EARRING ALLOWED.

- Boys may NOT wear earrings of any type.
- A religious medal is allowed.
- One rubber wrist band supporting an important cause may be worn.
- The final decision will be made by principal and teacher.

MAKE-UP

- NO MAKE-UP OR NAIL POLISH ALLOWED.

HAIR

- NO EXTREME HAIRCUTS, HAIR PIECES, OR STYLES ALLOWED.
- All hair must be kept out of eyes at all times.
- Simple, small hair ribbons may be worn by girls. (Any hair ribbons that create a distraction will not be permitted.)
- No headbands with long ribbons are permitted.
- No three-dimensional headbands.
- No inappropriate bleaching or coloring of hair allowed.
- Boys' hair must not touch the collar or eyebrows.
- The ears must be cut out and there must be a minimum of the width of the student's finger between the eyebrows and the hair.
- Bushy or unkempt hair is not permitted.
- Sideburns should not extend beyond the middle of the ear.
- NO FACIAL HAIR SUCH AS MOUSTACHES OR GOATEES.
- The final decision on permissibility of hair styles will lie with the pastor and principal.

COATS/OUTERWEAR

The following guidelines will be used for outerwear. When the weather is above 60 degrees, a sweatshirt is optional. When the temperature is between 50-60 degrees, a sweatshirt or an outer layer must be worn. If the temperature is below 50 degrees, a coat/ 2 layers should be worn. Children will not be permitted outside for recess in cold weather without a coat. They will be sent to the office.

OUT-OF-UNIFORM DAY DRESS CODE

- No sandals, flip flops, high heels, or shoes that pose a safety risk are permitted.
- No tank tops/no cut-off tops/no midribs/no spaghetti straps/no severely tight tops/no see-through tops/ no low-cut tops/no camisoles/no visible bra straps/ no Peek A Boo shoulder shirts
- No obscene or otherwise objectionable T-shirts
- No form-fitting pants
- No shorts (unless advised otherwise)
- No overly baggy pants
- No overly short skirts (gym shorts fingertip rule applies)
- Keeping in mind that we are a Catholic school, our students are encouraged to take pride in their appearance at all times. A modest appearance is the standard.
- A student whose selection of clothing is found to be unacceptable by the principal or teachers will be required to call a parent for a change of clothing.
- Students who do not abide by the dress code will lose the privilege to come out of uniform.

CLOTHING IDENTIFICATION

We strongly recommend that each article of clothing be marked with your child's name. Sweaters, jackets, hats, gloves, lunch boxes, and supplies must be marked with the student's name. If items are lost, they can be returned promptly to the owner. Items found are sent to lost and found. Children may check for lost items before and after school. Items left in the lost and found for more than two weeks will be discarded. If you notice an article of your child's clothing missing, please ask him/her to check in the lost and found.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are not permitted to bring electronic devices to school. These would include: electronic games, portable music players, electronic toys, etc. Calculators are permitted (with teacher permission), but they should be the types that are limited to mathematical functions only. Similarly, watches that have the ability to communicate or play games are not permitted. These guidelines are also in effect for After-School Care.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are considered an integral part of the school's educational program and a valuable learning experience for students. Field trips are scheduled at various times during the school year. In advance of the trip, a permission form, required by the Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools, is sent home. A student will be permitted to attend the trip only if the permission form is signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the teacher by the specified date along with any fee. No handwritten note or verbal permission will be accepted.

If, for some extraordinary reason, a student is unable to participate, the student is expected to attend school on that day and fees must still be paid since the rates we are quoted reflect total participation. Work will be supplied by the teacher(s), and the student will be assigned a classroom in which to work under the supervision of a staff member. If a student is unable to attend because of illness, we cannot promise a refund. The teacher must be notified if a child will not participate in the field trip experience. Students who are kept home from the trip will be marked absent.

Extreme care will be taken by the teachers and chaperones supervising these field trips to see to the well-being and safety of the students; however, we cannot be held responsible for accidents that occur. Teachers will take all medications (kept in the health office) for your child on any field trips. Separate arrangements are made for eighth grade confirmation retreats. Please remind the students they are representing *St. Mary Catholic School* as well as themselves, and it is necessary that they be on their best behavior. No student will be denied a field trip due to financial difficulties. If there is such a problem, please contact the principal. Excessive detentions, unacceptable behavior or problems with following school policies may be cause for a student to be denied the privilege of a field trip.

CHAPERONES FOR FIELD TRIPS

When planning a field trip, teachers will determine the number of parent chaperones needed to provide supervision for the trip. Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate as chaperones on field trips; however, due to safety and liability factors, siblings are not permitted on field trips. Adults attending field trips must meet the Archdiocesan **STAND/VIRTUS** requirements. Parents not selected as chaperones are not permitted to join the group at the trip destination. All students are required to ride the bus to and from SMCS for school field trips. Chaperones are expected to follow the same guidelines as the students, such as wearing appropriate attire, using language and behavior becoming a Christian, refraining from chewing gum, and showing respect to the presenters or tour guides; because, just like teachers and students, chaperones are representing *St. Mary Catholic School*. Chaperones are expected to keep in mind the best interest of all students, not just their own child on the trip. **Chaperones are expected to refrain from using their cell phones on field trips.** The teacher in charge of the field trip will meet with chaperones the morning of the trip prior to departing from school in order to share specific details of the trip.

GRADUATION (EIGHTH GRADE)

Students in 8th grade who successfully complete the course of study as outlined by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, will be awarded a diploma at the end of the school year. Any 8th grade student who fails to meet the academic requirements, that is, fails one or more major subjects across the board, will not be allowed to graduate. The student will need to

repeat the 8th grade in a school other than St. Mary. An 8th grade student must be in good academic, financial and behavior standing in order to participate in the end of the year graduation activities.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an integral part of the learning process and is assigned as needed at the discretion of the teacher. A reasonable amount of time should be spent each evening on homework according to the grade level of the child. Each teacher will set his/her policy concerning homework.

PARENTS, PLEASE NOTE: Do **NOT** bring homework, lunches, gym clothes, band instruments, or special projects, etc., to school for your child if he/she forgets to bring it.

LIBRARY

Students visit the library weekly. Books are collected and returned to the library on the morning of the day they are due. Overdue books are subject to a five (5) cents per day fine, excluding weekends and holidays (unless otherwise advised), or days absent due to illness. Children may not take out another book if one is overdue. Once a book is returned, the fine stops increasing, but is still due. These books are provided to the students free of charge; please impress upon your child the importance of taking care of these books and returning them properly and promptly. Books not returned within one month will automatically be billed to parents for the full replacement value of the books, plus any fine accrued.

PARTY INVITATIONS

If a child brings invitations for a birthday party, the entire class, all boys, or all girls must be invited. Otherwise, other arrangements must be made to distribute the invitations. School personnel will not distribute any invitations.

