

# Parent–Student Handbook

2018–2019

St. Mary's Catholic School  
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**St. Mary's Catholic School is a Catholic Parochial School of the Austin Diocese School District.**

**The school is dedicated to the Christian education of boys and girls from Pre-kindergarten through Grade 8.**

**St. Mary's Catholic School is accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED) through the Texas Commissioner of Education of the Texas Education Agency.**

**Member of the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA)  
Participant of the Education Service Center, Region 12**

**St. Mary's Catholic School complies with all applicable State and Federal laws on discrimination. Preference may be given in admission of Catholic students.**

**The Principal and School Pastor retain the right to amend this handbook for just cause at any time. Parents receive prompt notification of any and all policy changes made during the school year.**

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### **Mission of St. Mary's Catholic School**

**The Mission of St. Mary's Catholic School is the commitment to academic excellence and the spiritual development of our students toward a life of prayer, service and love.**

### **Prayer for Our School**

**Be it known to all who enter here, that Christ is the reason for this school. He is the unseen, but ever present, teacher in its classrooms. He is the model for its faculty and the inspiration of its students. Amen**

### **St. Mary's School Song**

To the tune of  
WHEN THE SAINTS GO MARCHING IN

One hundred years, have come and gone  
One hundred years have come and gone  
The light of learning shines at St. Mary's,  
Shines with brilliance true and strong.

And when the falcons stand out tall  
And when the falcons stand out tall  
How I am proud to be of St. Mary's,  
Stand up for falcons proud and tall.

The color blue, belongs to us  
The blue and white belong to us.  
How proud I am to stand up with valor,  
For Mary's color, faith and truth.

And when the blue, white banner waves,  
Under the clear blue Texas sky.  
My spirit soars to touch the future,  
Embracing all that's good and right.

One hundred years, have come and gone  
One hundred years have come and gone,  
The light of learning shines at St. Mary's  
Shines with brilliance true and strong.

### **Letter to the Parent**

**Dear Parents and Guardians,**

Welcome to our St. Mary's Catholic School Family. We are so happy you have chosen to become part of such a wonderful community. At St. Mary's Catholic School, we believe in the education of the whole child: spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally.

When you choose a Catholic school, you join a faith and academic community which provides a foundation for life. St. Mary's Catholic School is a community built on collaboration among parents, students and staff resulting in a comprehensive learning environment. Your child is in a safe and secure environment supported by school personnel who believe in their vocation to educate and love your children.

Our mission at St. Mary's Catholic School is to support and assist parents as the primary educators in the faith formation and academic achievement of their child. We provide a Christ-centered education in which Catholic identity permeates the entire curriculum, encouraging our students to reach their fullest capacity, spiritually, academically, physically and socially.

Please review the contents of this handbook and discuss important points with your child. To fit the ever changing needs of the school, certain rules and procedures may have been altered. Please be mindful of these changes and bring any concerns that you may have to our attention.

Thank you once again for your support and trust in us as we educate your children. At St. Mary's Catholic School, we live our faith, serve our community, excel in our academics and develop lifelong friendships.

God bless you,  
Mrs. Theresa Wyles, Principal

#### **Mission Statement of Catholic Schools of Texas**

The ministry of Catholic Education in general is the fulfillment of the educational mission of the Catholic Church and has as its primary goal the continuous formation of the Christian person.

As a pastoral instrument of the Church, the strength of the Catholic Schools is its ability to respond to the needs of the whole person, to serve the Church in time of transition, and to demonstrate to the world a global perspective for a peaceful and sustainable future.

The Catholic School is a unique environment in which pupils can experience the presence of the Holy Spirit. The School's focus is on the individual's spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical development. In the Catholic School, pupils and teachers are drawn to proclaim the Gospel message, to unite in worship, to respond to the needs of the community through fellowship and social justice, and to serve all people through the sharing of their spiritual gifts and temporal goods.

Intellectually, pupils are challenged to work to the best of their abilities. In a world of diversity and absolutes, pupils need to be "free" to appreciate and understand the planet Earth, the people and cultures that inhabit it, and to develop global perspectives by which lives and consciences are formed. Pupils are provided opportunities to develop basic academic and physical skills, pursue knowledge, and critically study and analyze the world in which they live.

The effective Catholic School must call its pupils to the conviction that people are more important than material gain, that justice is more important than success, that love is more important than esteem, and that collaboration unites while competition divides. The truly successful Catholic School student is not necessarily one who is successful in every endeavor, but one who accepts Christian responsibility for fulfillment of personal potential and shares these gifts with others.

*- From the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department*

## Goals of Catholic Education

- † To provide an environment in which students are enabled to build and deepen their relationship with God
- † To foster an academic culture aimed at the pursuit of truth
- † To actively promote growth in virtue

## Philosophy of Education of St. Mary's Catholic School

We believe that each child is loved by God and uniquely created for a sublime purpose. Therefore, we must help our students to love God and neighbor with a whole heart; to think, judge, and act with right reason; and to use their education to better embrace Catholic teachings and the example of Christ.

To accomplish this aim, the school strives to create a Christian atmosphere of care and concern in which all children may grow toward their full potential spiritually, morally, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically. The very nature of the child requires a coordinated education, which is the product of a cooperative effort by home, church, and school. It is through this harmonious partnership that the aim of Catholic education is achieved.

We believe that the “effective Catholic School must call its pupils to the conviction that people are more important than material gain, that justice is more important than success, that love is more important than esteem, and that collaboration unites while competition divides. The truly successful Catholic School student is not necessarily one who is successful in every endeavor, but one who accepts Christian responsibility for fulfillment of personal potential and shares these gifts with others.” (Texas Catholic Conference Education Department)

## Education Objectives of St. Mary's Catholic School

### A. The school fosters:

1. A Catholic identity through the religious atmosphere, which permeates the total instructional program.
2. Gospel values as modeled in school procedures and actions of staff and students.
3. A faith community expressed through religious experiences through classes; programs for personal spiritual formation; opportunities to worship; service to others; sacramental preparation; and the sponsoring of adult programs.
4. Active interaction between the school and parishioners.
5. The formation of behavior in accord with Christian standards.
6. Sensitivity and responsiveness to social concerns and economic justice.
7. Development of Christian attitudes towards life, human sexuality, and the family.
8. Formation of students to set goals and attain them, to be self-disciplined, responsible, responsive, compassionate, and empathetic to the feelings and needs of others, and to respect individual differences in others.

### B. The administration and staff will:

1. Communicate on a regular basis about school activities and general accomplishments.
2. Provide systematic reporting to parents about student progress.
3. Communicate expectations for student academic performance to students and parents.
4. Provide a safe and orderly environment with a clear disciplinary code.
5. Inform parents of school policies and regulations concerning rights and responsibilities of staff, students, and parents: grievance procedures; discipline code; school policies; grading system; and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
6. Provide a guidance program through all grades.
7. Provide school facilities that project a positive image and environment for teaching and learning.
8. Provide programs of instruction to meet students' diverse learning needs.
9. Develop excellence in education through compliance with TCCED and diocesan guidelines.

**C. All students should:**

1. Develop a knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and personal relationship with God as evidenced by attitude and practice.
2. Develop proficiency in language arts and mathematics in the lower grades followed by studies in advanced mathematics, technology, science, social studies, fine arts, English, and foreign language.
3. Develop higher order level thinking skills of research, analysis, evaluation, and problem solving.
4. Develop proficiency in the use of basic communication skills and technology, as well as the ability to recognize propaganda in their lives.
5. Develop skills of problem solving for integrating information and a framework within which to sort out the diverse values present today.
6. Acquire knowledge and appreciation of the culture of the ethnic groups of our American heritage.
7. Develop an understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity together with skills needed within the global community.
8. Acquire an understanding of the importance of physical and mental health in one's life by developing healthy attitudes regarding human sexuality, nutrition, and healthy life skills.
9. Acquire knowledge of the democratic process and develop an understanding of the privileges of citizenship and learn to assume its responsibilities.
10. Develop an understanding of human geography and world cultures of today.
11. Be knowledgeable in government practices, political principles and current activities suitable to grade level.
12. Be aware of the principles of consumer economics.

**Parents as Partners in Education**

As partners in the educational process at St. Mary's Catholic School we ask parents to:

- Meet all financial obligations to the school.
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school.
- Support the discipline policy and support the school in helping students take responsibilities for their actions.
- Be respectful of faculty and staff at all times.
- Actively participate in school activities.
- Inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety and health.
- Notify the school office of absences and changes in important contact information.
- Read newsletters and website to keep current on school information.
- Set rules, times and limits so your child gets to bed early on school nights, arrives at school on time and prepared, is dressed according to the school dress code, completes assignments on time and has lunch money or a nutritional lunch each day.

St. Mary's Catholic School was founded in 1897 under the name of St. Mary's Academy by Father Heckmann, pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church. Under his direction, with the active support of a dedicated group of parishioners, Divine Providence Sisters guided the pupils for several years. The Divine Providence Sisters withdrew in 1912 and not until 1919 could teaching sisters be found to continue their good work. Sisters of the Congregation of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament from Houston, Texas, began their mission at St. Mary's Catholic School in 1919 and had a presence in the school until the retirement in May 1995 of long-time librarian, Sister James Philip Davison. In 1974, Mrs. Loris Edwards became the first lay principal.

Today, the school is staffed by lay teachers, administration and staff, who, together with the clergy, parents, and students, work for its uninterrupted growth and success to the greater honor and glory of God.

### St. Mary's Catholic School Hours

**The Instructional Day Pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade: 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday**

**Pre-Kindergarten Half Day Program: 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Pick up after 12:45 will be charged for after school-care, \$20 per 15 minutes.**

St. Mary's Catholic School will not accept responsibility for supervision of students before 7:45 a.m. or after 3:45 p.m., other than through school-supervised activities such as clubs, sports, tutoring, or the Extended Day program.

#### **Extended Day Hours:**

- **7:00 a.m. to 7:45 a.m.** No charge for a.m. supervision
- **Pre-K 3 & 4 Extended Day Program: 3:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.** (offered on as needed basis) A late fee of \$20.00 per 15 minutes.
- **K-8 Extended Day Program: The Zone: 3:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the cafeteria.** Program operated through the city of Temple.
- **Each program cannot accept children on a "drop-in" basis.**

**Children who are not picked up by 3:45 p.m. will be brought to the school office. Parents will be called and expected to pick up their children immediately. We understand that there may be rare incidents where the parent is running late. (If this is the case, please call the school.) However, those who are consistently late will be billed \$20.00 for each fifteen minutes after 3:45.**

**Office Hours: 7:45 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday**

An appointment is necessary to see the Principal. School entrance doors will be locked at all times.

### Academic Program

St. Mary's Catholic School's academic program is designed to help students achieve their highest potential. The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Austin use the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) state standards, which have been adopted by the Texas State Board of Education. CSDA are accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department (TCCED), which is recognized by the Texas Education Agency. As part of the accreditation process, the Catholic schools must demonstrate teaching the Texas state standards.

In addition to skills in Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Religion, St. Mary's Catholic School incorporates other key disciplines into the curriculum. Christian Service is core to our Faith and is integrated into our school through required community service projects and volunteer hours throughout the school year. Christian service is encouraged in all grade levels and is part of the student's Religion grade in grades 4-8.

Also offered as part of the daily program are the following:  
Foreign language studies – Spanish in grades K-8  
Technology program including iPad, Chromebooks and Computer Lab utilization  
Music and band programs  
Fine Arts  
Middle School Elective program

**Extracurricular Activities for students in grades 6-8**

Extracurricular activities may include, but not be limited to, team sports, athletics, National Junior Honor Society, interscholastic competition (Private Schools Interscholastic Association meets), Student Council, Pro-Life Club, God Squad, cheerleading and church choir.

