



ST. MARY PARISH SCHOOL

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2026–2027

Parent/Student Handbook

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SCOPE of this HANDBOOK

Enrollment at St. Mary Parish School is a privilege. Ongoing student status is subject to the school's academic and behavioral standards which may evolve and change over time. Decisions regarding academic matters (including but not limited to the issuance of grades), student discipline, and an individual's continuing status as a student at the school are within the discretion of the school administration. The purpose of this handbook is to set forth general guidelines that will assist students and their families in understanding what the school expects of them. The provisions of this handbook are subject to change at any time by the school administration. Questions about items contained in this handbook should be directed to the principal.

By enrolling a student in St. Mary Parish School, parents, guardians, and students agree that they have received and reviewed the current version of the school's Parent/Student Handbook and agree to comply with all policies, rules, guidelines, regulations, and directives stated therein, as well as any future updates and revisions to the policies during their time of enrollment.

By enrolling a student at St. Mary Parish School, parents/guardians and students also understand and agree that St. Mary Parish School has the right as a private religious institution to make rules that govern conduct on the part of parents/guardians and students, both on school premises and off. Parents/guardians and students agree to comply with the standards of conduct set forth in the Handbook, to support the policies and procedures contained therein, and to cooperate fully with St. Mary Parish School and its personnel as educational partners. The required Parent/Student Handbook acknowledgment is completed digitally as part of the enrollment process.

The contents of this handbook are to be accepted by the parents/guardians and students as an essential element of the contract between each family and the school. Violations of the spirit, intent, or letter of the policies, rules, and regulations found in the handbook will be considered just cause for administrative action. Under no circumstances may a parent/guardian excuse a student from observance of the policies, rules, and regulations of St. Mary Parish School or in the participation in all aspects of the required curriculum.

RIGHT TO AMEND

St. Mary Parish School reserves the right to amend or waive provisions of this handbook when deemed necessary by the principal. If changes are made to the handbook, parents/guardians and students will be notified in a timely manner. This handbook exists to foster the efficient operation of St. Mary Parish School. The school administration exercises flexibility to meet this objective and has the discretion to take actions other than those specified in this handbook.

GOOD STANDING and CONTINUED ENROLLMENT

St. Mary Parish School has a responsibility to protect the learning environment for all students. A student whose repeated or persistent behavior substantially disrupts classroom instruction, interferes with the learning of others, or requires a level of intervention that prevents the teacher from effectively serving the class may be placed on behavioral probation or another appropriate behavior support plan.

The school will ordinarily work in partnership with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) to identify concerns, establish expectations for improvement, and provide reasonable opportunities for the student to demonstrate sustained improvement.

When disruptive behavior persists despite reasonable interventions, or when the student's behavior continues to significantly interfere with the school's ability to provide an appropriate learning environment for other students,

the principal may determine that St. Mary Parish School is no longer an appropriate educational placement and may require the family to withdraw the student or may decline continued enrollment/re-enrollment.

Students are enrolled at St. Mary Parish School on the basis of an evaluation and acceptance that is ongoing. The school reserves the right to dismiss students at any time for violation of any policy in this handbook, whether on campus or off campus, unsatisfactory academic standing, or for other reasons that, in the judgment of the school administration, adversely affect the welfare of the individual student or other students, the school and its employees, the reputation of the school, or the school community.

In order to continue enrollment at the school, a student must be in “good standing.” A student considered to be in “good standing” is one who has not become subject to dismissal for academic reasons, one whose record of conduct is at least satisfactory, one whose family supports the school faculty and the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, and one who has met all financial obligations to the school or made satisfactory arrangements for those obligations. Continued enrollment, then, is a privilege earned by cooperative personal conduct and fulfillment of academic requirements and financial obligations. The school reserves the right to refuse registration or re-registration. When the school judges that the parents/guardians do not support school policies, the school reserves the right to terminate the student’s enrollment.

CONDITION of ENROLLMENT for PARENTS/GUARDIANS

It is a condition of enrollment that the parents/guardians of a student shall also conform themselves to standards of conduct that are consistent with the Christian principles of the school, as determined by the school in its discretion. These principles include, but are not limited to, any policies, principles, or procedures set forth in any Parent/Student Handbook and contract of the school.