RECESS

All students have a twenty-minute recess period after their lunch period to be enjoyed outside on the playground. Students choose from four-square, basketball, kickball, hopscotch, or jumping rope. At least one member of the SMCS instructional staff and parent volunteers supervise the three recess periods (grades 3-5, K-2, and 6-8). Students should always come to school with appropriate jackets for outdoor recess. On days that the temperature is below 32°F or there is inclement weather, recess will be held in the classroom.

SISTER CORDA'S KITCHEN LUNCH PROGRAM

Students have the option of purchasing a hot lunch in the cafeteria or bringing lunch from home. Students who choose to buy lunch participate in the SMCS lunch program. Orders are taken daily for hot lunches. Payment is done through a prepaid lunch account in FACTS. A menu is sent home at the beginning of each month. If a child brings a lunch box/bag, his/ her name and grade must be on the outside. No carbonated drinks, glass bottles or containers, nor fast food lunches are allowed.

SCHOOL TELEPHONE

The telephone in the school office is for business purposes. For this reason, children will not be allowed to use the telephone unless there is an emergency. Please make arrangements for after-school activities before the child leaves home in the morning. If a child forgets homework, books or any other school materials, he/she will not be permitted to call home.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Schoolbooks, library books, equipment, and the building itself are subject to a certain amount of wear each year. But when damage or defacement of property occurs through deliberate abuse, carelessness or neglect, the cost of replacement or repair will be charged to the person(s) responsible for it.

ONE-TO-ONE COMPUTING INITIATIVE

St. Mary Catholic School strives to keep pace with the ever-changing technological world. A one-to-one computing initiative for all students in grades kindergarten through eight is utilized to enhance our curriculum. Parents must attend an orientation meeting and submit a signed Student/Parent Electronic Contract Agreement prior to their children being issued an iPad or Chromebook.

HEALTH

ALLERGIES

Parents must notify the school of their child's allergies including food allergies. School medication orders must be renewed each year by the physician and the order must be signed on or after July 1. If the student carries an EPIPEN with them, the physician's order must state this requirement.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

A complete Bloodborne Pathogens Standard Exposure Control Plan has been established by the school and can be found in each Faculty Handbook and on file in the Health Office.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Parents must call the school if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. The school must notify the Health Department. All reports are confidential. The following communicable diseases/conditions are necessary to report:

- Measles – regular or German
- Tuberculosis
- Meningitis
- Whooping Cough
- Hepatitis
- Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever
- Food Poisoning
- Human Immune Deficiency
- Virus Infection (AIDS and all other symptomatic infections)
- Mumps
- Adverse reactions to Pertussis Vaccine
- Lyme disease
- Animal bites/Rabies
- Chicken Pox
- Influenza

Any student with drainage from the eyes, associated with conjunctivitis (pink eye) must be kept at home until under treatment from a doctor. A doctor's note will be required for readmission to school. Students who have chicken pox are excluded from school until all lesions are scabbed over.

HEAD INJURY

If any injury to the head or any other serious injury occurs to a student, the nurse will call the parent and send home a report. The report is to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school. If the parent/guardian or alternative contact person cannot be reached in an emergency, the school will contact police/ambulance for assistance.

HEAD LICE

Please notify the school at once if you find that your child is infected with head lice. A child or class may need to be checked but discretion and privacy will be maintained.

HEALTH RECORDS

Parents are required to complete a Health Form listing any allergies, serious medical conditions, medications, and emergency contact information. The school must be notified of changes that occur during the school year.

HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICES

Vision and Hearing Screening: The school follows the directives of the Washington County Health Department and responds to parent's requests for individual testing. This testing is usually done for: all new students who have not provided documentation for screening in the past year; all students the year they enter the school in Grades Kindergarten, 1, and 8; and any student with a suspected hearing or vision problem as reported by school staff or parents/guardians.

St. Mary Catholic School employs a full-time nurse who oversees the school health program.

A student's immunizations must be current in order to enroll in school. Please keep the health office updated on your child's immunization status. Under MD law, a child under six years of age who is admitted to a preschool program must have appropriate screening for lead poisoning. Parent(s) or guardian(s) must submit evidence of this screening to the child provider within 30 days of admission to care. Under MD law, children who reside (or have ever resided) in certain areas of the state or other states designated as at-risk for childhood lead poisoning must receive one or more blood lead tests. See Health Inventory Lead Addendum (Form 1215-A). All Washington County zip codes require testing.

Good health habits must be taught and practiced at home and in school. *Children with severe coughs, colds and/or fevers, and other signs of illness should not be sent to school.* Likewise, it is important that after any type of viral infection the child be kept home until fully recuperated. If your child is complaining and you send him/her anyway, please refrain from telling him/her that if he/she does not feel better have the office call you. Usually if told this, the child will come to the office complaining. If the child is not feeling well, but you feel he/she might be able to make it, please send a note to school. This way, we will be aware, but the child won't have "going home" on his/her mind. Parents of children who have any type of physical disorder should contact the principal/teachers to make them aware of the problem.

Care given in school is limited to first aid in accidents and illness until the parents can be reached to take the child home, to the doctor, or to the hospital. At the discretion of school officials, if it is deemed the child needs immediate emergency care, 911 will be called and then the parent will be notified to meet personnel from school and the child at Meritus Medical Center, 11116 Medical Campus Road, Hagerstown, MD 21742. EMERGENCY CARDS are kept for each family providing information to assist in locating parents. IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT THIS INFORMATION BE KEPT UP-TO-DATE.

INSURANCE

The School will provide parents with the option to purchase student health insurance for their children.

INJURY

If a student sustains an injury outside of the school day that prohibits him or her from participating in physical education class, the parent is to give the school nurse a doctor's note that outlines the restrictions and the period of time the student should be excused from physical education. The parent should also e-mail the physical education teacher that the school nurse has the doctor's note. **A student not participating in physical education class must wear his or her regular school uniform instead of the physical education uniform.**

MARYLAND SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

A child may not enter school, unless he/she has submitted an official immunization record or other appropriate documentation of immunization status. The immunization record must have the month, day and year of each vaccination and be signed by a

physician or health department official. In the case of religious objection or medical contra-indication, form DHMH 89, must be submitted and kept on file and be approved by the school. Exempted students are to be excluded from school if there is an outbreak of the disease for which they are not immunized.

MEDICATIONS

The administration of medication in school is discouraged. However, if a student's physician recommends that the student receive prescription or over-the-counter medication during the school day, a written order from the student's doctor is required. Medication can only be dispensed with a written order from the student's physician, specifying start and stop date. The original medication container or box for inhalers must be brought to the school. These containers or boxes should include the following: name of medication, directions for use, time for dispensing, name of doctor ordering the medication, date of prescription, expiration date as stated by the pharmacist, strength of medication/dosage, and student's name and grade.

Students may not possess, dispense or distribute medication on their own. Under special circumstances, individual students may be authorized by their physician to carry and self-administer emergency medications (e.g. inhalers, epi-pens). In this case, the school nurse must be consulted. All medication must be delivered to school by a parent/guardian.

St. Mary Catholic School follows the Maryland State requirements for administering medications. Some of those requirements are listed below, but are not all-inclusive. For any further information, please contact the school office.