*Students must maintain passing grades (70+) in all subjects and have a **conduct grade no lower than a C** to participate in school extracurricular activities, including sports.*

PSIA competition is also open to elementary students.

**Enrichment Activities**

These include field trips, classroom presentations by outside consultants, participation in community events and programs at the Cultural Activities Center.

**Placement Level**

The Principal, in consultation with faculty and parents, determines a student’s placement level. Such decisions rest upon consideration of the student’s (1) past performance, (2) achievement test scores, when appropriate, and (3) emotional and physical needs.

**Semester Exams**

Semester exams are administered in Grades 4 through 8 at the end of each semester.

**Grading Policy**

Teachers’ grading policies are based upon class or group participation, tests, quizzes, assignments, projects, reports, and other criteria.

Students receive report cards at the end of each academic quarter (nine-week block), and a progress report at midpoint in each quarter. Paper copies will be sent home for Pre-K and Kindergarten . while all other grades will be on RenWeb. **Parents have access to web based grade book at all times.**

Parents must set up their Parent Web in order to access student grades. If questions arise during the quarter, regarding grades, it is expected that the parent will contact the child’s teacher for clarification or help. The teacher is always the first line of information regarding academics .

**Grading Codes (Pre-K and Kindergarten)**

- E - Excellent**
- G - Good**
- S - Satisfactory**
- I - Improvement/Practice needed**
- / - Not Applicable**
- NR - No Recognition**

**PR - Partial Recognition**  
**CR - Complete Recognition**

<b>Grading Codes (Grades 1-8)</b>
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	<b><u>Knowledge</u> Scholarship</b>	<b><u>Skills</u> Initiative</b>	<b><u>Skills</u> Individual Improvement</b>	<b><u>Attitudes</u> General</b>	<b><u>Attitudes</u> Cooperation</b>
<b>“A” 90-100</b>	Student exhibited an excellent understanding of the academic material.	Student showed tremendous amount of skill and initiative to complete the task required.	Student was able to exhibit a marked and significant improvement from the last grading.	Student exhibited a positive disposition and showed a high level of positive attitude in the face of challenging work.	Student exhibited a high degree of positive influence towards the group and showed excellent leadership and character.
<b>“B” 80-89</b>	Student exhibited good or above average understanding of the lesson objectives.	Student showed a high average amount of skill and showed above average ability to complete the assigned task.	Student was able to show a somewhat significant improvement from the last grading.	Student exhibited a good disposition and good attitude in the face of challenging work.	Student showed a positive influence towards the group and showed good leadership.
<b>“C” 75-79</b>	Student showed an average understanding of the lesson objectives.	Student exhibited an average amount of skill and completed the assignment satisfactorily.	Student showed some improvement as compared to the last grading.	Student’s attitude is fair and satisfactory but needs improvement.	Student was somewhat able to satisfactorily contribute positively to the group.
<b>“D” 70-74</b>	Student barely met the minimum understanding to pass the lesson objectives.	Student showed very minimal or below average ability to complete the task.	Student showed minimal improvement as compared to last grading.	Student’s attitude meets minimum standards and needs tremendous amount of improvement.	Student’s ability to contribute to the group’s overall performance was poor.
<b>“F” 69 or less</b>	Student did not meet the minimum to pass the lesson objectives.	Student did not show satisfactory skill or ability to complete the task.	Student was not able to show any improvement from the last grading.	Student does not show a productive or positive attitude.	Student’s attitude is not wholesome for the group.

**Promotion and Retention Standards**

The Diocese of Austin and The Texas Catholic Conference Education Department prescribe the following standards:

**Early Childhood – (Pre-K3, Pre-K4, Kindergarten)**

To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain for the year an overall average of satisfactory or above.

**Grades 1 and 2**

To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain for the year an overall average of 70 or above, which is derived by averaging the final grade for the following subjects: language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and religion. In addition, a student shall attain an average of 70 or above in language arts and in mathematics. Grades for health, fine arts, and physical education may be determined by school policies using numerical grades, letter grades, or indications such as “excellent,” “satisfactory,” “unsatisfactory,” or “needs improvement.”

**Grades 3-5**

To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain for the year an overall average of 70 or above, which is derived by averaging the final grade for the following subjects: language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and religion. In addition, a student shall attain an average of 70 or above in language arts and in mathematics. Grades for health, fine arts, and physical education may be determined by school policies using numerical grades, letter grades, or indications such as “excellent,” “satisfactory,” “unsatisfactory,” or “needs improvement.”

**Middle School Grades 6-8**

To be promoted from one grade level to the next, a student shall attain an overall average of 70 or above for the year in all courses taken. In addition, a student shall attain an average of 70 or above in the following subjects: language arts, mathematics, social studies, science and religion.

**Assistance to Individual Students**

St. Mary’s Catholic School is not able to employ special teachers to assist individual students, nor does the principal or teachers formulate Individual Education Programs (IEPs). The teacher will alert the parents when students are having difficulty achieving a passing grade. After a consultation with the Principal, an assessment may be obtained through the student’s local public school at no charge.

In some instances, after consultation with the Principal, teacher(s), and parents, St. Mary’s Catholic School may make reasonable accommodations to assist individual students as long as there will be no altering or lowering of standards or expectations in either the instructional or assessment phases of a course of study.

St. Mary’s Catholic School’s teachers offer tutoring after school to assist students.

**360 Meetings for Middle School: Behavior and/or Academic Intervention**

Meeting includes parent(s), student and all teachers. Each teacher shares their observations and recommendations on how the student can improve and work successfully. The goal of the meeting is create an academic and/or behavior plan. Students who receive Ds and Fs on their progress report and/or report card or having constant behavior issues in their classes will be subject to a 360 meeting. These are made upon request by teacher and/or parent.

**Accidents**

Injuries receive first aid treatment. The school notifies an injured student’s parent or guardian at home or at that person’s place of business. The parent or guardian decides whether the child should remain at school for the remainder of the day.

## Admissions

As a condition of admission, parents agree to submit their child to the rules and regulations adopted by the school. The application process may include an interview with the Principal for prospective students in grades 5 – 8. Any student in grades 5 – 8 will be placed on a probation period for the first nine weeks.

By 1 September of the academic year, a child must be ...

- ... 3 years old (**and fully toilet-trained**) to enter Pre-Kindergarten 3\*
- ... 4 years old (**and fully toilet-trained**) to enter Pre-Kindergarten 4\*
- ... 5 years old (**and fully toilet-trained**) to enter Kindergarten\*
- ... 6 years old to enter Grade 1\*

Age must be documented with an official birth certificate.

(\* Indicates regulation of the Diocese of Austin.)

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Schools within the Diocese of Austin do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in: (i) the admission of students; (ii) the offerings of rights, privileges, programs, or activities generally made available to their students; or (iii) the administration of educational policies, admissions policies, loan programs, athletic programs, employment practices or policies, or other school-administered programs.

### **Registration and Building Fees**

Registration fee is collected at the time of registration. The building fee may be paid in full at the time of registration or may be added to the monthly tuition payment. If you need to make arrangements, please contact the Registrar. The full registration fee is required for students who transfer to St. Mary's at any time during the school year.

***IMPORTANT: ALL FEES AND TUITION PAID ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.***

Catholic families qualify for reduced tuition rates, if they are registered in a local parish. St. Mary's Catholic School will verify a family's active status; the school will assign appropriate rates —standard or reduced— if this status changes during the year.

### **Documents Required**

- Completed SMCS Application form
- Completion of FACTS
- Signed Authorization to Release Information form
- Official Birth Certificate
- Current immunization record
- Social Security Card
- Race/Ethnicity form
- Current report card
- Current Standardized Test Scores (grade 1-8)
- Custody section of divorce decree or proof of guardianship, if applicable
- Teacher Recommendation form
- Parish Affiliation Verification form

Parents of Catholic students must also present sacramental certificates for Baptism, First Reconciliation, and First Communion.

### **Admission Restrictions**

St. Mary's Catholic School does not accept students on a part-time basis.

St. Mary's Catholic School may not accept children with behavioral problems, as they may require attention of specifically trained personnel that we do not provide.

The Principal determines if a student will be accepted into the school; therefore, the school may accept a student with a special physical or learning need but only after a conference to ascertain the exact nature of the child's need. The Principal may require parents of a student with special needs to agree to enrollment on a conditional basis.

St. Mary's Catholic School's staff deals with all students on an individual basis; however, certain needs may require professional attention of a kind other than the school provides. In the child's interest, we reserve the right to refuse admission in such cases.

Should learning, behavioral, or physical problems surface later in the school year, we will determine whether the school can accommodate the child's learning needs, or, if other arrangements should be made. Such action will be done through consultation with the parents and all involved staff members.

**Tuition and Fees**

With the exception of the registration fee all tuition and other fees are paid through FACTS Management Company on the terms you agreed to on your online FACTS application. No in-house tuition payments can be made. Any payment that is not posted by FACTS by your due date is considered late and will receive a \$40 late fee. A NSF fee will be applied to your account for dishonored payments. In the event that your account becomes delinquent, FACTS will contact the school. For payments two or more months delinquent, the family may be requested to withdraw the student(s) until the account is brought up to date.

Readmission of a student for the following school year requires either payment in full of outstanding tuition, fees, and fines, or else a satisfactory arrangement with the School Principal.

When a child is withdrawn from school, the parent/guardian is responsible to pay for the entire semester in which the child is enrolled. Under certain circumstances, the balance of the tuition owed may be waived if the family is moving a distance greater than 100 miles from the school. **No refund can be given on tuition paid in advance or on any fees** (registration, resource, etc.).

**School Supplies**

Supply lists are available in the school office and on the school website.

**Immunizations**

SMCS follows Texas Dept. of Health Immunization Guidelines

<b>DTP/DT/DTaP:</b> 5 doses, with one after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday	<b>HibCV (Haemophilus influenza type B):</b> Primary series, or dose after 15 months of age for child under 5 years	<b>Measles Booster:</b> By Kindergarten entry date
<b>Td (Tetanus/Diphtheria booster):</b> <u>within 10 years of DTP</u>  <b>Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria &amp; acellular pertussis-containing vaccine:</b> all students in grade 7 <sup>th</sup> , required 1 dose. Students in 7 <sup>th</sup> grade will require a booster dose if it has been 5 yrs have passed. Students in grades 8 – 12 require booster dose if 10 yrs. have passed.	<b>Varicella vaccine (chicken pox):</b> all students entering Kindergarten and 7 <sup>th</sup> required 2 doses. Documentation of chicken pox in lieu of immunization.	<b>PCV 7 (Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine:</b> 1 dose before age 5
<b>Hepatitis B:</b> 3doses before age 5	<b>Polio:</b> 4 doses, with 1 dose after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday	<b>TB Skin Test:</b> St. Mary's Catholic School requirement. <b>Date and results</b> must be recorded on Immunization record

		to be considered valid.
<b>Hepatitis A:</b> all students entering Kindergarten, required to have 2 doses	<b>MMR: (Measles, mumps, rubella):</b> all students entering Kindergarten, required to have 2 doses	<b>Meningococcal Vaccine:</b> all students entering 7 <sup>th</sup> grade, required to have 1 dose

**Attendance**

Attending a Catholic School is a privilege, not a right. The Principal can at any time mandate withdrawal of a child pursuant to the procedure for resolution of disputes when this is in the best interest of the school and/or the student. The Principal reserves the right to determine the acceptability of excuses for missing school.