These Christian principles further include, but are not limited to, the following expectations:

1. Parents/guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting the religious, academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of the school.
2. Students and parents/guardians are expected to respectfully express any concerns about the school operation and its personnel to the appropriate school or diocesan authority. They are further expected to avoid doing so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor-driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile, or divisive. Finally, it is the school’s expectation that students and parents will avoid making such comments publicly, including in any public forum or on any form of social media.
3. Parents/guardians and students are expected to avoid sending or posting any content on email, text messaging, or social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter [X], GroupMe, etc.) that is contrary to the mission and philosophy of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Sacramento and St. Mary Parish School. This includes expressing criticisms or displeasure with the school administration, or with a teacher, staff member, student, parent, or any authority at St. Mary Parish School and/or parish in regards to (but not limited to) policy, homework, assignments, grievances, or any school-related program. Parents/Guardians and students should carefully review policies on “Communication” (including email) and the entire section entitled “Information and Communication Technology Policies.”
4. Parents are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with other parents of the school community. Difficulties in relationships must be addressed and resolved by the parties themselves. If a difficulty impacts the environment of the school, the principal has the authority to intervene and work to determine an outcome.
5. These expectations for students and parents/guardians apply to activities on and off campus including, but not limited to, all school-sponsored programs and events (e.g. Extension Program, licensed child care programs, athletics, field trips, etc.) as well as to inter-personal conflicts among students or parents.

6. The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, which actions fall short of meeting expectations regarding the Christian principles of the school and the policies in this handbook. Depending on the severity and circumstances of the event, failure to follow the school's principles and policies will normally result in a verbal or written warning to the student and or parent/guardian. For serious violations of the school's principles and policies, the school's response may be to take disciplinary actions up to and including the requirement to withdraw from school (e.g., suspension of a student, suspension of parent/guardian's privilege to come on the campus grounds and/or participate in parish/school activities, volunteer work, etc., or permanently withdraw enrollment from the school).
7. The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, when conduct is of such a severe nature as to warrant immediate disciplinary action without warning or prior communication.

PROCESS for CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Disputes in schools are usually due to misunderstandings, differences in judgment, opposing interpretations of school policy, or perceived inequalities in the relationship between and among students, parents, teachers, and the principal. All parties involved in a dispute are expected to manifest good faith in their efforts to resolve disputes by maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect, confidentiality, and Christian charity.

Every effort should be made between differing parties, through open and honest discussion at the onset, to resolve the dispute. In each case the parties need to meet to provide the opportunity to state the issue(s) clearly and begin work on solutions.

In every case, the parties should attempt to resolve their differences at the level at which the dispute has taken place. Appeals to higher authorities may not be considered until this attempt at resolution has been completed.

- If a conflict arises between stakeholders (students, parents, teachers, administration), a conference will be arranged by school staff with the appropriate parties. The principal of the school must be informed prior to this contact. Every effort must be made to resolve the issue at this level.
- The next level of dispute resolution is to involve a vice-principal or dean of students, if applicable. The vice principal or dean of students will hold a conference with the parties listed previously.
- The next final stage of dispute resolution at the school level is to involve the principal. In parish schools the principal will consult with the pastor who may be invited to a conference with all parties if he or the family so desire. Every effort should be made at this level to be sure that all parties are able to present their cases and to work collaboratively to resolve the differences that caused the conflict. If irreconcilable differences remain, however, and a decision regarding the dispute is necessary, the principal will render a final decision.
- Such conferences to resolve conflict, including phone and virtual conferences (e.g. Zoom), may only be attended by appropriate school personnel and by parties involved directly in the conflict (e.g., parents and guardians). The conference may not take place if other visitors (relatives, friends, etc.) are present, nor may the proceedings be recorded without the express consent of the principal. Legal counsel will NOT be permitted to attend any such conference.
- In the event that irreconcilable differences remain, the parties may seek the involvement of the Catholic School Department, but only after all school-level steps above have been followed. The Catholic School Department will address the dispute according to its procedures in effect at that time.
- Local advisory commissions (CSAC), or School Boards, or parent organizations are NOT part of this dispute resolution process.
- At all times during the dispute resolution process, the expectation is that differences and concerns, as well as steps in the process to resolve them, will not be made public in any way (e.g., social media, other media, etc.).

- Should it become obvious that a parent is unable or unwilling to support the philosophy and policies of the school, the implementation of those policies, or the established process for resolving conflicts, the principal may recommend or require that the parent(s)/guardian(s) transfer their child/children to another school.
- In any instance of a dispute between parents (such as over custody of children enrolled at the school), the school will make every effort to remain neutral, and the parents involved in the dispute must make every effort to resolve the dispute between themselves, and to keep it from affecting the school environment. Individual parents are prohibited from directing any requests to the school or staff members for information or assistance that is designed or calculated to give that parent an advantage in his or her dispute with the other parent.

About St. Mary Parish School

MISSION STATEMENT

As a ministry of St. Mary Parish, guided by the life of Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother, we love with devotion, learn with passion, and lead with faith.