- A Physician's Medication Order Form (PMOF) **MUST BE COMPLETED** (no exceptions) by the student's physician for **EACH MEDICATION**, prescription and/or non-prescription, to be administered at school. It is the parent's responsibility to obtain the completed PMOF from the child's physician. Blank forms can be obtained from the school office or downloaded from the school website.
- Written authorization is required by the parent for each medication to be administered in school. (There is a section on the PMOF for this permission.) The school will not assume responsibility for giving medications not prescribed by a physician and without written consent by the parent.
- No medication may be administered with parental consent only or with over-the-phone consent only.
- No medication may be administered under any circumstances other than stated on the PMOF.
- Any changes in dosage, time, frequency, or reasons for giving medications must be submitted on a new PMOF completed by the physician and approved by the parent.
- Medications **MUST BE HAND-DELIVERED BY THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN**. No student may possess, administer, or distribute medication, prescription or non-prescription. Under no circumstances will school personnel administer medication brought to school by the student.
- The original medication container or box for inhalers must be brought to the school. These containers or boxes should include the following: name of medication, directions for use, time for dispensing, name of doctor ordering the medication, date of prescription, expiration date as stated by the pharmacist, strength of medication/dosage, and student's name and grade.
- Any over-the-counter medication must be in the original container.
- The first dosage of any new prescription must be started outside of school.
- Students may not possess, dispense or distribute medication on their own. Under special circumstances, individual students may be authorized by their physician to carry and self-administer emergency medications (e.g. inhalers, epi-pens.) See next bullet.
- In some cases, students may be given the privilege to self-carry an inhaler (Gr. 3 and above), or an epipen (middle school). Please contact the office for additional

information if you feel your child should have this privilege.

- Any student having ANY medication, prescription or non-prescription, in his/her possession, except as stated above, could be subject to suspension and/or expulsion from school. Cough drops and chapsticks that have active ingredients must have a physician signed PMOF to carry in school. This is state mandated in all Maryland schools.
- All medications kept in school will be kept under lock and key, accessible only to the authorized administering personnel.
- Parents are required to pick up all medications at the end of the school year.

PLEASE DO NOT ASK THE SCHOOL TO DEVIATE FROM THESE PROCEDURES.

Physician Medication Order Forms (PMOF) and Medication Procedures are available on the website or in the school office, if needed. Please follow these procedures for ANY medications your child may need throughout the school year. A prior PMOF form must be on file at the school for administering medication on field trips including Fairview Outdoor School. A new PMOF must be obtained for Fairview meds given at home on a daily basis.

In addition to the above, any child who needs to use crutches, canes, leg braces, or ace bandages must have a written doctor's certificate with beginning and end date instructions.

Health Assessment Forms I & II are required at the beginning of enrollment in *Saint Mary Catholic School*. Form I is completed by parent; Form II is completed by physician. Any significant medical change throughout the student's entire enrollment should be alerted to the health nurse and a new set of Health Assessment Forms be submitted to the school.

PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RECESS

Children who are ill enough to be kept in during recess periods should be kept at home until they can follow the regular school schedule. The school does not have adequate personnel for individual supervision.

Parents should not send a youngster to school who is ill in the morning; including if the child is running a fever. Since there is no indoor monitor, a student must be well enough to fully participate in outdoor play. A doctor's written and signed request is needed for a student to be excused from physical education classes. **A student not participating in physical education class must wear his or her regular school uniform instead of the physical education uniform.**

Safety

AHERA

In October 1986, the U.S. Congress enacted the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Under this law, comprehensive regulations were developed to address asbestos problems in public and private elementary and secondary schools. These regulations require most schools to inspect for friable and non-friable asbestos, develop asbestos management plans that address asbestos hazards in school buildings and implement response actions in a timely manner. Our program for fulfilling these responsibilities is outlined in our asbestos management plan. This plan contains information on our inspections, re-inspections, response actions and post-response action activities, including periodic surveillance activities that are planned or are in progress. The plan is kept in the principal's office and may be viewed upon request during normal business hours. An appointment is recommended.

ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR THE INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

Technology skills are necessary to ready our students for their future. Access to the Internet and technology tools (including software tools, web-based applications and services, computer equipment, I-Pads, and other personal electronic devices) allow students to conduct research, produce digital content, and communicate with classmates and teachers. The Internet and technology tools put enormous power at the fingertips of users. As such, they also place a great deal of responsibility on users.

It is imperative that technology resources be used to build community, encourage critical reflection, and foster readiness for future learning. Developments in technology at the School are to be used ethically, legally, and responsibly. As in other areas, our students are expected to make good choices with regard to their behavior.

Individual users are responsible for their activity on the Internet and technology tools, including the material stored and information shared. In order to protect private and personal information, unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information is prohibited. The School reserves the right to edit Internet accounts for child-only configurations, and to run filtering software for students' protection.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student users (and their parents) recognize the limitations the School imposes on the use of the Internet and technology tools and that they understand the standards of behavior the School expects of users.

All users of the School network and technology tools, whether on a School-owned or personal device, are responsible for adhering to the following guidelines for acceptable use.

Acceptable uses of the Internet and technology tools are for authorized academic and school-related activities that support learning and teaching and:

- Respect the privacy and property rights of others and the well-being of the School
- Are consistent with Roman Catholic values and morals
- Treat technology tools and computer equipment with respect.

Unacceptable uses of the Internet and technology tools include but are not limited to:

- Violating the rights or privacy of others, including by photographing or filming an individual without consent
- Posting or distributing videos or photographs without consent of the persons depicted and the School
- Using technology to send profanity, obscenity, or other offensive or harmful language
- Unauthorized copying, downloading, or installation of content, software or applications (including plagiarism or "pirating" music)
- Sending false information or sending messages to the School community that fail to identify the sender (including anonymous messages or messages using a pseudonym)
- Using any program designed to disrupt network performance or breach network security, such as software designed to capture passwords or break encryption protocols
- Revealing personal information beyond what is required for login while using Internet or web-based resources
- Responding to inappropriate messages from others (which should be reported to the School)
- Downloading or copying information onto disks or hard drives without prior teacher approval
- Accessing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are inappropriate or may be offensive to others (including pornography and other

- inappropriate images)
- Sharing of passwords or attempting to discover another's password (passwords should be changed frequently)
- Using or accessing another's account (network accounts are to be used only by those for whom the account has been established)
- Intentionally writing, producing, generating, copying or introducing dangerous codes or programs designed to cause harm, including, but not limited to viruses, bugs, 'worms', etc.
- Intentionally damaging, altering, or tampering with any hardware, software, printers, keyboards, speakers, etc.
- Accessing or searching files, directories, or folders for which the user does not have authorization
- Intentionally erasing, renaming, or disabling of anyone else's files or programs
- Accessing social media, email, or other off-task websites or apps during School without explicit permission of a teacher or adult supervisor
- Violating School conduct rules or the law.

