

Middle School Handbook 2016-2017

We, as a middle school team, have compiled together an explanation on what your child's middle school year will look like, and how your child will be successful each day. Please review with your child, have you and your student sign the last page, and return just the bottom portion to school by Monday, August 21st (please keep the handbook for your personal reference.) We look forward to a great year together! Thank you!



Expectations: We are firm believers that parents are the first and most important teachers in their child's life. Our role as educators is to be part of a team that will facilitate your child's learning throughout the year. Our goal is to meet higher standards, as we want our students to do as well. It is a blessing to be able to teach within the Catholic Faith and we feel honored to be part of the Saint Mary's community.

As middle schoolers, whether your student is just beginning their 6th grade year or going into their last 8th grade year, it is a blessing and a calling to be part of the "upstairs" and be leaders and examples to the younger students. Their behavior, talk, leadership, respect, and way they carry themselves **MUST** set a positive example at all times. We will constantly be reminding and guiding your children to do just that.

Communication



Communications: Please reference the website/grade book for any questions you may have. Each teacher will update their webpage every week so you are aware of your child's learning, assignments, and homework. If your child is missing something or has a low grade, please ask your child first about it. If there is still confusion, have your child ask their teacher about the assignment/grade. This helps your child learn self-responsibility! If you are still unsure, you are more than welcome to email the class teacher with your concerns and we will reply to you as soon as we can. Each teacher's email can be found on the website, and at the end of the handbook.



Behavior: All teachers at St. Mary's, whether new or not, know that the quality of children we teach here are top-notch! They have been instructed by you as their parents and us as their teachers to always behave in the most positive way possible. Because of this continued guidance from teachers and parents, the middle school teachers have devised a demerit system to hold the students accountable for their daily actions, responses, and responsibilities. The demerit system for behavior is explained below:

When a student reaches 4 demerits, the student will receive an after school detention to be served on the Thursday following. This detention slip will go home with the student and will need to be signed and returned the next day. Each time the student reaches another 4 demerits, another detention will be assigned. (i.e. 4 demerits, then 8 demerits, then 12 demerits...) Demerits will accrue each quarter, and will start over at 0 at the beginning of a new

quarter. If a student reaches a total of 16 demerits (meaning the student has served 3 detentions previously in that quarter for their 4th, 8th, and 12th demerit), the 16th demerit will result in a Saturday detention. (Please refer to the parent student handbook for information on this.)

These demerits will be recorded on Renweb, and parents will be able to see these on their Renweb parent connection when the connection becomes available. Please ask your child to explain any demerit to you first before contacting the teacher if needed. This teaches self-responsibility and self-control. Minor infractions (such as chewing gum, uniform violation, talking in line, lack of materials, tardy to class, class disruption) will incur 1 demerit. At teacher discretion, the number of demerits an infraction incurs may increase depending on the severity and the frequency of the infraction. Students will be notified of a demerit given when the infraction occurs.



Attendance: The SMCS attendance policy is located on the schools site. Your child is responsible for any missed assignments. If you need to make any special arrangements, please communicate with the teacher.



Homework: Homework is a necessary part of your child's education. Homework is important to give the student adequate practice and time to comprehend and learn the material outside of their class time. However, we do realize that many of these talented students have extracurricular activities that do not allow them much free time after school. We want every child to have time for their activities, dinner, family time, and early bed before their next day begins. The middle school teachers are in constant communication to ensure that each child has a fair amount of homework and study time after school.



Grading: We will follow the grading scale as set forth in the SMCS_handbook:

- A 90%-100%
- B 80%-90%
- C 75%-79%
- D 70%-74%
- F 69% or below

Late Work: your child will be responsible for turning in each and every assignment he/she has been assigned. There will be 10pts deducted per day that the assignment is late.



Mass and Special Activities: We are able to celebrate Mass every Friday, Holy Day of Obligation and other special days. Please be early if you are an Altar server, lector or have any

other formal participation. **BOYS:** Please wear a tie and belt with your uniform on Mass days. **GIRLS:** please wear your Mass uniform on Mass days.



Service Hours: SMCS has always had a high standard for teaching the importance of service for our Church and community. There will be a "Service Record Log" that will be sent home to record your child's service hours. There is also a template you can print at home from my SMCS page. Half of the required service hours will be due at Christmas break, the other half will be due in May before the end of school.

Bits & Pieces:

1. **LUNCH** - your child's lunchtime is 12:30-1:00 each day. We understand this may be later than he/she is used to eating, and we know that these students get hungry! If your child would like to, they may bring a healthy (please!) snack to eat during morning recess so they will be able to focus in each class before lunch.
2. **Planners** - your child is required to purchase a planner through the school to carry with them each day. This will help them keep track of assignments and homework. Students who struggle with organization are strongly encouraged to be diligent in using a planner - this will not only help themselves, but will help parents and teachers as well. Please check your students planners to see their daily classwork/homework. They are responsible for writing these down.

STUDENT PLEDGE

1. **I will conduct myself like a Christian at all times.** I will treat myself and others with respect, and will expect to be treated fairly. The words I say are real, they are powerful, and I am responsible for them.
2. **I am a free thinker.** I understand that I will be challenged to think. I will be honest if I do not know an answer. I will not be afraid to ask questions, take risks, express my opinions or offer an educated guess.
3. **I will take ownership of my workspace.** I will hold myself, my classmates and my teacher accountable for keeping the classroom clean, neat and orderly. I will do my part to clean up and organize after each class period.
4. **I will take ownership of my work.** I will make every effort to turn in my assignments completed and on time.
 - a. If I cannot complete an assignment on time, I will inform my teacher as soon as I realize I will miss the deadline.
 - b. If I must miss a deadline, I understand that my teacher will consider my explanation but does not have to grant me extra time, even if I feel I have a good reason.
5. **I will take ownership of myself.** I will accept the consequences for my actions, both good and bad.
6. **I will have integrity.** I am responsible for my own work. I may help my classmates when it is appropriate, but I will not do their work for them, nor will I ask a classmate to do my work for me. I will not cheat.
7. **I will be proactive.** If I have a disagreement with a classmate, we will try to resolve it peacefully before bringing it to the teacher's desk.
8. **I will be courageous.** I will stand for what is right, even if I am standing alone.

Thank you for your continued support of SMCS teachers and students. We look forward to a great 2016-2017 with your middle schooler!

Sincerely,

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After you have read and discussed the handbook with your student, please sign below, cut along the line, and send back with your student. Thank you!

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Date