VISION STATEMENT

St. Mary Parish School believes in Jesus as our founder, and that faith in Him guides our lives and moves us to action. We complement the role of the family as together we work toward the formation of students who know and live their faith. We guide them in developing gospel values, academic skills, an awareness of social responsibility, an aesthetic appreciation of life, and confidence in taking their place as responsible Christian citizens in society.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of St. Mary Parish School is rooted in the person of Jesus and we view Catholic education as an expression of the mission entrusted by Him to the Church. We support the goals of the Bishops of the United States: Message, Service and Community.

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children. The teachers, staff, and community of St. Mary Parish School complement and enhance the role of the parents, providing an environment that integrates Catholic values with strong academic programs.

We are dedicated to educating children to contribute to the common good by becoming active and caring members of the communities, cities, and nation in which they live.

Grounded in the spirit of the Gospel, we seek to foster a loving and supportive environment where each individual is accepted and encouraged to grow.

SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS (SLEs)

Stewards of God's Earth

People of prayer

Imaginative, enthusiastic, and creative

Respectful, loving, and kind

Intelligent, inquisitive learners

Traveling the path of Jesus

HISTORY

St. Mary Parish traces its roots to 1906 and Sacramento's Italian Catholic community. After World War II, parishioners relocated and built the present church at 58th and M Streets. Fundraising for a parish school followed, and St. Mary Parish School opened on September 18, 1955, initially serving kindergarten through fourth grade. A grade was added each year until the first eighth-grade class graduated in 1960. The school was first served by the Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate (Pallottine Sisters), followed by the Presentation Sisters; today, the school is staffed by lay educators. St. Mary Parish School continues this long tradition of faith, family, service, and Catholic education.

ACCREDITATION

St. Mary Parish School enjoys accreditation granted by the Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). These Associations are non-governmental, nationally recognized organizations whose members include elementary schools through collegiate institutions offering post-graduate instruction. Accreditation of an institution by these associations indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality periodically applied through a peer review process. An accredited school or college/university is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives clear evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

St. Mary Parish School, in the Diocese of Sacramento, mindful of their primary mission to be witnesses to the love of Christ for all, does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national and/or ethnic origin, or disability in the administration of education policies, scholarships and loan programs, and athletic, and other school-administered programs. For purposes of this policy, the term "sex" means the physical and biological presentation of a child's sex at birth without regard to gender identity or gender transition or affirmation.

School Structure and Organization

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Catholic Schools Association of Sacramento (CSAS), a fiduciary board of directors made up of Catholic laity under the governance of the Bishop of Sacramento, supervises the Catholic School Department (and specifically the Superintendent) in the delivery of the Bishop's vision for Catholic education. The CSAS board has no direct supervisory or managerial role over individual schools.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

The Catholic School Department (CSD) endeavors to support the mission of the Diocese of Sacramento in all of its administrative, operational, financial, intellectual, and spiritual pursuits. The CSD is committed to the mission of the Church by supporting Catholic faith formation and academic excellence for all to ensure life-long learning and the development of responsible and compassionate citizens. Beginning with the 2026–27 school year, the CSD utilizes a domain-specialist leadership model. Five Directors support all 32 diocesan schools through specialized areas of school leadership: Catholic Identity & Religious Leadership; Instructional Leadership & Curriculum; Student Services & School Culture; Administration, Operations & Finance; and Community, Communications & Enrollment. The Directors work collaboratively with the Executive Director/Superintendent and school principals to provide consultation, review, and support within their respective domains.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (SUPERINTENDENT)

The Executive Director, **Dr. Katie Perata**, oversees the entire program of the CSD.

CSD DIRECTORS

The CSD Directors provide specialized support to all diocesan schools within their respective domains: **Henry Garcia**, Catholic Identity & Religious Leadership; **Tosha Tillotson**, Instructional Leadership & Curriculum; **Janet Nagel**, Student Services & School Culture; **Don Gibbs**, Administration, Operations & Finance; and **Tom Jensen**, Community, Communications & Enrollment.

PASTOR

The Pastor, **Fr. George Thadathil CMI**, is the ex officio administrative officer of the parish school. As the Bishop is the chief pastor of the diocese, so is the Pastor the head of the parish; he is also responsible for all educational ministry programs within the parish. The Pastor delegates the day-to-day administration and educational leadership of St. Mary Parish School to the Principal, who works in collaboration with the Pastor and the Catholic School Department.

PARISH FINANCE COUNCIL

The parish finance council assists the pastor in the administration of all financial aspects of the parish.

PRINCIPAL

The school principal, **Amy Hale**, is delegated by the Pastor and the CSD to serve as the educational leader, responsible for managing the policies, regulations, and procedures to ensure that all students are supervised in a safe, traditional, Catholic learning environment that meets the approved curricula and mission of St. Mary Parish School. The Principal is responsible for the day-to-day administration and educational leadership of the school and works collaboratively with the Pastor and the Catholic School Department.