Harassment/cyber-bullying of others online, whether against a student, non-student, or employee, is serious, is prohibited, and is contrary to the School's policy and values. Harassment/cyber-bullying whether it is initiated on campus or off campus, online or in person, should be reported immediately to a faculty member, and may lead to disciplinary action and possible criminal prosecution under Maryland's law prohibiting the Misuse of Interactive Computer Service ("Grace's Law").

Parents are responsible for:

- Reviewing and discussing this policy with their child as well as supporting the School in its enforcement
- Partnering with the School in monitoring their child's technology use
- Modeling appropriate Internet behaviors for their child
- Reporting any concerns regarding this policy or their child's use of the Internet or technology tools to School personnel.

Failure to adhere to the policy guidelines may result in a revocation of a student's Internet access and other technology privileges and disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Web-based Services

The School uses Google Apps for Education as well as other web-based education tools, sites, and services ("web-based services") to provide students with important web-based educational experiences and enhanced opportunities to communicate and share collaboratively with one another. As part of students' use of web-based services, certain educational records may be created, collected, or stored. Directory information, such as a child's name, email address, grade/age, and enrollment status, may also be shared with web-based services. The School may access, monitor, and review children's use of web-based services and Internet use and children shall not have any expectation of privacy with respect to any communications or activities through such services. Use of web-based services is for educational purposes only and subject to the conduct and acceptable use guidelines set forth in this Handbook. A list of the School's web-based services and corresponding privacy policies are available upon request. By enrolling a child in the School, the parent consents to the child's participation in the School's academic activities and programs, including the child's use of and access to web-based services as described in this paragraph. In order to withhold or withdraw consent for the use of web-based services, parents must contact the School principal in writing.

Harassment Policy

Policy

It is the policy of the Archdiocese to prohibit harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process) in its education programs and activities. Each Catholic school shall adhere to this policy with respect to students. (Employees are similarly protected from harassment by a separate Archdiocesan policy.) A school is not required to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings.

I. Scope

This policy applies to all students in Archdiocesan elementary, middle and secondary schools. The Archdiocese neither condones nor tolerates harassment of students at school, at school-related activities or functions, or in any school-related setting. Harassment of students, whether engaged in by other students, teachers, administrators, or others, is prohibited. Violation of this Policy is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or suspension or expulsion from school, depending on the nature and severity of the offense and the individual's disciplinary record.

II. Prohibited Conduct

- A. For purposes of this Policy, "harassment" means verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or protected activity, that:
 - (i) Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment;
 - (ii) Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or
 - (iii) Otherwise adversely affects an individual's educational opportunities.
- B. Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, handicap or disability, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation. "Sexual" harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for educational decisions or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

III. Procedure

- A. Any person who believes that a student is being subjected to harassment should immediately report the harassment to any one or more of the following individuals: the student's teacher, the principal of the school, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools.
- B. Individuals are encouraged to report harassment early, before it becomes severe or pervasive, so that preventive action can be taken. All complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly and impartially, and will remain confidential to the extent possible.

- C. Any retaliation, reprisals, or intimidation, whether by the alleged harasser or from another source, directed toward the complaining party or anyone else as a result of the filing or investigation of a harassment complaint is considered a serious violation of this Policy and should be reported immediately.
- D. Once the investigation is complete, the school will take immediate and appropriate corrective action when it determines that this Policy has been violated. The complaining party and the complained-of party will be advised of the investigation's findings and conclusions. A report of the findings will be forwarded to the Department of Catholic Schools.

Bullying Policy Statement

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation (as defined below) of any student is prohibited in all Archdiocese of Baltimore Schools. Retaliation or reprisal against anyone who reports such behaviors or participates in an investigation of a report is also prohibited. Such behaviors are contrary to school life in a Christ-centered community, which respects the dignity and uniqueness of all of God's children. To foster a school environment where all students are educated in a safe and caring atmosphere, all Archdiocesan schools will follow established procedures for bullying prevention, intervention, and response.

Harassment of students on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, and sexual orientation are also addressed under the Archdiocesan Student Harassment Policy in the Code of Conduct. Suspected abuse or neglect of students is addressed under the Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth.

"Bullying, harassment, or intimidation" means intentional conduct, including written, verbal, or physical conduct or an intentional electronic communication, that:

- a. Creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance or with a student's physical or psychological well-being and:
 - i. Is motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, or physical or mental ability or disability; or
 - ii. Is sexual in nature; or
 - iii. Is threatening or seriously intimidating; and
- b. Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Electronic technology means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including a telephone, cellular phone, computer, pager, etc.

Retaliation means an act of reprisal or revenge, i.e., getting back at a person for an act he/she committed (such as reporting misconduct).

Reporting forms are located in the main office and on the school's website.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Maryland law requires that all educators and other school employees, including volunteers, report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and the family may be helped. Our school policy supports Maryland laws in this regard and requires that all school staff report suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services, Protective Services Division, and/or the local police department, as well as to the Principal.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Students who reside in the State of Pennsylvania are provided the option of being bused to private school Out of State. Please contact your local school district to discuss specific details. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to provide St. Mary Catholic School details of your agreement with the other school district, as well as provide SMCS with the bus driver's name and contact information.

EMERGENCY CARDS

Emergency card information for each child is to be kept current. It is imperative that we have an emergency card for each child and the School is informed immediately of any change in address or telephone number. Children will only be released to the person(s) designated on the emergency card, unless otherwise instructed by the custodial parent/guardian.

Parents whose phone numbers are unlisted must give the school either the unlisted number or a number where the parent(s) can be reached. It is essential that the school have this information in case of an emergency. It will be kept in the strictest confidence. Any change of phone number or home address is to be given to the school office and homeroom teacher in writing within one week after change is effective.

CRISIS INTERVENTION PLAN/ FIRE AND SAFETY DRILLS

St. Mary Catholic School has a crisis management plan that is reviewed and revised annually. Staff members are informed of procedures for emergency situations including injuries, fires, and tornadoes. Fire drills and emergency evacuation procedures are practiced during the school year. Fire exit notices are posted in every room. Students and adults are instructed to leave the building quickly and silently and to report to a pre-designated area. If there are extreme weather conditions at the time of a non-emergency dismissal, the students will remain in the building until it is safe to commence the dismissal procedure. If, during the course of the school day, the school building is rendered unsafe for the students, the children will evacuate to the Hagerstown Police Department (50 N Burhans Blvd., Hagerstown, MD 21740) until the school building is once again declared safe. An Emergency Response Manual specific to *St. Mary Catholic School* is available for parent/guardian review. Please contact the administration.

In accordance with the state law, fire drills are conducted on a regular basis. Students are instructed by the classroom teacher regarding the procedure and exits to be used for the fire drill. Signs are posted in all classrooms advising route of exit in the event of an emergency. Absolute silence must be maintained during a fire drill. In addition to fire drills, the following drills shall be conducted annually: evacuation; shelter in place; reverse evacuation; lock down; drop, cover, and hold; and severe weather.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

St. Mary Catholic School follows the announcement for Washington County Public Schools. If Washington County calls a Two-Hour Delay on one of our scheduled 12:00 P.M. DISMISSAL DAYS, the 12:00 dismissal is canceled. Students report to school two hours late and are dismissed at 2:55 P.M. The Principal will send an email alert to families through the SwiftK12 System.