**In accordance with the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department and Diocesan Board policies, the following shall apply:**

1. A student will be subject to failure in a class if he/she misses more than **10% of the school year.** **Attendance at Mass is part of Religion class and will be included in the Religion grade.**
2. All absences without telephoned or written notice from a parent or guardian are considered unexcused. The office must receive a written excuse on the day the student returns to school.
3. An absence may be excused for illness of the student, death in the family, doctor and dentist appointment, or school activities that necessitate absence. Students with excused absences will be given an opportunity to make up work within an established time frame, determined by the teacher. The school reserves the right to classify an absence as unexcused.
5. The school requires a doctor’s note for any student absent due to illness for more than three days in a row.
6. Absent students shall be responsible for making up class assignments. The work must be completed by a deadline arranged by the teacher. *Students absent the day before a test are not automatically excused from taking the test.*

Students are counted as present for a full day only if in attendance for the full day; 8:00-3:30. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. or leaving after 2:30 will be marked as tardy. Students arriving after 10:00 a.m. or leaving any time before 2:30 will be marked with a half -day absence.

All learning time is important to your child. Tardies result in missed instruction time and may have a negative effect on your child’s learning. It is essential that your child be on time for school. An absence will be recorded for each 5 tardies. Tardies will only be excused with a doctor’s note or due to unavoidable circumstances. Forgetting homework or oversleeping are not unavoidable circumstances.

Students arriving after school begins are considered tardy and must be signed in by the parent or guardian in the office No child should be “dropped off” after 8:00 a.m. This is for the safety of your child. Parents who do not come into the school to sign in their child will be called back. The child will remain in the office until he/she has been properly signed in and receives a tardy slip.

**Doctor/Dentist Appointment**

Parents are asked to avoid making doctor/dental appointments during the school day in order to minimize any disruptions in student learning. However, if such cannot be avoided, only doctor/dentist appointments ***in writing*** are considered excused. The procedure follows:

1. At the appointed day and time, the parent signs out the student from the school office.
2. Upon returning to campus, the student must report to the school office, sign in, submit the doctor/dental excuse before returning to class.

**Tardy to School**

School doors open at 7:45 a.m. School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m.,. Parents, please be aware that 8:00 a.m. is “cell phone” time. **Late students may not enter class without a tardy slip. Students arriving**

**after school begins are considered tardy and must be signed in by the parent or guardian in the office. No child should be “dropped off” after 8:00 a.m. This is for the safety of your child. . Parents who do not come into the school to sign in their child will be called back. The child will remain in the office until he/she has been properly signed in and receives a tardy slip.**

### **Tardy to Class**

Roll call will be held in the homeroom periods and at the beginning of each class period for Middle School. Teachers notify the school office of students who are not in class and have not been excused. **A student known to have arrived on campus who does not attend class is marked as truant and receives a demerit (for Middle School). Students who arrive on campus must go to class. Students will not be marked present until the student joins his or her class.**

Each class period begins when the teacher closes the classroom door and begins prayer. (A late student may not enter the classroom until the prayer ends.) To join the class after this time, late students must present a pass from the office or previous class.

### **Absent from Campus**

A student may not leave campus without permission and accompanied by a parent or guardian.

### **Family Vacation**

The school strongly discourages school absences for reasons of personal travel or family vacation. The school calendar provides for extended weekends through the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child’s learning process. However, if the parent/guardian decides, the family should provide the Principal a written request *at least one week in advance*. If the Principal approves the absence, the student must complete missed homework. No advanced assignments or tests will be given in anticipation of the vacation.

Students who are absent shall be responsible for completing any work missed. The work must be completed to a satisfactory degree by a deadline arranged by the teacher. (*Diocese of Austin, Policy 303*)

### **Attendance at School Events**

Certain evening events are “mandatory for all students,” for example, PTC presentations, awards assemblies, the annual Christmas pageant, concert and theatrical performances, and athletic practices and games— are “mandatory for students directly involved.” The school will notify parents and students of all such events well in advance; **only in emergency situations or extenuating circumstances may a student’s absence be excused.**

Students in Grade 8 must attend the Graduation Mass scheduled at the end of the school year. Students and parents of Grade 7 host a breakfast following the Baccalaureate Mass.

## **Awards**

### **Honor Rolls**

At the end of each grading period, St. Mary’s Catholic School recognizes students in Grades 3 through 8 who have demonstrated academic excellence in the core classes (language arts, math, religion, science, and social studies) and who have maintained grades no lower than “B” in all classes and conduct.

- *Pastor's Honor Roll* (5 "A"s in the core subjects)
- *Principal's Honor Roll* (4 "A"s and 1 "B" in the core subjects)

### **Perfect Attendance**

At the end of each grading period, St. Mary’s Catholic School recognizes students in Pre-K through 8th who had perfect attendance for the quarter. This would include no tardies.

**Other Awards**

Additional awards may be given in recognition of outstanding contributions at the discretion of faculty with approval of the Principal.

**Eighth Grade Awards**

Graduating 8th graders will receive special awards at their Baccalaureate and Graduation Mass, to be determined by the middle school teachers and the administration.

<b>Band Program</b>
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St. Mary's Catholic School offers an entry-level band program for beginners in Grade 4, intermediate Band for students in Grade 5, and Advanced Band for Grades 6 through 8.

**Payment**

Payment of the Band Fee is due in full at the beginning of the school year. Band fees cannot be refunded or credited after the first week of September.

**Intermediate and Advanced Band**

Students must qualify to enter Intermediate and Advanced Band in Grades 5 through 8. A student may be accepted "conditionally," with the understanding that the student must advance his or her skill by completing scheduled practice sessions. "Conditional" students are encouraged to enroll in private lessons.

**Performances**

Public performance is the test of the band student. Band members must participate in all recitals scheduled by the Principal and Band Director. Failure to participate for other than medical reasons will result in a cut in grade or dismissal from the band. The Principal and Band Director determine the dress code for band performances.

**Instruments**

St. Mary's Catholic School furnishes some instruments; other instruments may be rented or purchased from local music stores. Students are responsible for the security and care of band instruments.

**Practice**

The student takes responsibility to follow a regular practice schedule to develop competency. Failure to practice or to turn in required reports of practice will directly affect the grade for the course and may result in dismissal from band.

**Conditions for Removal from Band**

A student who wishes to drop from band must have a parent provide notice, in writing, to the Band Director. To drop band during the first semester, notice must be received no later than the third week of the school year; to drop band the second semester, notice must be received by the end of the first semester. Dropping band in mid-semester will result in zero course credit.

At any time during the year, the Band Director—in cooperation with the Principal—may ask for a student's removal from band for *lack of practice* or *detrimental conduct*. The parent will receive notification from the Band Director, and the student will be given an opportunity to correct the behavior before removal.

<b>Bulletin Boards</b>
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Postings on School Bulletin Boards are subject to approval by the Principal. Only upon such approval may

any notices be posted.

### Cafeteria

Students may purchase a hot lunch or bring lunch from home. All students must eat lunch in the school cafeteria, unless excused for special class activities. The school's hot lunch program provides well-balanced meals for students.

During meal times, students should use appropriate table manners and should refrain from loud talking or horse play.

#### Collection Procedures

1. Prepay account through the office via check, cash or FACTS account.
2. Statements will be email on the 1st & 15th of each month; Starting in May statements will be emailed on a weekly basis.
3. Account referred to the principal.

The school invites parents and family members to eat lunch with the students.

### Care of School Property

#### **Care of School Property (including books, electronic devices and other materials)**

Books, electronic devices or materials checked out to a student, or used by the student, are the responsibility of that student. Fines and/or replacement costs are assessed for lost, damaged, or misplaced property.

Lost school books remain the property of the school and must be returned to the school if recovered.

Every textbook must be protected at all times by a cover that does not adhere to the surface of the book.

#### **Damage to School Property**

It is the duty of teachers and students alike to safeguard and protect the school's property. If a student defaces or destroys school property, he/she will be subject to administrative action, the severity of which will be based upon the degree of the damage and culpability of the student. At the very least, the parents will be contacted and the student asked to pay for the damage out of his own money.

### Contact Information and Family Status

**Any change to the Emergency Notification** —including address, telephone number, parents' marital status, and changes in employment, guardianship, or custody arrangements— must be made known to the school office as soon as possible *in writing with the appropriate documentation or can be changed directly on RenWeb.*

### Collections

All monies turned in by students for whatever purpose must be brought from home in a sealed envelope clearly identified on the outside with the name of the student, grade, amount of money envelope contains, and purpose of collection.

## Community Service Requirement

### Elementary Service Requirements Grades 4 and 5

To promote goodwill with those around us and to help students learn the value and pleasure of serving God by serving others, St. Mary's Catholic School asks that fourth and fifth grade students provide service to our community.

Community service is a component of the Religion curriculum and will be considered a part of the quarterly Religion grade. A variety of activities is expected, students should perform at least three different types of service projects during the course of the year. Students should perform 3 hours of service each quarter. Volunteer work needs to be done without compensation. Additionally, the reflection paragraph must be completed on the following page.

Examples of activities:

Visiting a nursing home, completing a project for the school or community, participating in a clean-up campaign, performing housework or errands for ill or elderly persons, helping with after school safety patrol (15 minutes each day), altar serving (30 minutes for School Mass and 1 hour for a Weekend Mass), singing in the choir at church.

A student may use his or her own money to purchase items for a shelter. However, the money may not be counted as the Christian Service, only the time taken to purchase and deliver said items

### Junior High Service Requirements

To promote goodwill with those around us, and to help students learn the value and pleasure of serving God by serving others, St. Mary's Catholic School requires all students in grades six through eight to provide service to our community outside of school hours. "Community service" is defined as "any activity benefiting an organization or individual in need of such activity and leading to an improvement of the quality of life". Community service does *not* include work done on behalf of a family member or family business, tasks for which a student receives payment, or activities (such as altar serving) the student already regularly performs. The amount of service required by each student each school year is listed below. Students providing more service may become eligible for special awards during the year, including the American Citizenship award.

**Grade 6:** 15 hours: 3 to 4 per quarter until 15 is met

(American Citizenship Award eligible)

**Grades 7 & 8:** 20 hours: 5 hours per quarter

(American Citizenship Award eligible)

Community service is a component of the Religion curriculum, in the area of Social Justice, and therefore will be reflective in the quarterly Religion grade. Incomplete Service requirements will result in the Religion grade being lowered.

### **Examples of community service activities:**

Visiting a nursing home; completing an arts-and-crafts project for the school or community; participating in a clean-up campaign; performing housework or errands for ill or elderly persons; baby-sitting (up to five hours, total) for someone (not a relative) unable to provide compensation; providing credible, needed assistance (approved by the school office) for an established community organization or institution. Note that a variety of service is expected, with a student performing at least three diverse types of activities or projects during the year.

Students are encouraged to perform as many hours as possible during the fall, as opportunities for service in the spring tend to be few.

**NON school masses, choir and altar serving for student's home parish may be counted toward service hours, not to exceed 5 hours per year.**

### **Exceeding Requirements**

Grade 6 students who give at least 25 hours by April 14<sup>th</sup>, and Grade 7 & 8 students with 35 or more hours of service by the same date, receive the American Citizenship Award.

## **Conduct and Discipline**

### **Acceptable Use of Communications Technology**

The purpose of use of electronic media and telecommunications at St. Mary's Catholic School is for education and research. Parents of children in all grades will be asked to sign the *Statement of Acceptable Use*, which applies to educational use of electronic images and the Internet. Instructional applications may include distance learning and video-conferencing. "Acceptable use" includes proper iPad, Chrome Book and computer usage (including on-task vs. off-task behaviors), e-mail etiquette, prevention of copyright violation, plagiarism, cyber bullying, texting, or access of non-approved materials, and other potentially harmful actions. Teachers will supervise and instruct students in these areas to achieve high moral, ethical, and social practices in use of electronic communications.

There will be consequences for a serious or repeated violation of Acceptable Use Policy.

### **Student Conduct**

St. Mary's Catholic School is committed to the principle that teaching students to conduct themselves properly in all situations must be a shared effort between parents and educators. This effort is vital to both the student's academic progress and self-discipline.

All students have a right to an educational setting that is orderly and free from disruption of a normal teaching/learning situation. In order to do this, all students must respect principles of good conduct.