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

The Principal's Administrative Team aids the Principal in the administration of the school. At St. Mary Parish School, the Administrative Team includes Professional Learning Community (PLC) Leads and other team members as deemed necessary based on student and school needs.

FACULTY and STAFF

The faculty and staff are selected by the principal in consultation with the pastor and the CSD. A directory of faculty and staff may be found on FACTS Family Portal.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMISSION (CSAC)

The local Catholic School Advisory Commission (CSAC) consists of the pastor, principal, and nine to eleven members of the school or parish community, including a parent club officer and a rotating faculty representative. The CSAC works interactively with the Principal to fulfill the CSAC's consultative responsibilities regarding the school's Catholic Identity, parent engagement, strategic planning, facilities, marketing, and development activities; its role is collaborative and advisory only.

PARENT CLUB

All parents/guardians of St. Mary Parish School students are members of Parent Club. Parent Club works in partnership with school leadership to build community, support school events, and help meet annual fundraising goals established through the school's budget process. Families contribute their time, talent, and treasure through both fundraisers and community-building "friend-raisers" that strengthen relationships within the St. Mary Parish School community.

Calendar

The annual St. Mary Parish School calendar is published separately and communicated to families through FACTS and school communications. Families are responsible for reviewing the calendar for school days, holidays, minimum days, liturgies, conferences, and special events.

Schedule

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday:
8:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Thursday:
8:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

Minimum Days:
8:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Families should consult the annual school calendar and FACTS for holidays, professional development days, special schedules, and other changes to the regular school schedule.

Admission, Registration, and Financial Policies

PARTNERSHIP of SCHOOL and FAMILY

St. Mary Parish School works with the parents in the faith formation of their children and continues the value development begun in the home. The school, however, has a mission to carry out the educational ministry of the parish and diocese as a Catholic school and to form students in the Catholic faith. All students are expected to participate fully in Religion classes and other faith-formation activities subject to the restrictions by the Church.

Acceptance to St. Mary Parish School is a privilege, not a right. Parents have a right to apply to St. Mary Parish School for admission of their child(ren), but the privilege of attending the school is contingent upon the parents' acceptance of the school's program of formation and instruction and their willingness to accept responsibility for their portion of the cost of education. Admission of any student is at the sole discretion of the principal.

Because the Church acknowledges parents as the primary educators of their children, the school believes that it has a responsibility to continue the child's faith formation. If the parents' public beliefs, values, and practices cause disruption of the school's educational climate, it becomes impossible for the school to support the parents in the faith formation of their children. In cases where parents engage in such conduct, continued enrollment of their children may be denied.

Acceptance into St. Mary Parish School is dependent upon the ability of the school to meet the educational needs of the child. The school may not have all the resources necessary to meet the educational, physical, psychological, and/or emotional needs of an individual child. While the school will make an effort to accommodate reasonable needs, if the needs of the child exceed the resources of the school, the best interests of the child may be best served by placing the child in a different educational environment with appropriate resources for the child.

ADMISSION PRIORITIES

The order of priority for acceptance to St. Mary Parish School follows:

1. Continuing students in good standing at St. Mary Parish School who meet registration deadlines (students who do not meet registration deadlines may lose their priority standing).
2. Siblings of Catholic families attending St. Mary Parish School.
3. Siblings of non-Catholic families attending St. Mary Parish School.
4. Registered, active members of St. Mary Parish.
5. Alumni or relatives of currently enrolled students.
6. Registered, active members of another Catholic parish.
7. Non-registered, non-active, or non-Catholic families.

PROBATIONARY ADMISSION

All students are admitted to St. Mary Parish School on a probationary basis. Probation covers conduct as well as grades and general participation. The school administration may terminate enrollment at any time.

AGE for ADMISSION

- A child may be admitted to Transitional Kindergarten who is 4 years of age on or before September 1st.
- A child may be admitted to Kindergarten who is 5 years of age on or before September 1st; applicants must be developmentally ready, which shall be determined through appropriate screening.
- A child may be admitted into the first grade who is 6 years of age on or before September 1st.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

At the time of initial registration, the school will require parent(s) to provide the school with records that establish and verify the student's age, biological sex at birth, and vaccination history, and whether the student is Catholic and has received his or her Sacraments. As part of the registration, therefore, each school shall require the parent(s) to provide copies of the student's birth certificate, health records including an up-to-date immunization record, and Baptismal certificate (and Reconciliation, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation certificates, if applicable).

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

The school will require all children to submit proof of having received a health assessment during the 18 months prior to entrance into first grade. The principal may grant permission to extend this to 90 days after entrance.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunizations can be a complicated topic which may be explained more fully by the child's physician. Every child must show up-to-date proof of required immunizations by the submission of a current California School Immunization Record (this can be provided by the physician). This requirement applies regardless of on-site or off-site (e.g., distance learning) school operation.