INSURANCE

Forms will be distributed early in the school year explaining the school accident insurance (optional). The following procedures will be used for filing claims.

1. Accidents must be reported to the office and form obtained.
2. Form must be completed by a doctor or hospital.
3. Form must be returned to the school office WITH ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE.
4. The principal will review, sign and mail the form from school.

MEDIA RELEASE

By signing the Receipt of Handbook Agreement, I, the legal guardian, consent to the use of my child's photographic image/voice for use in any marketing/advertising materials or programs created by the Archdiocese of Baltimore Department of Catholic Schools Office of Marketing or associated Catholic Schools. Mediums used include but are not limited to: publications, brochures, posters, fliers, social media and advertising campaign featuring broadcast (TV or radio), web pages, outdoor billboards and/or print ads in various publications throughout the Archdiocese of Baltimore Catholic Schools geographic area. I also consent to the use of my child's physical image and/or vocal talents in the case of broadcast (TV, video or radio) interviews or filming. I release any claim to or control over the photographs/vocal or visual talents regarding their production, use or placement in said marketing campaigns/materials. I further understand that if I wish to rescind this agreement, I may do so at any time by sending a letter to the principal, who will immediately notify the respective individuals. The requested rescission will take effect upon receipt of the principal's notification.

PARKING/TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES

Students are only to be released to custodial parents or those adults listed on emergency contact forms. Students should never be allowed to leave school in an UBER, Lift, or any private transportation company.

PRIMARY LOT

DO NOT OPEN VEHICLE GATES. These gates are closed for the safety of the children.

- The area in front of the parish garage is **NOT** for parking.
- Cars must **NOT** park alongside the side of the fence or gates on Wareham Alley while waiting to pick up students.
- Do not park in parking spaces across the alley which belong exclusively to the health clinic.
- PARENTS MAY **NOT** DRIVE ON THE PRIMARY LOT AT ANY TIME BEFORE DISMISSAL UNLESS PERMISSION IS GIVEN BY THE PRINCIPAL.
- **Afternoon pick up for students and siblings in Grades PK - 2nd.** When parking in the primary lot, please fill in the area in front of the parish center, and then make five (5) rows across the parking lot stopping at the yellow poles. Please fill the lot completely without booking the gates and keeping the alley clear at all times.

WALNUT PARKING LOT

- When parking in the Walnut Street lot, obey the parking sign regulations and also the direction arrows.
- These directives are for the safety of all; there is ample parking on the Walnut Street Parking Lot.
- **DO NOT PARK BETWEEN THE RED CURB AREA ON THE WALNUT STREET PARKING LOT.**
- Do not park in the area of the Walnut Street parking lot which is to the RIGHT of the entrance as you enter the lot. That, too, is for exclusive use by health clinic employees and patrons. Likewise, visitors and employees of the health clinic are not allowed to use the church/school portion of the Walnut Street lot.
- **Afternoon pick up for students in Grades 3rd - 8th.**

Please be courteous to the police officers at all times. We count on the surveillance and vigilance the police provide to our school grounds during the course of the school day.

REVIEW OF RECORDS BY PARENT/GUARDIAN

St. Mary Catholic School, upon proper notification, allows parents or legal guardians to review the child's complete record in the presence of the principal or his delegate. If the custodial parent can show the school a court order denying access to the noncustodial

parent, then the school may deny access. Otherwise, the records must be made available to both parents.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

St. Mary Catholic School reserves the right to search school property (e.g., lockers, desks), a student's belongings, and areas under the student's control in order to enforce school policies, rules and regulations or otherwise to preserve a safe and orderly learning environment.

CONFLICT SITUATIONS

Conflicts are a normal and healthy part of living and growing. The Administration will implement acceptable conflict resolution techniques to work towards a solution.

STAND/VIRTUS

The Archdiocese of Baltimore and *St. Mary Catholic School* are committed to providing a safe environment for children. Our procedures for volunteering in schools require that a volunteer who will have substantial contact with children must complete screening and training procedures that are outlined on the www.archbalt.org website.

The current and effective version of the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Child and Youth Protection Policies and Procedures, including the *Statement of Policy for the Protection of Children & Youth* and the *Code of Conduct for Church Personnel of the Archdiocese of Baltimore*, which incorporates any revisions to the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Child and Youth Protection Policies and Procedures that may be made from time to time, is available on the Child and Youth Protection page of the Archdiocese of Baltimore's website and on the Archdiocese of Baltimore's online compliance management system, VIRTUS. Because paper/printed copies of the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Child and Youth Protection Policies and Procedures may be inaccurate or out of date, only the version of the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Child and Youth Protection Policies and Procedures posted on the Archdiocese of Baltimore's website and *STAND/ VIRTUS* may be relied upon.

STUDENT RECORDS

Student records are maintained in the school office or a designated administrative area. Access to records is governed by the Records Policy.

FERPA POLICY

St. Mary Catholic School complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. In general, FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to education records. (The rights granted to parents under FERPA automatically pass to the student when the student turns 18 or enrolls in college.) These rights and related procedures of *St. Mary Catholic School* are as follows:

- Parents have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the School. Parents should submit to the Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School will make arrangements for access and notify the parent of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- Parents have the right to request that the School correct records they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents wishing to request an amendment of the student's records should write to the Principal and clearly identify the part of the record they believe is inaccurate or misleading and the information they believe should be included in a corrected record. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested, the School will notify the parent of the decision and the parent's right to request a hearing.

- Parents generally have the right to consent in writing to disclosures of information from a student's education record. However, there are certain exceptions to the consent requirement, including disclosures under the following conditions:
 - To School officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information. A school official is a person employed by the School or the Archdiocese as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff); a person or company with whom the School has contracted to provide a service (e.g., attorney); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities or duties to the School.
 - To other schools to which a student is transferring.
 - In connection with financial aid under certain circumstances.
 - To specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
 - To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.
 - To accrediting organizations.
 - In order to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
 - To appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.

The School also may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent unless a parent objects in writing. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include this type of information in certain publications. Examples of such publications include a playbill, showing the student's role in a drama production; the annual yearbook; honor roll or other recognition lists; graduation programs; and sports activity sheets.

The School has designated the following as directory information:

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Honors and awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level
- Parents who do not want the School to disclose the above directory information without their prior written consent must notify the Principal, in writing by September 15.
- A log must be maintained of each request for access to and each disclosure of educational record information other than disclosure to parents or students 18 or older or school officials. The log should contain the name of the person(s), the date, and the legitimate interests the person had in requesting or obtaining the information.
- Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by St. Mary Catholic School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-8520.

VISITORS—RAPTOR VISITOR MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

In order to ensure a safe environment for our children, all school doors will remain locked during the school day. ALL visitors must enter the building through the front door at 218

W. Washington Street and present a valid government issued identification card, such as a driver's license, that will be scanned through the Raptor Visitor Management System before receiving an identification badge for access to other areas in the school.