**Regulations governing student conduct apply to all school sponsored activities whether on or off campus.** Teachers and administrators have the authority to enforce conduct standards at all school-sponsored functions. **Conduct detrimental to the school, whether in or outside of school, may be grounds for expulsion.** Respect for those in authority must be shown at all times. Rudeness, discourtesy, or disobedience will not be tolerated.

Disciplinary consequences shall be applied to students who violate conduct standards. In general, consequences shall be progressively administered so that penalties increase due to the severity or persistence of the misbehavior, in keeping with the maturity level of the student. Some examples are listed below under Section A *Consequences*.

Disciplinary action will depend upon a careful assessment of all circumstances, including the nature and severity of the offense.

### **Bullying and/or Harassment**

St. Mary's Catholic School considers learning and providing a safe environment for all individuals as the highest priority. St. Mary's Catholic School strives to provide all students with an educational setting that is orderly and free from disruption of a normal teaching/learning situation. In order to accomplish this, all students must respect principles of good conduct.

Bullying or harassment of any kind, matter, or means is taken very seriously and will not be tolerated by this School, its staff, or administration.

Bullying is:

- the expression of any kind, whether written, oral, or physical conduct, that is determined to have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property; or
- any conduct that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to create an intimidating, threatening, or abusive environment for a student.
- Further, any conduct designed or likely to result in causing physical, emotional, or psychological harm of a persistent nature will be considered bullying.

Bullying occurs when an individual or group, whether seriously or in jest, actively or passively, uses strength or power to cause harm, either physically, verbally, or emotionally, by intimidating or demeaning others. It is usually persistent and is often covert and is a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten, or frighten someone.

Bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following types of conduct:

- Physical assault against a person or group of people because of some perceived physical, economic, intellectual, cultural, or racial difference.
- Derogatory name calling of an insulting and/or personal nature designed or likely to result in offending a person or group of persons.
- Verbal and /or written abuse and/or threats against another of any kind.
- Demanding money, material, goods, or favors by means of threat or force.
- Ridiculing an individual or group of individuals because of physical, economic, sexual, intellectual, cultural, or racial difference.
- Graffiti or any form of vandalism designed to intimidate or embarrass.
- Incitement of others to commit acts of bullying.
- Racist, sexist, anti-gay, and/or anti-homosexual behavior.
- It may involve the use of any electronic form such as cell phones, computers, or the internet.
- Deliberate exclusion or isolation of an individual or group of individuals for any reason not rationally related to any activity approved by the School.

Students or faculty are to report all allegations or believed cases of bullying, or harassment, of any kind to the Principal. All allegations of bullying, harassment, and cyber-bullying will be taken seriously and promptly investigated. The student found in violation of this policy will face disciplinary action including possibly in-school suspension, out of school suspension, or expulsion. The proper disciplinary action will be determined by the Principal at her discretion based on whether it is the student's first offense or second offense, and/or depending on the severity or pervasiveness of the offense, among other factors.

Cyber bullying is defined as sending inappropriate texts, email, or instant messaging, posting inappropriate pictures or messages about others in blogs, on websites, on cell phones or smartphones, in chat rooms, or home pages, or by any internet means, or electronic, or using someone else's username to spread rumors or lies or other information designed to embarrass, harass, or threaten someone.

Students engaging in such cyber-bullying behavior (seriously or in jest) will face such disciplinary action as would be appropriate for any other type of bullying conduct.

#### **Parent/Staff Conduct and Responsibilities**

Staff, parents, and other members of the school community are called upon to model good standards of behavior both in and out of School. **Adults in the school community should be good listeners, remain mutually supportive and inclusive of one another, maintain appropriate confidentiality, and handle disagreements in a spirit of conciliation. Gossip is never acceptable.** All members of this school community know that the examples of the adult members are the best teachers of student conduct for the future.

Volunteers on the campus are especially reminded to keep conversation positive and limited to appropriate topics.

A special word is needed about the goal of inclusiveness, since this principle is frequently violated among children and in schools. Students of all ages will be taught that name-calling, bullying, ridiculing, teasing, and excluding have no place at school and that these actions are not only unnecessary, but also intolerable. Parents are expected to reinforce these ideas at home.

### **Offenses Involving Property**

Lockers, desks, and other storage spaces are school property. The school reserves the right to search possessions at any time. Prohibited items may be seized and retained in the school office for pickup by parents.

Students are prohibited from vandalizing or otherwise damaging or defacing any personal property belonging to, rented by, or used by the school or parish personnel. No student shall steal any property; likewise, no student shall take or borrow any property that does not belong to him or her, without the consent of the person to whom the property belongs. A person shall not, without the consent of the owner, damage or destroy property of the owner. (*Texas Penal Code 828.04*)

### **Student Standards**

A fundamental aspect of educating our students is to teach them to treat others with love and respect. School standards of behavior help the student learn self-control and proper social behavior. Our students are expected to meet school standards at all times throughout the day.

#### **The following examples are prohibited both at school and school-sponsored activities:**

- Failure to comply with school policies, standards, and regulations, or with directives issued by school personnel.
- Showing disrespect for others. This includes rude behavior or insubordination.
- Spreading of gossip or slander.
- Engaging in verbal abuse (such as name calling, ethnic or racial slurs, or derogatory statements.)
- Use of profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures.
- Use of physical or verbal intimidation of others through threats, bullying, harassment, pushing, hitting or lifting up students or any other demeaning behavior.
- Participating in classroom disturbances.
- Throwing of objects.
- Chasing or running in rooms or halls.
- Pushing, tripping, or fighting in school or on school grounds.
- Chewing gum, eating candy, or eating/drinking outside designated areas.
- Bringing toys, CD players, or other electronic entertainment items not used for class work to school.
- Use of electronic organizers unless required by class.
- Selling, bartering, renting or trading of goods.
- Tardiness, truancy, or skipping classes or other scheduled activities.
- Leaving school grounds or the classroom without permission.
- Cheating, forgery, plagiarizing or copying the work of another student.
- Any public display of affection, or other inappropriate physical contact.
- Sexual harassment (written, verbal or physical.)
- Gambling for money, candy etc., for personal gain.
- Possession and/or use of illegal drugs, tobacco products and/or alcoholic beverages with or without the intent to distribute.
- Extortion, coercion, or blackmail (i.e., using force or threat of force to obtain items of value or to cause harm to an individual).
- Possession or use of fireworks, explosives, firearms, knives or objects of any kind that may be considered a weapon.
- Unauthorized distribution of group letters, newspapers or other unofficial publications on school grounds, and posting of signs (permission must be obtained through the school office.)
- Possession of vulgar pictures or pornography of any kind.

**Cell phones and other electronic devices are to be turned off and must be turned in to the school**

**office immediately upon entering the school building. They are not to be carried or operated during the school day, which includes checking text messages.**

**Cell phones and other electronic devices taken up from students, lockers, backpacks, etc., must be picked up by the student's parents from the Principal. They will not be returned directly to the student. The school is not responsible for items that are not turned in to the office.**

## **Discipline**

The purpose of discipline is to teach the student to make correct choices that are consistent with the Christian principles taught by the family, church and school. Discipline involves the molding, strengthening, and correction of pupils, and by encouragement to make the best choices.

By creating an atmosphere of orderly activity, discipline makes work possible and develops character in the exercise of virtue. It has the spiritual basis of authority and obedience: *"All authority comes from God."*

Students who violate the school's standards of conduct bring about the negative consequences of their own choices. **In most cases, consequences can be progressively administered so that penalties increase due to the severity or persistence of the misbehavior.** This gives the student opportunity to learn to make better choices.

### **A. Consequences**

Disciplinary consequences may include, but are not limited to, these approaches:

1. Verbal reprimands
2. Time out to reflect and pray on the problem
3. Special assignments or duties, including written reports
4. Strict supervised study
5. Withdrawal of privileges
6. Temporary removal from class
7. Silent lunch
8. Detention after school
9. Saturday Detention
10. Partial or complete denial of attendance or participation in extracurricular, or other special activities
11. Behavioral contracts
12. Staff counseling
13. Individualized behavior modification program
14. Probation
15. Suspension from school
16. Expulsion from school for remainder of year
17. Other reasonable actions necessitated by unforeseeable special circumstance

## **Discipline Policy**

### **Daily Progression of Consequences**

1st Infraction - Verbal redirection stating what the student should be doing. (i.e. on time to class, bringing materials to class, engaged in class activity in a positive manner.)

2<sup>nd</sup> Infraction – Teacher consequence (i.e. detention, silent lunch, missed recess, loss of privilege). Parent communication by teacher.

3<sup>rd</sup> Infraction – Sent to Principal. Student writes reflection. Parent communication.

Cheating, plagiarism, insubordination, extreme disrespect, extreme verbal infraction, physical infractions and infractions involving destruction of property will be elevated to principal visit where further consequences will be determined. The principal has final determination in matters regarding discipline.

### **General Classroom Policy**

A basic responsibility of the classroom teacher is to help students to develop self-discipline in studies, personal organization, and good behavior. A student who disturbs the learning of other students is literally stealing time from education and must be taught the moral value of self-disciplined study. Teachers are responsible to communicate their expectations of appropriate classroom behavior to the students. When a student fails to maintain proper behavior, the teacher will work with the student and parents in order to develop an approach in common to help the student learn to work in the classroom.

Normally disciplinary consequences are handled in the classroom. Serious transgressions that fall outside the classroom scope of instructive disciplinary action or repeated warnings will result in a meeting with the Principal.

### **Detention- After School Thursdays at 3:45**

**Pre-K and Kindergarten: 20 minutes**

**1st-3rd: 30 minutes**

**4th-8th: 45 minutes**

A detention form stating the reason and setting the day/date for the detention is made to the parent. Detentions will take place after school on the Thursday following the issuance of the detention. **Students who have earned a detention may not participate in after school activities on that day. This includes athletic practices and games.**

If the student misses serving the detention for any reason other than absence from school due to illness, a second detention will be issued. Students are to be picked up at the classroom. In lieu of detention, administration reserves the right to have a student involved in an alternative activity designed to improve or change student behavior.

Any faculty and staff members may issue a detention. If the detention slip is not signed by the parent/guardian and returned the next day, the student will receive an additional detention.

Individual teachers may also provide a detention period for those students who habitually fail to turn in class assignments. Parents/Guardians will be notified in advance regarding the date and time of all detentions.

After the third serious behavioral misconduct detention, the parent/guardian will be contacted and the student may be required to serve an in-school suspension.

Pick up procedures for detention is through the cafeteria after 4:00 p.m. The front doors are locked and the office is closed. Parents will pay \$20.00 per child after 4:30 p.m. for each 15 minutes.

### **Saturday Detention**

Students may be referred to Saturday detention either for disciplinary, academic, or attendance reasons or the accrual of demerits in Middle School. Due to the need for adult supervision, parents of any student requiring Saturday detention will be charged a fee of \$50.00.

Students will know in advance and must come in school uniform. Students are expected to come with appropriate school work; teachers may assign make-up tests for the student to complete. The fee must be paid before the student is allowed to participate in extracurricular athletic and academic activities.

**Suspension (in school and out of school)**

A student may be suspended from school when other disciplinary measures have failed to bring about desirable behavior or when a student has made serious transgressions of school rules.

If a student is given an in-school suspension, the parent will be billed \$50.00, to cover the cost of the substitute who will monitor the student for the day. If a student is suspended for multiple days this amount will be adjusted accordingly.

A parent conference will be held where the situation is explained and specific requirements for the suspension and reinstatement of the student are outlined in a written contract.

Repeat offenses will result in a longer suspension. Further transgression of the school rules will result in the student being expelled from school.