- The school expects all new and continuing students to be immunized according to current California legal requirements (a good reference can be found at "shotsforschool," now a part of the CDPH website).

- Continuing students who are not in compliance (missed dose, new grade span, etc.) must have immunizations up to date within 30 days of notification or they may not attend school.
- Medical exemptions for enrollment may be considered on a case-by-case basis, provided the family has complied with state law on that topic. Medical exemptions can only be issued through The California Immunization Registry Medical Exemption website of the CDPH (CAIR-ME) by physicians licensed in California: <https://cair.cdph.ca.gov/exemptions/home>
- The school reserves the right, at the sole discretion of the principal (in consultation with the pastor), to deny admission to any student who is not fully immunized, even if there are qualifying medical grounds for exemption from the immunization requirement.
- Under California law, personal exemptions have been phased out and are no longer allowed.
- In addition to vaccines required for school entry, the CDPH strongly recommends that all students and staff be immunized each autumn against influenza unless contraindicated by personal medical conditions.
- Questions regarding immunizations should be directed to the principal.

APPLICATION PROCESS

New student applications are accepted online on the school website beginning in October and require a \$50 non-refundable application fee. Applications are considered incomplete until the application fee and all required documentation (see DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS above) have been received. Applications remain on the waiting list throughout the school year for which the application is completed. Parents will be notified by email regarding acceptance or non-acceptance.

REGISTRATION FEE

- A non-refundable registration fee of \$500 for all students in TK–8 is due and payable upon registration; students are not considered registered until the registration fee is paid in full.
- The registration fee for continuing students is due no later than March 1. Priority status may be forfeited if the registration fee is not received by the due date.
- ALL financial obligations for the previous school year, including fees due for the Extension and Preschool Programs, extra-curricular and co-curricular programs, and parent-hour and fundraising requirements, must be paid in full.
- Students transferring from another private school must have paid all fees at the previous school prior to registration at St. Mary Parish School.

TUITION

Tuition rates for 2026–2027:

- \$7,905 per year — 1 child in school
- \$14,810 per year — 2 children in school
- \$22,215 per year — 3 children in school
- \$29,620 per year — 4 children in school

The payment-in-full discount is no longer offered.

OTHER FEES

Grade-based class fees vary by grade, are charged through FACTS, and are non-refundable. Additional optional or activity-specific fees may apply when communicated by St. Mary Parish School.

TUITION COLLECTION

It is a requirement that ALL families be registered in the FACTS Tuition Management Company, even if the family prefers to make cash payments. The school office can assist families in establishing an account with FACTS.

Tuition is managed exclusively via the FACTS Tuition Management Company. Parents may select one of the following options:

- Ten payments: July 2026 – April 2027
- Eleven payments: July 2026 – May 2027
- Twelve payments: July 2026 – June 2027

If an account is in arrears, a student may be excluded from class until the account is brought current. For special circumstances, arrangements must be made with the pastor and principal. All monies owed to the school must be paid before a student can enroll for the following year. 8th grade families may only choose the 10 payment option.

FINANCIAL AID

FACTS Tuition Management Company manages all applications for financial aid.

COST of EDUCATION

The actual cost to educate one student in grades TK–8 at St. Mary Parish School during the **2026–27 academic year is \$9,034.**

Tuition and fees do not cover the actual cost of educating a child at St. Mary Parish School. Families whose financial situation enables them to pay the actual cost of education are encouraged to do so. Any amount paid above the stated tuition fee is a donation to St. Mary Parish School.

OTHER ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Each St. Mary Parish School family is required to complete a minimum of 25 service hours each year.

- 10 hours must support a major fundraising event: Jogathon, Auction, or Golf Tournament.
- 15 additional general volunteer hours must be completed. Up to 10 of these hours may be served with St. Mary Parish.
- Service hours are counted from April 1, 2026 through March 31, 2027 and must be recorded in FACTS by March 31.

Families that do not complete the required 25 service hours will be assessed a \$400 supplemental registration fee. Families that complete the hours but fail to record them in FACTS by March 31 will be assessed a \$50 processing fee.

Each family must contribute \$575 through fundraising and/or a personal monetary donation between April 1, 2026 and March 31, 2027.

Each family must earn a minimum of \$200 in RaiseRight rebates. This requirement is separate from the \$575 fundraising commitment. Rebates earned above \$200 may be applied toward the \$575 commitment.

WITHDRAWAL

Two weeks' notice by parents/guardians is required before the withdrawal of a student. An exit interview must also take place with the principal. Tuition and monthly extension contracts are prorated by day. All other fees/obligations will not be prorated. The registration fee and class fees are non-refundable. The school reserves the right to withhold student records until all financial obligations have been settled.