LATE ARRIVALS/EARLY DEPARTURES

If a child is taken out of school after school has begun, he/she must have a note from a parent/guardian and must be picked up in the school office. If the child is returned the same day, he/she must be returned through the school office and signed back in. The person picking up a student in the office must sign the register. No child will be allowed to meet a ride outside when leaving for any reason during the school hours.

FAMILY

CHANGE OF INFORMATION

Please notify the school office immediately in writing whenever your address, phone number, e-mail address or parish affiliation changes. If you have an unpublished number, please advise us. We will honor your request and keep it confidential.

CHANGE IN NAME OR FAMILY STATUS

If there is a change in the family status/or the change of a child's name, it is important that the school be informed promptly of the change. In case of a change of custody, a copy of the portion of the court order that describes the custody arrangements must be on file with the school.

COMMUNICATIONS

In the best interest of students, the school welcomes and encourages communication between parents and teachers. Whenever a situation occurs that causes concern, the concern should be addressed first at the level at which the situation arose. Please contact your child's teacher directly by email or phone to schedule a mutually convenient time to meet.

Parents whose phone numbers are unlisted must give the school either the unlisted number or a number where the parent(s) can be reached. It is essential that the school have this information in case of an emergency. It will be kept in the strictest confidence. Any change of phone number or home address is to be given to the school office and homeroom teacher immediately.

The following means of communication are used by the School to keep parents informed regarding school policy and children's progress:

1. Parent/Student Handbook—Each family receives a copy of our policy handbook. It should be thoroughly reviewed so that the regulations are understood by all. You are required to sign and return receipt of handbook stating you have read, your child/ren have read, and understand all therein contained.
2. Newsletters/Memos—At the beginning of each month (and often in between) a newsletter/memo will be sent to each family electronically repeating important calendar dates and announcing school activities.
3. School Calendars—By the beginning of each month, a calendar will be sent electronically featuring important dates and events of the upcoming month. A School Calendar is also posted on the School Website.
4. School Web Site—www.stmarycatholicschool.org.
5. Email—All members of the SMCS Faculty and Staff have a stmarycatholicschool.org email account which they check on a daily basis. Email is an excellent tool that enables parents and teachers to stay in touch.
6. Parent/Teacher Conferences—If you wish to confer with a teacher, please send a note/email to that teacher stating the topic and possible dates that you can meet. Teachers are required to respond promptly, either by phone, note, or e-mail, with a date for the conference. Without an appointment, parents are not to go to the

classroom and expect that the teacher has time for a conference. Our teachers are involved with many activities and duties before and after school. Before going to a classroom for a conference appointment, sign in at the office. We thank you for your cooperation.

7. Teachers' Notes--From time to time a teacher will send home a note with important information for you. Please acknowledge receipt of these notes.
8. Principal Conferences--The Principal is always willing and ready to listen to any concerns you might have. It is suggested, however, that classroom problems be first discussed with the individual teacher.
9. St. Mary Home and School Association--All parents are expected to be active members. Your interest and support are vital to our efforts of providing a quality education for your children. Dues are per family rate. (See HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION)
10. SwiftK12 System --St. *Mary Catholic School* utilizes the SwiftK12 System to send emails, text messages, and/or telephone messages to parents regarding important reminders, upcoming events, and delayed openings, closings, or early dismissals.

In the event of an emergency that would impact the health, safety and welfare of our students or a situation that compromises the safety of our school facility or grounds the school will notify parents through the SwiftK12 System. In the event of such an emergency, parents will simultaneously receive a text message, a phone call to their home, and an email alert to the phone numbers and email addresses that were submitted to our school on the SwiftK12 System form. This system will only be used in the event of a true emergency.

COMMUNICATION FROM HOMEROOM PARENTS OR OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

All communication between homeroom parents or organizations and families must be given to the homeroom teacher (or where applicable the administration). The principal will receive and approve all notices prior to distribution.

CONFERENCES

Conferences are scheduled for all parents each October; thereafter, conferences are held at the teacher's or parent's request. Every parent is required to attend a conference with each child's teacher at least once a year.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

All grievances are handled at the local level. Parents should first meet with the teacher whom the student was with at the time of the incident. If necessary, the parent and teacher can meet with the principal. The school board is not included in the grievance process.

FAMILY DIRECTORY

The Family Directory of *St. Mary Catholic School* will be provided to school families in September. *The Family Directory of St. Mary Catholic School* is the proprietary information and property of *St. Mary Catholic School*. In exchange for receiving a copy of the Family Directory, you agree to keep the Family Directory confidential and not to disseminate the Family Directory or any information contained herein to any other persons, businesses, or other third parties without the express written permission of *St. Mary Catholic School*. The unauthorized dissemination of information in violation of this privacy policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including withdrawal of your child and possible criminal and/or civil legal action against you.

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (H.S.A.)

H.S.A. is an organization that:

- helps parents, school administration, and faculty develop a mutual understanding and appreciation of the mission of Catholic education as lived in the local Catholic School within the Archdiocese of Baltimore
- provides a formal avenue for parents/caregivers of current students to participate with the faculty and administration in their children's education
- develops supportive systems for communication and service to the local Catholic School
- works with the Principal to provide programs and processes that engage the School families in spiritual, educational, outreach, social, legislative, public relations, service, and fundraising activities that further the mission of the School
- collaborates with the other parish, civic, and School organizations
- is accountable to the Pastor of the parish and the Principal of the School
- provides positive and energetic communication for the Administration and School community
- displays positive Public Relations/Marketing on behalf of the School
- supports financial endeavors for the School
- observes the School's mission and vision
- selects a representative to serve on the School Board

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

Emergency card information for each child is to be kept current. Children will only be released to the person(s) designated on the emergency card, unless otherwise instructed by the custodial parent/guardian.

Non-custodial parents are welcome to review their child's records unless there is a court order or legal agreement prohibiting such access. The school may notify the custodial parent of a request to review records.

(N) School does not allow a non-custodial parent physical access to his/her child during school hours or on school premises unless the custodial parent has consented or the school has a court order permitting access.

PARENT/GUARDIAN HOMEWORK RESPONSIBILITIES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

Parents/guardians are expected to see that their children fulfill their homework responsibilities. If home assignments cannot be completed because of home conditions, e.g., sickness in the family, death of a relative, etc., students may defer doing the prescribed work, but a written explanation should be provided to the teacher and administration in order to obtain permission. Attendance at sporting events, extra-curricular activities and/or practices is not considered an excusable reason for not having homework done on time. At all grade levels, homework will be included in determining the subject area grade on the report card. When a teacher notices that a student is consistently missing assignments, he/she will notify the parents and offer appropriate suggestions. Please know that missing assignments will negatively affect the final grade.

We ask that parents/guardians support the teachers and fulfill their supervisory responsibilities by attending to the following:

- Review the assigned work with the child.
- Provide a quiet, well-equipped place as well as the time required.
- Provide assistance to the child as needed and help him/her plan his/her time so as to complete long-term assignments by the due date.
- Emphasize the need for study.