The following offenses committed by a student while under the jurisdiction of the school are grounds for suspension/expulsion:

- Actions gravely detrimental to the moral, physical, or spiritual welfare of other students.
- Committing an obscene act or habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Assault, battery, or any threat of force or violence directed toward any school personnel, or pupil or any other person or their property.
- Open persistent defiance of authority of the teacher, supervisors, or administrators.
- Verbal/physical abuse toward any person, including fighting of any kind; destruction of property.
- Continued willful disobedience, dishonesty, cheating, plagiarism, forgery or general disrespect.
- Use, sale, distribution, or possession of tobacco, alcohol, narcotics, or intoxicants of any kind.
- Theft.
- Willful cutting, defacing, or otherwise damaging any property, real or personal, belonging to the school, school personnel, or another student.
- Habitual truancy.
- Possession of harmful weapons, objects, or materials that can be used as a weapon.
- The continued presence in school of the student is determined to be damaging to the general welfare of the student body as manifested by his/her activity outside of school.

A student who acts in a disruptive, aggressive, or destructive manner may be required to leave school for the remainder of the day. This action may be deemed necessary, especially for a student who has had excessive or repeated behavior or attitude problems. In such a case, the administration will contact the child's parent/guardian who must come and pick up the student immediately. The parent/guardian may choose to have another responsible party, whose name is listed on the student emergency card, pick up the child for them. Additional day(s) of suspension from school may accompany this action if it is deemed necessary.

**When a suspension occurs, the student is responsible for all work missed, including a suspension assignment. Suspension and class work must be completed before a student is able to return to class.**

The student may not participate in or attend any school-sponsored activity, including practice, games, tournaments, social activities etc. on the suspension day(s). Any student who has been suspended three (3) times during the school year may be dismissed from St. Mary's Catholic School.

After every effort has been made to correct the student's behavior and evidence is shown that the student's behavior and the philosophy and objectives of the school are incongruent, the parents will be asked to withdraw the student from the school. Non-compliance with the request will result in expulsion from the school. The Pastor and Diocesan Office of Education will be closely informed of the impending action. Expulsion is an extreme but sometimes necessary measure for the common good.

The administration shall arrange a conference with the student and parents/guardians who shall be informed of:

- a) The pattern of conduct in question and evidence present.

- b) The right of the student to present a statement on his/her behalf.
- c) The specific course of action or improvement necessary so that expulsion will not be necessary.

**NOTIFICATION OF SUSPENSION:**

Parents will be notified immediately of the suspension and a prompt meeting or conference will be held at which time matters pertinent to the suspension will be discussed by the principal, teacher, parent and student.

**SUSPENSION BY A TEACHER:**

In NO CASE will a teacher on his/her own authority suspend a student.

**NOTIFICATION OF EXPULSION:**

Parents will be notified immediately of the expulsion and a prompt meeting or conference held at which time matters pertinent to the expulsion will be discussed by the pastor, principal, teacher, parent and student.

**Expulsion**

**The expulsion of a student from a Catholic school is invoked only as a last resort.** When it becomes apparent that the pupil's behavior continues to disrupt the learning situation in the school or presents a serious moral problem, the Principal, with approval of the School Pastor and Superintendent, will expel the pupil from the school. This serious disciplinary action will be entered in the student's record.

**Search**

The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property. This includes cell phones and other electronic devices.

**Counseling and Guidance**

St. Mary's Catholic School is involved with the whole child; therefore, his spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social growth and adjustment are of as much concern to us as is his physical well being. Classroom teachers are instructed in guidance techniques. The Principal and Pastor are ready to provide counseling. If referral is indicated, the parents, through consultation with the school decide on an appropriate choice among the private and public resources.

**Disputes and Conflict**

Disputes or conflicts can arise in the educational setting. It is important that such matters be resolved as quickly as possible. **If the dispute/conflict is with a teacher, the first step for parent/guardian is discussion of the problem with that teacher.** If the problem is not resolved satisfactorily, the parent/guardian may proceed to the second step and request a meeting with the Principal.

If the dispute/conflict is with the Principal, the first step for parent/guardian is discussion of the problem with the Principal. If the problem is not resolved satisfactorily, the parent/guardian may proceed in the second step and request a meeting with the School Pastor.

Where conflict is occurring, there is a strict need to refrain from gossip within the community. This includes all adults, school personnel and parents. **Gossip will not be tolerated,** as it always has a negative outcome. Consequences for damaging gossip will be enforced.

**Adult Civility Code**

As an adult member of St. Mary's Catholic School community, I hereby agree to conduct myself with conspicuous civility at all times. All of my exchanges with students, faculty, staff, parents and visitors will

be marked by respect and kindness, even in times of stress or disagreement. This Civility Code for teachers, staff members, parents, guardians and students focuses on Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance. In order to be an effective member of the St. Mary's community, I pledge to follow this Civility Code for the good of the whole community and, especially for the children who learn from my example.

### **Consequences:**

While the normal consequences for a violation of the Civility Code follow, the sequences below, some violations may be so severe or extreme that they require immediate probation or separation of students and/or adults.

1. The individual will be contacted to discuss the situation and consequences of the behavior. A written warning is given at this time.
2. If the individual commits another violation, the person is placed on probation. The terms /length of this probation are determined on a case-by-case basis
3. If the individual's behavior continues to be deemed a problem during the defined probation period or if he/she violates that probation, where applicable:
  - a. The child of the individual will be dismissed from St. Mary's Catholic School without tuition refund.
  - b. The adult will be restricted from school campus.

All members of our community (parents, students, faculty, and staff) will be held to the same civility standard. While Civility Code violations are usually held in the strictest confidence, some civility code regulations may be so public or significant the Principal may inform the school community. In these instances an individual name is not used.

Any questions regarding such policies or procedures should be directed to the Principal or Pastor as appropriate.

## **Dress Code**

The Principal has sole authority to determine the school uniform/appropriate dress and enforce standards for all St. Mary's students as the need arises during the school year.

**St. Mary's students must be in full uniform before the first bell rings and until they leave the school campus and at school events where the school uniform is required.** Students who are not in full uniform will be sent to the office and the parent will be called to bring the proper clothing. For students not following the dress code, first offense will result in discussion with student. Repeated violations will result in disciplinary action.

### **Required:**

- Girl's jumpers in Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> must have a school logo.
- Solid White tennis shoes (no high tops) or black dress shoes for the girls. Elementary students must wear their tennis shoes on P.E. days.
- Solid Black tennis shoes (no high tops) or solid black dress shoes for the boys. Elementary students must wear their tennis shoes on P.E. days.
- P.E. shorts for Junior High must be purchased through Risse uniform. These shorts include the school logo.

### **Optional**

- The girls in Pre-K through grade 5 may wear a light blue polo, with the school logo, and a skirt, Monday through Thursday.
- The boys in Pre-K through grade 5 may wear a light blue polo, with the school logo, and their regular navy blue pants or shorts (grades 1-5 must wear belt) Monday through Thursday.
- The boys and girls in Junior High may wear a dark blue polo, with the school logo, and their current skirt for girls and pants for boys, Monday through Thursday.
- Girls in Pre-K through 5 may wear Risse navy blue pants from Nov. 1st to March 1st Monday through Thursday.
- Girls in 6th through 8th may wear Risse khaki pants from Nov. 1st to March 1st Monday

through Thursday.

Uniforms with school logo must be purchased through Risse uniform company.

**St. Mary's Catholic School Uniform**

Risse Uniform is our official site. All required uniform pieces must be purchased through Risse Uniform Company. <https://www.rissebrothers.com/>

	<b>Girls</b> From Risse Uniforms*	<b>Girls</b> From store of choice	<b>Boys</b> From Risse Uniforms*	<b>Boys</b> From store of choice
<b>Pre-K – K</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Navy drop waist jumper with school logo, white Peter Pan collar blouse.</li> <li>Monogrammed navy cardigan sweater, vest or fleece (optional)</li> <li><b>Optional</b> navy blue skort and light blue polo (with school logo) to be worn Mon.-Thurs. only.</li> <li><b>Optional</b> navy blue Risse pants. May be worn from Nov. 1 to March 1st. To be worn Mon-Thurs. only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plain white, black or navy knee high or bobby socks or same color tights; no pantyhose.</li> <li>Black dress shoe or solid white tennis shoe (no high tops)</li> <li><b>Navy biker style modesty shorts</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soft navy pull-on shorts/pants or navy walking shorts/pants</li> <li>Blue/white striped oxford shirt</li> <li>Navy tie for Mass</li> <li>Monogrammed navy cardigan sweater, vest, or fleece jacket (optional)</li> <li><b>Optional</b> light blue polo (with school logo) to be worn Mon.- Thurs. only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solid navy, black or white crew socks (no ankle socks)</li> <li>Solid black tennis shoe or solid black dress shoe.</li> </ul>
<b>Grades 1-5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Navy drop waist jumper, with school logo, white Peter Pan collar blouse, and <b>biker style modesty shorts</b>.</li> <li>Monogrammed navy cardigan sweater, vest or fleece (optional).</li> <li><b>Optional</b> navy blue skort and light blue polo (with school logo) to be worn Mon.-Thurs. only.</li> <li><b>Optional</b> navy blue Risse pants. May be worn from Nov. 1st to March 1st. To be worn Mon-Thurs. only.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plain white, black or navy knee high or bobby socks or same color tights; no pantyhose.</li> <li>Black dress shoe or solid white tennis shoe (no high tops).</li> <li><b>Navy biker style modesty shorts</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Navy pants or navy walking shorts/pants</li> <li>Blue/white striped oxford shirt</li> <li>Navy tie for Mass</li> <li>Monogrammed navy cardigan sweater, vest, or fleece jacket (optional)</li> <li><b>Optional</b> light blue polo (with school logo) to be worn Mon.- Thurs. only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Navy, brown or black leather belt</li> <li>Solid navy, black or white crew socks (no ankle socks)</li> <li>Solid black tennis shoe or solid black dress shoe</li> </ul>
<b>Grades 6-8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glen plaid skirt, plain white oxford blouse, and navy tie with red striping or Glen plaid tie.</li> <li>Monogrammed navy polyester vest or cardigan vest.</li> <li>Monogrammed Cardigan sweater or fleece (optional)</li> <li><b>Optional</b> navy blue polo (with school logo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plain white, black or navy knee high or bobby socks or same color tights; no pantyhose.</li> <li>Black dress shoe or solid white tennis shoe (no high tops)</li> <li><b>Navy biker style modesty shorts</b></li> <li>Athletic shorts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plain white oxford shirt, khaki pants, and navy tie with red striping</li> <li>Monogrammed navy cardigan sweater, vest, or fleece jacket (optional)</li> <li><b>Optional</b> navy blue polo (with school logo) to be worn Mon.- Thurs. only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plain white oxford shirt</li> <li>Brown, navy or black leather belt</li> <li>Solid navy, or white crew socks (no ankle socks)</li> <li>Solid black tennis shoe or solid black dress shoe</li> <li>Athletic shorts for PE must be purchased from</li> </ul>

	<p>to be worn Mon.-Thurs. only.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Optional</b> khaki Risse pants. May be worn from Nov. 1st to March 1st. To be worn Mon-Thurs. only.</li> </ul>	<p>for PE must be purchased from Risse Brothers.</p>		<p>Risse Brothers.</p>
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**Skirts and Jumpers**

Junior High students Skirt (Jr. High) and Jumper (Elementary), with school logo, must cover the knee. Navy biker-style modesty shorts must be worn with the skirts or jumpers.

**Vests for Junior High Girls**

Vests are with full uniform. Students may choose the monogrammed polyester or sweater vest.

**Ties and Belts**

Ties are to be pulled up to cover the shirt collar button. If boy's pants have belt loops, a leather belt must be worn. Leather belts are to be solid black, brown or navy.

Junior High boys and girls wear a tie with full uniform. Elementary boys must wear a tie on Mass days. Pre-K and Kindergarten do not need to wear ties.