DELINQUENT TUITION and FEES PAYMENT POLICY

This policy outlines the need for timely payment of tuition and other related fees. If unforeseen financial difficulties arise, families should immediately contact the school principal in order to review the financial hardship and seek to find a mutually agreeable alternative tuition payment plan. Understanding that unexpected situations can and do arise, the school strives to work with families. However, the school must maintain an adequate revenue stream to meet its financial commitments and to ensure that all students and their families are treated fairly and equitably. When payments are not made in the manner described in the signed tuition contract, the following procedures will be followed by school administration:

30 Days Past Due

- The family will receive written notification from school administration that their account is past due along with a copy of this policy.
- The family must contact school administration within five business days of the receipt of the past due notice to remedy the situation.

60 Days Past Due

- The family will receive written notification from the principal that their account is past due along with a copy of this policy.
- At a minimum, students will not be permitted to participate in athletic activities or other extra-curricular activities until payments are current or an alternate payment plan is submitted by the family and approved by the principal.
- At the principal's discretion, students are subject to dismissal from the school. Students will not be permitted to attend school until the outstanding balance is paid in full or an alternative payment plan is submitted by the family and approved by the principal.

90 Days Past Due

- The family will receive written notification from the principal that their account is past due, along with a copy of this policy. The Catholic School Department will be notified as required by diocesan policy.
- Students will be dismissed from the school. Students will not be allowed to continue their education at any of the other Catholic schools in the Diocese until tuition and other related obligations are current. Our Catholic schools cannot accept registration from a family with an outstanding balance at any of the other schools in the Diocese.
- Unless an alternative payment is submitted by the family and approved by the principal, delinquent accounts: i) will be turned over to a collection agency; ii) will appear on a family's credit report; and ii) may be pursued in civil court.

Families of Eighth Grade Students with Delinquent Accounts

- All outstanding student balances for 8th grade students must be paid by May 1 of that academic year, or families must submit an alternative payment plan that is approved by the principal.
- Eighth grade students with past due balances will not be allowed to participate in the school's graduation ceremony until the past due balance is paid in full or an alternative payment plan is submitted by the family and approved by the principal.

Extension Program

The Extension Program at St. Mary Parish School provides professional care, supervision, homework support, recreation, and enrichment activities for students who require care beyond the regular school day. The Extension Program is an extension of the St. Mary Parish School community; therefore, all school policies and behavioral expectations contained in this handbook remain in effect during Extension. The Extension Program is available only to students enrolled at St. Mary Parish School and is offered for an additional fee.

HOURS AND DAYS

Morning Extension is available from 7:00 a.m. to 7:45 a.m., when students are dismissed to their classrooms. Afternoon Extension begins at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday; at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday; and at 12:15 p.m. on designated minimum days. The Extension Program closes promptly at 6:00 p.m.

Students who arrive on campus before regular morning supervision begins must be signed into the Extension Program. Students who remain on campus after their designated dismissal period must report to Extension unless they are participating in another school-approved, supervised activity. Students may not remain unsupervised on campus or immediately adjacent to campus before or after school to avoid using the Extension Program.

MINIMUM DAYS

On designated minimum days, Extension begins at 12:15 p.m. and continues until 6:00 p.m. **Students attending Extension on minimum days must bring a lunch from home when the school's regular lunch program is not available.**

EXTENSION FEES AND BILLING

Current Extension Program rates, registration information, payment options, drop-in rates, and billing procedures are communicated to families through the annual Extension Program materials. Students who are not regularly enrolled in Extension but require care after their designated dismissal period will be charged the applicable drop-in rate.

EXTENSION PROGRAM POLICIES

All St. Mary Parish School policies, including the contents of this handbook, apply to students while participating in the Extension Program.

Students attending Extension after school must check in immediately following their designated dismissal time unless they are first participating in another school-approved, supervised activity.

Students who remain after school for tutoring, athletics, clubs, or another supervised school activity are considered supervised only for the duration of that activity. Siblings may not remain on campus waiting for another student's activity to conclude unless they are enrolled in or using the Extension Program.

When a student will attend Extension following tutoring, athletics, a club, or another supervised activity, the Extension Program must be informed so staff know to expect the student.

Students who are not picked up during their designated dismissal period will be escorted to Extension. Applicable Extension charges will be assessed according to the family's enrollment status and current program rates.

Children will be released only to a parent/guardian or another adult authorized in FACTS to pick up the student. Extension staff may require government-issued photo identification from an adult they do not recognize before releasing a child.

If an emergency requires someone who is not listed as an authorized pickup person in FACTS to pick up a child, the parent/guardian must provide permission to the Extension Program. The individual will be required to present photo identification before the child is released.

Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping all emergency contact and authorized-pickup information in FACTS current at all times. No student may leave the Extension Program or school campus without completing the required sign-out procedure.

School personnel will not release a child to an adult who appears unable to provide safe transportation or care for the child, including an adult who appears intoxicated or impaired, or when the child demonstrates or expresses fear or anxiety about being released to that adult. In such circumstances, school personnel will contact another authorized adult. Law enforcement may be contacted when necessary to protect the child.

LATE PICKUP

The Extension Program closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. Families who pick up their child after 6:00 p.m. will be assessed a late fee of \$5.00 per minute, which will be billed to the family. After three late pickups, the parent/guardian must meet with the Extension Program Director to develop a reliable pickup plan.

EXTENSION PROGRAM CONTACT

The Extension Program may be contacted at **916-213-4287**.

Communication

SCHOOL CONTACT

Current school contact information is available through FACTS.

Attendance notifications should be sent to the student's teacher and attendance@saintmaryschool.com.

PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION

It is essential that parent/guardian contact information, emergency contacts, and authorized pickup information be kept current at all times in FACTS.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members of the staff will not divulge information concerning any student to anyone who does not have a clear "need to know." In disciplinary or academic situations, the only persons who meet this definition are appropriate members of the faculty/staff and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child(ren) involved.

OFFICE TELEPHONE USE

- Calls for students during school hours are to be for emergency only and are to be left with the school receptionist.
- Students may use the telephone for emergency calls only. The following are not considered emergencies: forgotten gym clothes, homework, lunches, or social arrangements after school.

COMMUNICATION from the SCHOOL

FACTS is the school's primary mode of communication. FACTS SIS is the student information system, and FACTS Tuition Management is where financial information is found. This login-protected site is for parents to have access to announcements, week-at-a-glance calendars for the school and each class, sign-ups, forms, RSVP's, lunch menus, grades, homework, progress reports. Please check FACTS SIS on a daily basis to receive the most up-to-date information and announcements. Grades and progress reports for grades 5-8 are updated on a regular basis. Progress Report dates are posted on the school calendar.

RECORDING CALLS and MEETINGS

Audio or video recording of a telephone call or any kind of meeting with school employees (either in-person or virtual) is strictly forbidden. Additionally, anyone present for a call or meeting (but not visible to others) must be identified to all participants.

SEPARATED PARENTS and BLENDED FAMILIES

- Any biological parent or custodial parent/guardian can reasonably expect to receive communication regarding his/her student; parents/guardians should work with the school to determine the appropriate means of receiving this communication.
- Financial communication will be provided to parents/guardians who are registered in FACTS.
- Parents are expected to be reasonable in expectations regarding information about their student(s).
- Homework and classwork are for students; it is unreasonable to expect that multiple copies of homework, etc., will be provided to students with more than one set of parents or more than one household. Each child will receive one copy of homework assignments, worksheets, etc. It is the student's responsibility to complete the work and take the work to separate households as needed.
- It is expected that one teacher conference will be held for a student and that separated parents come together for that brief time to focus on the student. Families should work with the principal regarding the need for any exception to this expectation.
- To avoid conflicts at school or at school events, parents are asked to follow whatever the courts have determined regarding days and times of custody arrangements.
- The school remains impartial regarding custodial arrangements and will abide by court documents only; it is the responsibility of each parent to see that the school has current copies of any documents regarding court directives as to custody. Accordingly, school personnel may not act as a liaison between parties and may not accept or deliver materials of any kind from one party to another.
- The school will attempt to interpret and apply any court order provided by the parents, but it is the parents' responsibility to go back to court for clarification if they think the school is applying or interpreting the order incorrectly.
- School employees will not provide written testimonials in support of a parent in a marital or custodial dispute; employees need to be subpoenaed at which time they can provide testimony in a setting managed by the court.
- It is the responsibility of any custodial parent to ensure that appropriate emergency contact information is current in FACTS.

CONTACTING TEACHERS

Parents must not interrupt a teacher during class time, which includes arrival and dismissal time. Instead, parents may make an appointment in person, leave a voice mail, or email the teacher directly. Teachers are directed to make reasonable efforts to respond to any messages within 48 hours. In the case of an urgent message, the office should be contacted. Parents and students should never call a teacher at home or on his or her cell phone.