While it is the students' ultimate responsibility to write down the daily assignments in their daily planners, homework for students is available in Google Classroom.

PARENTAL SUPPORT/COMPLIANCE

In cases of serious or repeated noncompliance by a parent with school policies or procedures, the administration reserves the right to withdraw that parent's child/children from the school.

FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES

HSA FALL AUCTION EVENT

The Home and School Association hosts an adult-only event in the Fall each year. The event is always filled with fun and good company. This one event is expected to fund the HSA budget as well as provide tuition offset support and enhancements to the school. All families are asked to support this major event in one way or another.

RUMMAGE SALE

The opportunity to donate your unwanted treasures and earn money for *St. Mary Catholic School* happens once a year. A grand event that surpasses even the largest yard sale, the SMCS Annual Rummage Sale offers a service to the community and a successful fundraiser for the school.

RACE 4 EDUCATION

Pre-K through eighth grade students participate in this fundraising endeavor that helps support technology. Students have family and friends sponsor their participation

PIXIE SHOP

As Christmas approaches, many wonderful parent volunteer elves host the Pixie Shop. Students from all grades are invited to shop for those special people on their lists.

COMMUNITY BUILDING EVENTS

THANKSGIVING LUNCH

This *St. Mary Catholic School* tradition takes place during lunch time in November. Families are invited to join their students for a catered lunch. Tickets must be purchased prior to the event.

FAMILY BINGO

Come enjoy dinner and an evening of fun for the whole family. Meal includes pizza and drinks. Following dinner we will play 12 bingo games for great kid-friendly prizes. Registration forms are sent home prior to the event and are limited to the first 50 families.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK (January 29 – February 4)

As a school community, we are given so many opportunities to come together and celebrate Catholic education at *St. Mary Catholic School* during Catholic Schools Week. The Pancake Breakfast, Career Day, the Dignitaries Luncheon, the Volunteer Reception, Parent Visitation Day, Student Appreciation Day, the Talent Show, Grandparent Day, Teacher Appreciation Day, and First Friday Mass encourage us to gather as a community and reaffirm why Catholic education at SMCS is so important for our children. Faith, academics, service, family, and tradition are core components to our mission as a school and are evidenced throughout the week.

OPTIONAL FUNDRAISERS

The SMHSA sponsors other fundraisers such as restaurant nights, Yankee Candles, Square One Art, and Gertrude Hawk Candy during the school year in which participation is encouraged but optional.

VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT POLICY

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK

An effective school is a partnership among parents, students and the school. Service is an essential and fun opportunity to work closely with the staff members and to get to know other parents within the *St. Mary Catholic School* (SMCS) community. Donating your time can be incredibly rewarding and it is a wonderful way to have a positive influence in your child's life and to build our school community.

We are grateful to, and dependent upon, families who, through their gifts of time, treasure, and talent, enhance the quality of education we are able to provide our students. At SMCS, we believe that giving of ourselves to others is one of the most fundamental concepts a student can learn and that it is one of the best lessons a Catholic School education can teach. We firmly believe that we as a community must lead by example. This is our *Many Hands Make Light Work* policy.

The service opportunities at SMCS are boundless. Opportunities are available during the days, evenings, and weekends throughout the year. Specific events will be advertised via email (www.SignUpGenius.com) for specific shifts, donations, etc.

In accordance with the Archdiocese of Baltimore, SMCS requires that anyone who will have substantial contact with children meet the Archdiocesan **STAND/VIRTUS** requirements. The knowledge one gains from this program allows us to better provide a safe environment for children.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES & FINANCES

APPLICATION FOR ADMITTANCE

Applications for admissions will be available beginning February 1 for the next school year through our online registration platform, SchoolAdmin. Notices will be given through the parish bulletins, newspaper, radio (WJEJ morning school news), and memos sent home as the dates get closer.

REQUIRED AT TIME OF APPLICATION

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate (if Catholic)
- Copy of previous year's progress/report card, as well as current report card
- Copy of standardized test scores (if applicable)
- Letter of confirmation of registration/participation from home parish (if applicable)
- \$100.00 non-refundable application fee for Pre-Kindergarten through eighth grade students. (If the student is accepted, an enrollment fee of \$250 per student is due at this time.)

REQUIRED BY OPENING OF SCHOOL

- Copy of up-to-date immunizations records (submit with application if possible)
- Proof of physical examination within last 12 months
- Completed Health Assessment forms

St. Mary Catholic School has a principal obligation to parishioners who are practicing Catholics. Priority admission is given to children with siblings already attending *St. Mary Catholic School*. New students will be admitted as follows:

1. First priority will be given to children of **REGISTERED AND PARTICIPATING** members of *St. Mary/ St. Michael* who follow our application schedule and procedure (see above).
2. Second priority will be given to children of **REGISTERED AND PARTICIPATING** members of other Catholic parishes who follow our registration

- schedule and procedure (see above).
3. Third priority will be given to children of families who are **NON-REGISTERED/NON- PRACTICING CATHOLICS AND OTHER DENOMINATIONS** who follow our application schedule and procedure (see above).
 4. Kindergarten (must be 5 years old by September 1st of the kindergarten year):
Archdiocese of Baltimore: Educational readiness is the primary criteria in determining the acceptance of a student into the Kindergarten program.
Purpose:
* To comply with state law
* To ensure the readiness of the child for school.
 5. Pre-Kindergarten (must be 4 years old by September 1st of the pre-kindergarten year): Archdiocese of Baltimore: Educational readiness is the primary criteria in determining the acceptance of a student into the pre-kindergarten program.
Purpose:
*To comply with state law
* To ensure the readiness of the child for school.
 6. All new students are given a two-month evaluation period. If during this time the school is unable to meet the needs of the student(s), the parent(s) will be asked to place their child in another school. Such recommendations would only occur after conferences with the parent(s) and after exhausting all other methods of help.

TUITION

There is a different scale for:

- Registered/Participating (must use church envelopes or online giving) members of *St. Mary/ St. Michael* for at least one year. The pastor determines if a family is eligible for the *St. Mary's* tuition rate.
- Registered/Participating (must use church envelopes or online giving) members of other Catholic parishes
- Non-Registered/Non-Participating Catholics and members of other denominations

TUITION VARIES FROM YEAR TO YEAR.

If a change of parish is made, written notification to the school must be received from the new parish.

The school is subsidized by St. Mary Catholic Parish.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

- Annual: Lump sum payment is due in July
- Bi-annual: One-half of the total tuition is due in July & one-half is due in December
- Quarterly: Payments are due in July, October, January, and April
- Monthly: Payment is due on a ten-month schedule, July through April

St. Mary Catholic School uses FACTS Management Company, ("FACTS") to manage the tuition collection process. All school families are required to pay tuition through FACTS. For payments charged to a debit or credit card through FACTS, there is an additional fee of 2.95%. A processing fee of \$30 will be charged by FACTS and an additional processing fee of \$25 by the School for any checks or ACH payments returned by the bank.

Payments are due **on or before the 10th** of the month, regardless of Method of Payment.