**Shirts**

Elementary boys must wear the oxford, blue and white striped shirt daily. Navy blue shorts are permitted for Elementary boys only on non-Mass days. Long pants must be worn to Mass.

Junior High students must button the top button of their shirts/blouses for Mass. The top button may be left opened otherwise, provided that the tie covers it.

**Shirts are to be tucked in at all times** with sleeves not pushed or rolled up when students are on campus or at school-sponsored activities.

**Hair**

Boys and girls must keep their hair clean and well groomed, with bangs above the eyebrows and hair kept off the face. No extreme hairstyles are permitted; **including but not limited to**, mohawks, spiked hair, highlights, sides shaved while top is long, and patterned shavings (patterned shavings include any lines shaved into the hair) **The administration reserves the right to determine hairstyles inappropriate.**

Boys' hair must be cut above their shirt collars and trimmed above the ears and off the face.

**Hairstyles or ornaments that are distracting in the classroom are not permitted. Beads woven into the hair are not permitted. Hair must be a natural hair color. No bleached or artificially colored hair or highlights permitted. Hair must not cover the face.**

**Makeup, Fingernails, and Body Decoration**

Junior High girls may wear light makeup, clear lipstick, and clear nail polish. Heavy makeup, tinted lipstick, and colored nail polish are not allowed. No French tip, gel or fake nails are allowed. No writing, painting, stickers, or tattoos may be visible on the body or clothing.

**Piercing and Earrings**

Body piercing, other than ear piercing (as described here), is not permitted. A **single** piercing of the earlobe—not in the cartilage—is allowed. **Only one earring of a matched set** may be worn in each ear and must be a stud, a button, or a tiny hoop that stays close to the ear. (**Large hoops and dangling earrings pose a hazard and are prohibited at all times.**) If earring violations continue after a warning,

the student will be asked to surrender the earrings to the office, where a parent may retrieve them.

Boys are never allowed to wear earrings of any sort.

### **Necklaces and Pins**

A thin chain or cord, with a cross, crucifix, or a single medal may be worn outside the shirt/blouse. All other chains must be worn under the shirt; **“chokers” are prohibited**. Pins or buttons are allowed if they relate to a school-supported activity or cause.

### **Rings, Bracelets, and Watches**

One ring and one bracelet per hand are permitted. **Hair bands are not considered bracelets**. Watches may be worn but must be kept silent. Smart Watches are not allowed.

### **Shoes and Socks**

Socks must be high enough to cover the ankles, crew length socks for boys, and knee high or bobby socks for girls are options (knee socks should not cover the knee) Socks may be black, navy or white in color. Socks may not have any logos or writing. Tights of like colors, navy blue, white or black, may also be worn. Leggings are acceptable provided the socks are the same color and the leggings are long enough to connect with the sock.

Girls in all grades may wear either solid white tennis shoes (any brand, no high tops) or black dress shoes. Boys in all grades may wear solid black tennis shoes or solid black dress shoes. Please keep in mind, for grades Pre-K through 5th, students must wear the tennis shoes on P.E. days.

No sandals, open-toes shoes, no boots or hi-top shoes, no ballet slippers or shoes with a heel over 1 inch are permitted.

### **Sweaters and Jackets**

Hoodies of any kind are not allowed at St. Mary’s indoors (except on Spirit Days where the SJM hoodie may be worn). With the understanding that temperatures in the classroom may have extreme differences and be difficult to control, students are advised to dress accordingly and appropriately. Only SMCS navy blue sweaters or SMCS fleece jackets may be worn in the classroom or in the school building. There are no exceptions.

### **Consequences of Dress Code Violations**

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: Verbal warning - student counseled by teacher/adult**
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: Written warning – parent signature required**
- 3<sup>rd</sup> offense: Detention**

### **Spirit Day: Only the following is permitted:**

Spirit Day dress is as follows: St. Mary’s Catholic School **grey spirit shirt only**, with properly fitted blue jeans, capris or walking shorts. All pants must be hemmed, without holes or ragged edges. Students may wear any type tennis shoe on Spirit Days.

Falcon sweatshirts, school sweaters or fleece jackets may be worn on Spirit days.

As usual, only light makeup may be worn. Large hoops or dangling earrings are never permitted.

Hats/caps may not be worn in the school building.

The school office sells spirit shirts. For club T-shirts, consult the appropriate sponsor.

### **Cold Weather Wear**

Students may wear their school sweaters or school-emblem windbreakers or fleece jackets in the church on cold days, and also in the classroom if it is too cool. Girls may also wear white, black or navy cotton tights. Long sleeve white, navy or black shirts may be worn under uniforms on cold days.

## **Extended Day Programs**

### **Before-School Supervision and Drop Off**

St. Mary's Catholic School offers before-school supervision from 7:00 to 7:45 a.m. in the school cafeteria for students in Grades Pre-K-8. *There is no charge for this service.*

A school representative will be stationed at the drop-off point beginning at 7:15 a.m. Parents are to drop off children with an adult stationed in the cul-de-sac near the cafeteria or drive into the church parking lot. No parking, dropping off, or picking up students on Avenue K is permitted for the safety of our children and to ensure that the bus lane is clear at all times.

### **After-School Extended Day**

St. Mary's Catholic School will not accept responsibility for supervision after 3:45 P.M. except students that are enrolled in the Pre-K 3 & 4 Extended Day program or The Zone after school program. Any student in Pre-Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade left on campus after 3:45 P.M. will be sent to the school office for pick-up. A fee will be charged to the family \$20 for each fifteen minutes. **All other students should remain with the after school-supervised activity for which permission has been received.**

The St. Mary's Catholic School Pre-K 3 & 4 Extended Day Program provides supervised after-school activities from 3:45 to 6:00 p.m. The Program is open each school day, with the exception of the first day of school and the last day of school. Students must be signed up in the school office. The base of operations for the Pre-K 3 & 4 Extended Day Program is in the Pre-K room. The fee is due at the beginning of each month. Late fees of \$20.00 per 15 minutes after 6:00 p.m. will be enforced. Pre-K extended care pick up should come through the cafeteria door.

The City of Temple Parks and Leisure Services Department, in partnership with St. Mary's Catholic School, provides **The Zone** after school program for students in Kindergarten – 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The Zone program focuses on homework, tutoring, and structured activities from 3:45 – 6:00 p.m. in the cafeteria. Weekly rates must be paid in full to Zone staff.

**Each program cannot accept children on a “drop-in” basis. Children that are not picked up by 3:45 p.m. will be brought to the school office. Parents will be called and expected to pick up their children immediately.**

## **Extracurricular Activities**

Students must maintain passing grades (70+) *in all subjects* and have a conduct grade *no lower than “C”* to participate in school extracurricular activities, including sports.

## **Field/Study Trips**

Field/Study trips are planned by the teacher to be a valuable educational experience that fits into the

curricular plan.

Field/Study trips are a privilege, not a right. Only students who act responsibly, wear the permitted uniform, and have returned a properly signed school permission form will be permitted to go.

Unless otherwise stated on the permission form, regular school attire will be worn on trips that primarily involve indoor activities, while spirit clothes may be permitted for outdoor field/study trips.

Field/Study trips are an integral part of the learning program; therefore, children who are not permitted to accompany the class on a field/study trip must spend the same period of time in school under the supervision of a teacher working on special assignments equal to the field trip experience.

Volunteers who go on a field/study trip must have an approved eAppsDB application and security clearance from the Diocese of Austin, and show proof of having attended the Diocesan “Ethics and Integrity” workshop. Drivers for field/study trips must possess a valid driver's license and show current proof of liability insurance before each trip.

Chaperones for field trips, whether day or overnight, are chosen by the teacher. Parents must not assume they are attending a field trip, as the number of chaperones may be limited by the location as well the number of male and female chaperones should correspond to the number of male and female students.

**Chaperone Expectations:** Chaperones are to be a role model for the children. Chaperones will remain with their group. They will follow the directives given by the teacher. They must always supervise their assigned group unless otherwise directed by the teacher.

Payment for field trips should be made directly to the school. Returned checks will incur a fee of \$40.00 to the school as well as the bank fee

Siblings of a student going on a field trip are not allowed to accompany a class even if the parent is chaperoning.

## Homework

The faculty and administration believe that the homework given to students should follow these rules: Work should be engaging, relevant, quality vs. quantity and support student learning. It is this set of rules that teachers look to when assigning homework.

Homework should be connected to the learning in the classroom and afford students the opportunity to :

- Review the material taught in class each day
- Reinforce skills taught
- Prepare for examinations
- Work on long-range assignments
- Catch up on missed work
- Complete written and extra projects
- Finish work not completed in class
- Preview the following day's material

Average of work per night:

Lower Elementary (K-2)	15-30 minutes per night
Upper Elementary (3-5)	30-45 minutes per night
Middle School (6-8)	60-90 minutes per night

**Illness**

***A child with a fever should not go to school.*** A child who has been sick is not to return to school until fever-free for at least 24 hours **without fever reducing medication**. We will call parents to pick up a child who develops a fever during the school day.

<b>Conditions for keeping a child at home</b>	<b>Conditions for returning a child to school</b>
Oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher	Fever-free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication
Vomiting, nausea or severe abdominal pain	Symptom-free
Marked drowsiness or malaise	Symptom-free
Sore throat, acute cold, or persistent cough	Symptom-free
Red, inflamed, or discharging eyes	Written physician release
Acute skin rashes or eruptions	Written physician release
Swollen glands around jaws, ears, and neck	Written physician release
Suspected scabies or impetigo	Written physician release
Any skin lesion in the weeping stage or ringworm of the body	Lesion covered, physician-diagnosed as noninfectious
Earache	Symptom-free
Other symptoms suggestive of acute illness	Written physician release
Bacterial Meningitis	Written physician or health dept. release
Strep Throat, Scarlet Fever	Keep home until strep test is negative, or 24 hours after antibiotic treatment
Head Lice	Student must be nit-free after treatment with Nix or permethrin product.
HIV/AIDS: Keep at home if open sores or lesions are present; if the student is incontinent; or, if there is an outbreak of measles, rubella, or chickenpox in the school.	

**Inclement Weather**

In case of ice or snow, St. Mary’s Catholic School normally follows Temple ISD’s determination for school closings and delays, *unless otherwise announced*. However, St. Mary’s Catholic School may announce a school closing during adverse conditions before Temple ISD does. Closings are customarily announced on local TV stations including the cable Weather Channel. If icy conditions occur early the preceding evening, announcements may be made at the ten o’clock TV evening news broadcasts or on the Weather Channel. Notice of school closings will be communicated through [www.remind.com](http://www.remind.com) and will also appear on the school website, [www.stmarys-temple.org](http://www.stmarys-temple.org).

**Insurance**

The Austin Catholic Diocese will pay insurance for each St. Mary’s Catholic School student for accidents occurring while the student is on campus or engaged in an off-campus school activity.

**Library**

Our students are encouraged to frequently use the school library and to have a book checked out at all times. It is the expectation that students will be responsible for taking good care of the books they borrow from the library.

Students are permitted to bring in outside reading materials if the librarian gives approval. Teachers may

choose to give approval for the use of an outside book in a book report.

Library fines are to be promptly paid.

### Liturgical Celebrations and Holy Mass

**All students** in St. Mary's Catholic School develop their understanding of religion through attending school liturgies.

All students will attend School Mass together on Fridays at 8:15 a.m. and on Holy Days. Also, special liturgical celebrations are scheduled throughout the year. We encourage parents to participate in all of these events. Eucharistic Adoration is observed each Wednesday by grades 2-8.

School Liturgies also include Stations of the Cross (Fridays during Lent), Living Rosary, school Penance services etc.

#### **Standards for Mass Attendance**

St. Mary's Catholic School students are privileged to attend school Mass each week. This is an important school event where students must conform to all school standards of decorum for dress and behavior.

### Lost and Found

Inquiries about lost, misplaced, or found articles are to be directed to the school office. Check with the office immediately and frequently if your child is missing an item. A lost and found cart is located outside the office. Items are not held over a long period of time and are usually donated to St. Vincent DePaul at least twice a year.

*Please label your child's clothing, binders, and supplies to make it easier to return misplaced items to their rightful owner.*

### Medication

According to the Catholic School Office of the Diocese of Austin:

Only medication necessary for a child to remain in school will be given during school hours. No medication will be given to any child without a signed permission form from the parent or legal guardian.

**Authorized school personnel will administer only medication prescribed by a licensed physician or dentist and dispensed by a registered pharmacist. "Over the counter" medication (acetaminophen, ointments, cold tablets, cough syrups, etc.) will not be given unless prescribed by a licensed physician and labeled by a licensed pharmacist with proper directions.**

Students are not permitted to carry medication of any kind. Medicine must be brought to the school office by a parent or responsible adult. A student must not give any type of medication to another student nor accept such medication (not even aspirin).

Medications must be in a properly labeled container with the following information: student's name;

physician/dentist's name; date; name of medication; dosage; directions for administration, including specific times (may not stipulate "as needed"); duration that medication is to be given. *Medications may not be kept by a student or in the classroom.*

Medications are kept under lock and key and may only be dispensed by previously instructed office personnel.

### Messages

The staff regrets that the school cannot give messages to students during school hours except in emergency situations (e.g., pertaining to illness or accident).

### Parent-Teacher Conferences and Communications

Teachers are available to confer with parents regarding their child's progress. Conferences may be scheduled with the teacher. Impromptu meetings or hallway conferences are to be discouraged in the interest of privacy.

**Classes may not be interrupted in order to speak to the teacher except in case of extreme emergency. The easiest way to schedule a parent teacher conference is to send a written or email request to the teacher.**

At the end of the first quarter, school-wide parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled. The homeroom teacher will present the report card and discuss the student's ongoing progress. Elementary homeroom teachers conduct these conferences in their classrooms. Non-homeroom teachers conduct conferences at a designated area. Middle School conferences are held in the gym, allowing parents to speak with all teachers.

Teachers may communicate to parents through entries in the students' academic notebooks and assignment journals, phone calls, or via email. More personal communications are sent home in a sealed envelope.

Parents should expect up to 1 day response time when calling or emailing a teacher. Teachers may not respond after hours or weekends. If the contact is the result of an emergency the principal should be notified.

### Parent Involvement

St. Mary's Catholic School not only encourages parents to participate in the lives of their children at school but also depends upon that participation, requiring 25 hours of volunteer work per family each year.\* In May, each family will be asked to contribute \$10.00 for each unfulfilled volunteer hour.

**\*If a family is unable or chooses not to volunteer, a \$250.00 tax-deductible fee will be assessed. You may pay \$125.00 in August and \$125.00 in April. Each family must complete at least half (12.5 hours) of the hours by December 1.**

**The volunteer logbook is kept in the hallway outside of the school office. You are responsible for recording your hours. At the end of April, the volunteer coordinator will total the hours entered. Any outstanding hours will be billed at the cost of \$10 per hour.**

### Parties

Class parties are at the teacher's discretion. Cash or checks for class parties should be given to the office. The office will deposit the money in the classroom account.

**Invitations to parties outside of school may not be passed out in school unless all students are included.**

**Physical Education Classes**

**Medical Excuse**

Students may be excused from physical education for health or medical reasons for a maximum of three consecutive days with a note from a parent. Excuses for more than three days require an official order from a physician. In cases of non-participation in the program or participation on a limited basis, a statement from the doctor must be on file, giving the reason and the length of time of the restriction.

**P.E. Uniforms**

Students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 5 wear their regular school uniforms to physical education. Tennis shoes will be permitted during the P.E. period.

**Junior High students are required to have proper physical education clothing. Students are required to be dressed out fully each day during physical education class.** Students must be in school uniform before leaving gym.

If a junior high student reports to P.E. with incomplete or improper clothing, the student will get points deducted from their grade that day. The will still be expected to participate in class

**Specifications:** St. Mary's t-shirt, of any kind, knee-length athletic shorts, and tennis shoes. An additional St. Mary's shirt must be brought if the P.E. class falls on a designated Spirit Day.

Physical education items must be carried in a small gym bag clearly labeled with the student's name. Items other than P.E. clothes may not be carried in the gym bag. Physical education clothing must be placed in the gym bag and returned to the student's locker at the end of each PE class. Clothing should be kept clean and fresh and must be taken home and washed regularly.

If hair is long enough for a ponytail, it must be held together or pinned up. Long hair could cause the student to have an accident.

For reasons of sanitation, students may not wear uniforms, shoes, or socks that are not their own.

**Pictures**

Parents will be given opportunities to purchase pictures made of their children during the school year. Individual and group pictures will be taken. Also, a yearbook will be available for purchase at the end of the school year.

**Pre-Registration and Registration**

By February, a letter of pre-registration is sent to parents of all students currently enrolled. For a specified time, these students will be given preference in registration including reserved placement for the upcoming year. Thereafter, placement for all registering students will be decided by date of receipt of the application form at the School Office.

Application fees for first-time enrollees and registration fees are required for all students at this time. If fees are not paid by the date specified in the letter, the application will be automatically placed on the bottom of our list—and a place will not be held for that student— unless the parent has initiated a special arrangement with the Principal or School Pastor.

### Progress Reports

A report on each student’s general academic standing and conduct is open on RenWeb/ParentsWeb at the midpoint of each nine-week quarter. Paper progress reports are sent home to Pre-K and Kindergarten parents.

At the end of each quarter, a report card is open on RenWeb/ParentsWeb for grades 1-8. Paper report cards are sent home to Pre-K and Kindergarten parents. End-of-year report cards—indicating the student’s promotion or retention— will be open/sent home one week after the last day of school.

### Records

Student records are maintained as necessary for local needs according to district, state, and federal requirements.

A student's parents or guardians are welcome to review these records during office hours in accordance with the Family Rights and Privacy Act. Requests should be made to the Principal one full working day in advance.

### Sacramental Preparation (Catholic Students)

Rules governing Sacramental Preparation for First Reconciliation and First Communion will be sent to parents of Second Grade students each fall.

### Safety

St. Mary’s Catholic School makes every effort to ensure the students' safety. City and County personnel conduct regular sanitary and safety inspections. Teachers, staff, and administration are vigilant in spotting and correcting safety hazards.

#### Traffic Flow

At all times parents must protect the safety of all of our children by driving slowly and carefully on the streets around our school and parish facilities. It is of *utmost importance* that everyone complies with posted signs and rules, so that the children’s safety may be foremost. **Do not leave unattended vehicles blocking the traffic flow, including the school buses. All drivers must promptly follow instructions given by a school traffic guard.**

Our greatest concern is seeing students cross traffic. Parents should never drop off their children in areas where they have to cross in front of oncoming vehicles. St. Mary’s Catholic School has established a drop-off point at the cul-de-sac near the cafeteria. **No parking, drop-off, or pick-up is permitted on Avenue K or in and around the bus lanes.**

#### Emergency Drills

Tornado drills are held periodically. Monthly fire drills are practiced where everyone leaves the

buildings. For the students' safety, silence must be maintained during drills and other emergency situations. Hard and soft lock downs are practiced with the Police department twice a year.

#### **Asbestos**

School facilities are in compliance with asbestos abatement standards. The Asbestos Management Plan is available in the Principal's office for public review.

## **Crisis Plan**

### **Fire Alarm**

**Priority #1: Remove people from imminent danger.** When the fire alarm rings, the teacher will pick up the class grade book and Emergency Phone List Folder and lead students to the class's assigned exit *in a silent and orderly manner*. The route to the assigned exit will be posted prominently in the classroom. If the assigned exit is blocked by smoke, fire, or other danger, proceed to the nearest safe exit. The last person to leave a room: takes the room's Fire Symbol (to give to the Fire Marshal as proof that the room is accounted for) and closes the door (to prevent spread of fire and to indicate that the room has been evacuated). The **teacher takes roll immediately** upon arrival at a designated outside area to ensure that all students are present. For everyone's safety during fire alarms, maintain silence at all times so that any necessary instructions can be heard.

**Tornado Watch:** Office personnel will announce tornado instructions over the intercom of the main building, and via telephone to the Pre-Kindergarten building. The teacher leads students to the class's designated evacuation location. The list of evacuation locations will be posted prominently in the classroom.

**Tornado Warning:** Office personnel instruct teachers to implement evacuation procedures and move students to the designated first floor hallway location away from the windows, or else call for everyone to "duck and cover" in the classrooms if time doesn't allow.

**Bomb Threat:** Upon receiving a bomb threat, office personnel send runners to warn classes. **DO NOT USE THE INTERCOM, TELEPHONES, CELL PHONES, OR FIRE ALARMS**, as these may trigger a device. Follow the Crisis Plan for Fire Alarm to evacuate students from the school buildings. Office personnel notify police (9-1-1) via off-campus telephone or by cell phone (if at a safe distance from the school buildings).

**Gas Leak or Chemical Disaster:** Proceed according to instructions from emergency personnel. For a potential Gas Leak, **DO NOT USE THE INTERCOM, TELEPHONES, CELL PHONES, OR FIRE ALARMS but use runners**. The teacher should take a class grade book and the Emergency Phone List and move students from the danger area as quickly as possible. Take roll immediately upon arrival at a safe location. If evacuation to an off-campus location is indicated, all available vehicles will be used to transport students. Transportation priority is given to the youngest students, and teachers accompany their students. The facilities of St. Luke's Parish in southern Temple and Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish are the school's primary off-campus evacuation sites. A parent wishing to retrieve a student must receive permission from office personnel and must sign the student out. Evacuation destination is determined by circumstances, source of the leak, and recommendations of emergency personnel.

**Anthrax and Bio-Terror:** Suspicious parcels will be referred to the police before opening. Staff will follow the advice of emergency personnel, in accordance with community emergency plans regarding terrorist activities. Evacuation of students proceeds as described in Gas Leak or Chemical Disaster, above.

**Soft Lock-Down Procedure:** All exterior doors remain locked. Announcement over the intercom: "**Soft Lockdown**" Teachers are to keep all students in the classrooms and close the door to the hallway until

an "All Clear" announcement is made. No students are to be taken out of the building to P.E., band, etc. If students are at P.E., band, etc., office staff will alert those teachers by cell phone to secure their students in the school gym.

**Hard Lockdown Procedure:** All doors are closed, lights turned off and students, teachers, staff, hide and stay quiet. Hard lockdown may only be cancelled by the Temple Police Department. P.E. and Music teachers will be called by office personnel in a hard lockdown.

### School Board

The purpose of the Consultative School Board is to assist the school community in its essential goal of educating young people and passing on the Catholic faith and its traditions to its students. In their pastoral statement, *To Teach As Jesus Did*, The U. S. Bishops state that "planning and implementing the educational mission of the Church must involve the entire Catholic community and that such involvement is achieved through such structures and processes representative of the Community."

By drawing on the expertise and experience of its members the Board helps secure the future of the school as an institution of education and formation in Catholic moral principles and traditions, and in all aspects of education. The purpose of the Consultative School Board is to promote broader participation and to invite administrative and financial counsel in formulating policies for the operation of the school, and to assist in devising and maintaining plans of operation designed to assure the successful permanent operation of the school.

The Board shall not conflict with the daily operation of the school, other existing or future organizations which are concerned with providing advice or activities in other areas. The Board is consultative only and does not in itself set policies for the school.

**Note that the following areas do not fall under the auspices of the Consultative School Board:** *disciplinary matters, curriculum development, approval of instructional materials, hiring and firing of staff, regulations, and grievances.*

### School Bus

The school bus routes are run by Holy Trinity Catholic High School (of Temple), and fees are collected through their office. Consult HTCHS at 254-771-0787 for information on schedules, routes, and rates.