There is no grace period. A late fee of \$25 will be charged by the School if a payment is late.

Eighth grade students must be paid in full by **May 15** or they will not be allowed to

participate in graduation ceremonies, and their diplomas, in addition to the progress report and transcripts, will be withheld until paid in full.

Money sent to school (fundraisers, field trips, bus tickets, stationery, etc.) must be in a sealed envelope with the following information on the outside: family name, oldest child's name and homeroom, date, purpose for the money.

When a student withdraws voluntarily or is asked to leave after completing part of an academic trimester, tuition for the entire trimester is due in full. In cases where tuition for multiple trimesters has been paid in advance, tuition will be refunded for unused whole trimesters only.

If there is a financial problem, contact the principal. Most parishes have a tuition assistance program in effect.

St. Mary Catholic School reserves the right to withhold any official school record, including progress reports and diplomas, to a parent or other educational institutions until all tuition, fees, and any other financial obligations to *St. Mary Catholic School* are satisfied in full. Additionally, the school reserves the right to expel any student whose tuition is unpaid for more than one month.

Under the directives of the Superintendent of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Division of Schools, no student can be admitted to *St. Mary Catholic School* until previous obligations to other educational institutions are met.

TUITION GRANTS AND AID

FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment conducts the financial need analysis for *St. Mary Catholic School*. All families (Catholic and non-Catholic) are encouraged to apply. Families applying for financial aid will need to complete an application and submit the necessary supporting documentation to FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment by February 28 to be considered for Archdiocesan Grants & Aid, or by April 1 for tuition assistance from the parish. Applicants should apply online at www.stmarycatholicsschool.org (Select Admissions tab; click on Financing Education) or at <https://online.factsmtg.com/aid>.

TRANSFERS/WITHDRAWAL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

St. Mary Catholic School reserves the right to refuse to provide any official school record, including report cards and diplomas, to a parent or other educational institution until all tuition, fees, and other financial obligations to *St. Mary Catholic School* are satisfied in full. *St. Mary Catholic School* will consider requests for exceptions to this rule on an individual basis only if it judges extraordinary circumstances exist.

RE-REGISTRATION FOR CURRENT STUDENTS

Re-registration for returning students for the next school year takes place in January through Finals Site Enrollment (formerly named SchoolAdmin). The re-registration fee (nonrefundable) is \$300 per family and is due at this time. The fee increases to \$350 per student if registration deadline is missed.

SCRIP PROGRAM

SCRIP is a gift card program that generates "free money" to be used toward your tuition costs. For every purchase, a percentage is given back to you in a tuition account. A schedule of order dates will be supplied at the beginning of the school year. Your profit is deducted from your tuition twice a year, or whenever you request it. For more information visit www.shopwithscrip.com.

ANNUAL GIVING FUND

Each year, SMCS conducts an Annual Giving Campaign and depends upon generous support from individuals for contributions. As members of our school community,

faculty, parents, grandparents, parishioners, and alumni have a vested interest in providing our students with the skills and resources necessary to be successful twenty-first century learners. Generous donations received from the past ten campaigns were used for tuition support and upgrades in our programs rather than for general operating expenses. Through generous donations and the support of St. Mary Catholic Church, our students have benefitted from upgrades in technology, new textbooks, new science equipment, web-filtering software, and many more enhancements for our educational programs while keeping the increase in tuition costs to families at a minimum. All upgrades enhanced teaching, learning, and communication—all benefiting our children. Please make a donation each year and support our students.

RAFFLE TICKETS

Our students participate on a family basis in a THREE-PHASE MANDATORY FUNDRAISER. Three times during the school year, each family is required to sell seven (7) tickets OR pay \$210 (\$70 per phase) to opt out of the mandatory fundraiser. Families may choose to pay the \$210 opt-out up front; otherwise, families are expected to pay \$70 by October 1, \$70 by January 1, and \$70 by April 1. A \$10 late fee will be assessed to each payment not received on time for each phase of the mandatory fundraiser.

RIGHT TO AMEND THE HANDBOOK

St. Mary Catholic School is a co-ed elementary school for grades PreK - 8. St. Mary Catholic School reserves the right to amend the Parent/Student Handbook and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be notified of any changes made. This Parent/Student Handbook is an informative booklet for parents and students setting forth the rules and policies of the school and is not intended as an expressed or implied contract.

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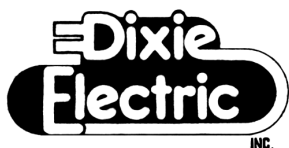
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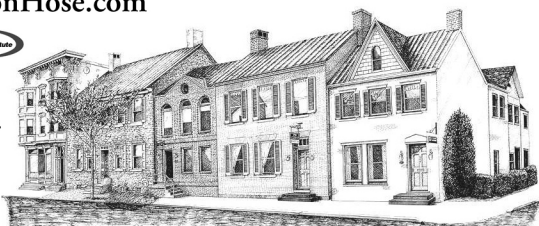
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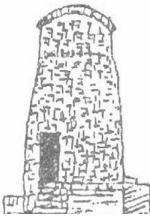
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SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

2023-2024 ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Summer Hours:
9-2pm Monday - Thursday
Fridays - Closed

JULY 2023						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

01 - 02: **No School**
03: School Resumes
12: **Noon Dismissal** - Professional
15: **No School** - MLK Holiday
16 - 18: Standardized Testing
27: Pancake Breakfast
29 - 2/2: Catholic School Week

JANUARY 2024						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

21: Teachers Return
23: School Extravaganza (6-8)
23: Used Uniform Sale (6-8)
24: Convocation
28: First Day of School
28: **Noon Dismissal**

AUGUST 2023						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

02: **Noon Dismissal**
14: Ash Wednesday
16: **Noon Dismissal** - Professional
19: **No School** - Presidents Day

FEBRUARY 2024						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		

01: Opening School Mass
04: **No School** - Labor Day
18 - 20: Standardized Testing

SEPTEMBER 2023						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

01: **No School** - Professional
05: ACRE Testing (Grade 5-8)
08: **Noon Dismissal**
08: Trimester 2 Ends
28: **No School**
29: **No School** - Easter Break

MARCH 2024						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

05: School Photos
06: **No School**
26: **Noon Dismissal**
27: **No School**

OCTOBER 2023						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

08: School Resumes
23 - 25: Standardized Testing

APRIL 2024						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

01: All Saints Day Mass
08: School Photo Retake
15: Trimester 1 Ends
20 - 21: **Noon Dismissal** -
Parent Conferences
22 - 24: **No School** -
Thanksgiving
29: High School Placement Test

NOVEMBER 2023						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

27: **No School** - Memorial Day
31: **Noon Dismissal** - 8th
Grade Graduation

MAY 2024						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

08: Immaculate Conception Mass
12/21 - 1/2: **Closed** - Christmas
Holiday

DECEMBER 2023						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
						1
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

06: **Noon Dismissal** - Last
Day for Students
07: Last Day for Faculty

JUNE 2023						
S	M	T	W	H	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

EVENTS

SCHOOL CLOSED

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