Students who ride the bus must abide by all rules set by both schools, and disciplinary action for our students who violate these rules may be brought about either by Holy Trinity or St. Mary's Catholic School.

Bus transportation is a privilege for those students who display safe appropriate behavior. A student who violates these rules may lose bus privileges.

Students shall conduct themselves with the same courtesy as if they were in school. They shall not fight, tease other students, use inappropriate language, or commit vandalism. Bus students must behave in an orderly manner and not cause undue noise or other disruption that could distract the driver. It could take only one instance of misconduct to cause an accident.

*Basic rules:*

- At all times, be courteous to the bus driver and promptly follow all instructions.
- Remain seated in assigned seats while the bus is in motion.
- No food, drinks, candy, etc. are allowed on the bus.
- Be careful not to leave any trash.
- Do not mark or otherwise deface the bus.

*Important safety reminders:*

- Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Never stick your head or hand outside the bus windows.
- Never throw anything inside or from the bus.

### School Clubs and Organizations

All organizations, programs, and clubs that represent the school must operate according to school policies. The Principal approves all by-laws and operational policies. All organizations function under the auspices of the Principal. Examples are parent organizations, athletic programs, and booster clubs.

Projects undertaken by any one representing a school-affiliated organization must have the prior approval of the Principal. All solicitations, purchases, and expenditures must have prior approval of the Principal. Those responsible for collection of money will file a detailed balance sheet with the office. The Financial Secretary deposits all monies into the St. Mary's Catholic School accounts.

#### Parent-Teacher Club

All families are asked to become members of the Parent-Teacher Club and are encouraged to participate in its activities. Information concerning meetings will be promulgated through the school newsletter. New officers assume their responsibilities at the beginning of the new school year.

The school is not responsible for students on the grounds during all school sponsored activities. During PTC events, students are not allowed to play outdoors or in any other part of the building **unless directly supervised by an adult**. Students participating in programs during PTC meetings are asked to wear their uniform.

### Sports

At all times, St. Mary's students will conduct themselves as Christian athletes. Athletes are expected to show an "A" in conduct during all games. Conduct inside or outside of school that is unbecoming of a Christian athlete will result in removal from the team. Parents are also expected to behave in a Christian manner.

The St. Mary's Catholic School After-School Athletics Program is open to all students in Grades 6-8. (Only in circumstances that there are not enough players to form a team will 5<sup>th</sup> grade students be invited to participate) Note that academic standing affects eligibility, as described below.

Before the first practice of the year, each student must supply the following:

- The "Athletics Participation Form" signed by parent(s) or guardian(s) who give permission to participate in practices and games.
- The "Medical History & Physical Examination for Student Athlete" form completed and signed by a physician
- The "Consent to Treat a Minor and Release of Liability" form signed by parent or guardian

- An up-to-date “Emergency Information and Notification” form
- Payment for any associated fees

At the first meeting, the coach will provide a schedule of practices and games. Updates to the schedule (especially games) are to be expected. Consult the St. Mary’s Catholic School website for current information.

### **Academic Eligibility Requirements**

The St. Mary’s Catholic School guidelines for participation in extra-curricular activities, in particular the Athletics Program, require that a student must not have received, in the preceding quarter, a failing grade (below 69) in any subject. A student with a failing grade for a given quarter is restricted from participation in the activity – including attendance at practices – until the mid-quarter progress reports are issued, at which time the student may be reinstated in the sports program.

If a failed subject is an elective and dropped, a student must miss 3 weeks of practice/games before being reinstated in the sports program.

### **Policies**

Our Athletic Program follows guidelines set forth by the University Interscholastic League (UIL) of Texas.

Teams participate in both “home” and “away” games. Whenever possible, hosts hire professionals to officiate, although sometimes non-professional adults serve; in no case may a minor officiate at a game. We encourage parents and friends to attend our games; attendance boosts team morale, and the small entry fee and concession sales helps defray compensation of any officials.

Student must be present for at least a half of a day, with a doctor’s note, if applicable, to play or practice with the team. Illness is not an excuse.

### **Rules for Student Conduct**

Attendance at practice and games is mandatory. Only personal illness or family emergency will be acceptable as an excuse. Unexcused absences from practice or games will result in removal from the team.

1. **Students must maintain passing grades (70+) in all subjects and have a conduct/citizenship grade no lower than “C” to participate in sports and other extracurricular activities. Junior High students must be up-to-date with their community service hours.**
2. Students who are absent from school on game days are not permitted to work out with the team or play that day.
3. Students are expected to report for practice and games on time. Repeat violations may result in a suspension from the team.
4. Students who are not able to attend practice must present a written excuse from the parent to the coach prior to that day's practice. Students may miss practice only for personal illness or family emergency. Absenteeism may result in dismissal from the team.
5. There must not be any loitering in or around the school. Students must arrange to be picked up promptly after practice or games.
6. The Gym will remain open during practice sessions so that students may use water fountains and restroom facilities. All other buildings are secured by this time.
7. Students are issued uniforms that are designated by the school. The coach assigns uniform numbers. Students will not be allowed to play without proper uniform.
8. Athletic attire may not be worn to class.

<b>Student Council</b>
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Student Council will meet at least once a month. Elections for Middle School student council

representatives are held in . Election rules are stipulated in the Constitution. Students running for an office must have an 85% GPA (for current school year), no more than 4 demerits or detentions, as well as a teacher recommendation.

### **National Junior Honor Society, St Mary's Catholic School Chapter**

The National Junior Honor Society chapter of St. Mary's Catholic School is a duly chartered and affiliated chapter of this prestigious national organization. Membership is open to those students who meet the required standards in scholarship, leadership, service, character and citizenship. Standards for selection are established by the national office of the 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 in the month of April each year.

Students in the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade are eligible for membership. For the scholarship criterion, a student must have a cumulative grade point average of 93% (A-) or better.

To evaluate a candidate's character, the Faculty Council uses two forms of input: first, school disciplinary records are reviewed; second, members of the faculty are solicited for input regarding their professional comments on a candidate's service activities, character, and leadership. These forms are carefully reviewed by the Faculty Council to A majority vote of the Council is necessary for selection. Candidates are notified regarding selection or non-selection according to a predetermined method and schedule.

Following notification, a formal induction ceremony is held at the school to recognize all newly-selected members. Once inducted, new members are required to maintain the same level of performance (or better) in all criteria that led to their selection. This obligation includes regular attendance at chapter meetings held on the second Wednesday of each month during the school year, and participation in the chapter service project(s).

Members are subject to removal from NJHS for poor grades or poor conduct.

Students or parents who have questions regarding the selection process or membership obligations may contact the chapter advisor or call the principal.

*--Quoted from the NJHS Handbook, 1998.*

### **Telephone Calls**

**Students may not carry or use cell phones or other electronic equipment during school hours. Cell phones and other electronic equipment brought for after-school use must be secured in the school office during the day, not kept in lockers, book bags, or given to the homeroom teacher, etc.**

Students may make emergency phone calls in the School Office.

### **Testing**

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 take the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). St. Mary's Catholic School does not teach to the test nor modify diocesan curriculum to influence our standardized test grades.

Students in Grades 5 and 8 take the Assessment of Catechesis Religious Education (ACRE) in April.

Students in grades 4-8 take semester exams at the end of each semester.

### Transfers and Withdrawals

A parent who wishes to arrange for transfer or withdrawal of a student must inform the secretary/registrar *at least one week in advance* either by telephone or written note. The parent may then report to the Registrar's office during business hours for completion of the necessary forms. **No withdrawal or transfer will be completed if money is owed for tuition, fees, fines, books, or other items.** The school will withhold the student's academic record until all debts are paid. Parents must request transcript copies *in writing*.

When a child is withdrawn from school the parent/guardian is responsible to pay for the entire semester in which the child is enrolled. Under certain circumstances the balance of the tuition owed may be waived if the family is moving a distance greater than 50 miles from the school. **No refund can be given on tuition paid in advance or on any fees** (registration, resource, etc.).

### Valuables

Students are asked not to wear expensive jewelry or bring excess money to school. Cell phones, electronic equipment, cameras, CDs and other articles not necessary in classroom work are not to be brought to school.

If a bus student chooses to bring personal entertainment equipment to the school, the item is to be left at the school office for security and retrieved at the end of the school day.

Students, *not the school*, are responsible for their personal property.

### Visitors

For our children's safety, ***all visitors must report to the school office*** and log in and out each time they visit the St. Mary's Catholic School campus, this includes lunch time. Visitors may only enter the school through the front door. This applies to those dropping off an item and those staying to volunteer.

The word "campus" as used here refers to any part of the campus including buildings, parking lots, and fields. A visitor is one who is on campus for any length of time during the school day. Requesting permission to come onto the campus is not of itself an automatic "permission granted" for the time requested, nor for future visits. Permission must be requested each time a person wishes to visit the school campus during the school day.

Parents may observe their children in the classrooms. However, the school asks that the parent make an appointment for observation through the school office before the date of the observation. The length of a visit should not exceed one class period.

Parents are not permitted to enter the classroom or library without approval from the school office.

School officials provide school tours.

**For security and safety reasons, students are not allowed to open any doors for anyone.**

### Volunteers

Volunteers and parent instructional aides must have the approval of the Principal. Sufficient orientation training will be given for the activity in which they will be engaged.

Volunteers must gain clearance through completion of the on-line application (“eAppsDB”), which includes a criminal background check and EIM training.

### **Ethics and Integrity Ministry (EIM)**

In an effort to protect our children, the Diocese of Austin mandates that all individuals who have contact with our children must be in compliance with the Ethics and Integrity in Ministry Policy, which equips each of us with the tools and knowledge to protect our children from possible abuse and perpetrators. All parents MUST complete this process to be able to chaperone field trips, volunteer in your child’s class and volunteer at the school.

In order to register for an EIM Workshop you must first complete the volunteer application, “eAppsDB”, located at <http://www.austindiocese.org/offices-ministries/offices/ethics-and-integrity-ministry-office>

The Austin Diocese website has a list of workshop dates and additional information regarding the Ethics and Integrity in Ministry Policy.

Once you have attended the workshop please submit a copy of the certificate to the school office.

Please contact the school office if you have any questions.

\*\*If it has been 3 years since you last completed the Ethics and Integrity in Ministry workshop, you need to register for the "EIM Refresher" Workshop.\*\*

### **Technology Policies**

**Blogs:** Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to Facebook®, etc. may result in disciplinary actions (including expulsion) if the content of the student’s or parent’s blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish. Parents should refrain from creating a class/grade Facebook® page without the written authorization of the principal. Negative or defamatory comments about the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish made on a parent’s Facebook® page may result in the children of the parent being separated from the school. If a student is involuntarily separated from the school, there will be no reimbursement for tuition and/or fees.

#### **Facebook® and other Social Media Postings of Student Photographs:**

St. Mary’s Catholic School works to protect the confidentiality rights of all students. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1973 (FERPA) and the Child Protection Act of 2012 (CPA) were designed to protect personally identifiable information of minors. St. Mary’s Catholic School adheres to these laws in its attempt to protect the privacy rights of all students. As a result, the parents of students enrolled at St. Mary’s Catholic School are forbidden from posting photographs taken at school sponsored events that include the images of students other than their own on their personal Facebook® or any social media page. Such postings are a violation of the St. Mary’s Catholic School’s adherence to FERPA and the Child Protection Act. The students of parents who post such photos may be separated from St. Mary’s Catholic School.

**Instagram®:** Photos and captions on a student or parent’s Instagram® account that depict the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish in a defamatory way may result in disciplinary action.

**Sexting:** Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices face suspension and/or expulsion.

**Texting:** Students should at no time be involved in texting during the course of the school day. Students

involved in texting at school face detention, suspension and/or expulsion.