E-MAIL USE

Email is a great means of communication which has been embraced by schools as an effective way to communicate back and forth between parents and teachers. However, the impersonal face of email unfortunately makes it easy to say things in such a manner that one would not use during a face-to-face meeting or in a personal phone call. The following guidelines govern appropriate e-mail use as well as the use of Group Me accounts and other social media:

- E-mail is an appropriate vehicle for quick, uncomplicated messages to teachers or administrators when time and/or confidentiality are not critical factors.
- E-mail is NOT an appropriate communication tool when a parent requires an immediate response or when the requested response would be highly sensitive and/or complex in nature.
- E-mail is an appropriate place to ask questions that require simple, direct answers.
- E-mail is NOT an appropriate communication for extensive chronologies, opinion statements, critiques, or judgments.
- E-mail should NOT be used to avoid a difficult situation; the people involved should be spoken to directly.
- E-mail messages lack the nuances of voice inflection or facial expressions that are part of personal conversations and are therefore open to misinterpretation.
- E-mail should NOT be used when the sender is upset.

DELIVERIES and FORGOTTEN ITEMS

- Any deliveries to students such as lunches, books, athletic equipment, or homework must be made in the office and not the classroom. Items should be clearly labeled with student first and last name and grade level.
- Birthday presents, balloons, and gifts, etc., are not to be sent to the school office for any student; such items will not be delivered to the classroom but may be picked up by a parent.

BACK to SCHOOL NIGHT

Back-to-School Night is held near the beginning of each school year. This event offers parents/guardians the opportunity to meet their child's teachers, receive important school-year information and expectations, and learn about the classroom culture and the year ahead.

Back-to-School Night is a required parent/guardian event. At least one parent/guardian from each family is expected to attend. Families with more than one student are encouraged to have both parents/guardians attend when possible so they can participate in the presentations for each of their children. Families receive parent service hours for attending Back-to-School Night.

PARENT/GUARDIAN SERVICE AND INVOLVEMENT

St. Mary Parish School depends upon the active partnership of families in building a strong school and parish community. Parent and guardian involvement strengthens relationships among families, supports the programs and events that benefit our students, and provides an important example of service and stewardship for our

children. Through schoolwide events, class hospitality responsibilities, Parent Club activities, parish service, and other volunteer opportunities, families share in the work of creating the welcoming community that distinguishes St. Mary Parish School.

FAMILY SERVICE REQUIREMENT

Each St. Mary Parish School family is required to complete a minimum of 25 service hours each year. Ten hours must support a major school fundraising event: Jogathon, Auction, or Golf Tournament. Fifteen additional general volunteer hours must also be completed; up to 10 of these hours may be served with St. Mary Parish. Service hours are counted from April 1 through March 31 and must be recorded in FACTS by March 31.

Families that do not complete the required 25 service hours will be assessed a \$400 supplemental registration fee. Families that complete the hours but fail to record them in FACTS by March 31 will be assessed a \$50 processing fee. Service requirements may be prorated for families enrolling after the beginning of the service-year period.

COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEER SERVICE

When a parent/guardian signs up for a volunteer shift or responsibility, event leaders and other volunteers rely upon that commitment. Families are expected to fulfill the volunteer responsibilities for which they register. If an unexpected circumstance prevents a volunteer from serving, the volunteer must notify the event chair or designated coordinator as soon as possible and, when requested, make reasonable efforts to arrange an approved replacement. Service hours will not be awarded for missed volunteer commitments. Repeated failure to fulfill volunteer commitments may affect a family's eligibility for certain volunteer opportunities.

CLASS HOSPITALITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

In partnership with Parent Club, St. Mary Parish School families share responsibility for supporting the special events and community-building activities that contribute to a welcoming and vibrant school community. For the 2026–27 school year, class responsibilities are:

- TK — Welcome Year: TK families are given their first year to become acclimated to and feel welcomed into the St. Mary Parish School community.
- Kindergarten — Campus Stewards Committee
- 1st Grade — Hospitality for TK Promotion
- 2nd Grade — Hospitality for Kindergarten Promotion
- 3rd Grade — Community Partnership Committee
- 4th & 5th Grades — Hospitality and door decorating for Teacher Appreciation Week
- 6th Grade — Hospitality for Grand Day
- 7th Grade — Hospitality for the Baccalaureate Brunch
- 8th Grade — Hospitality for the Catholic Schools Week Open House Community Breakfast

Parent Club and school leadership will communicate specific volunteer opportunities, responsibilities, and needs associated with each assignment.

Visiting the School and Volunteering

VISITING THE SCHOOL AND CAMPUS ACCESS

- St. Mary Parish School is a closed campus. Access to the campus and school buildings during the school day is limited to enrolled students, faculty/staff, authorized volunteers, and registered visitors who have a legitimate school-related purpose for being on campus.

- Visitors may not enter or move through school buildings, classrooms, playgrounds, or other student areas without authorization. All visitors must report to the School Office upon arrival, present a valid government-issued photo identification when requested or required by school visitor-management procedures, complete the school visitor registration/check-in process, wear the visitor badge issued by the school so that it remains clearly visible for the entire visit, remain in the designated reception/waiting area until met by an authorized staff member, and be escorted by a staff member when entering areas of campus not otherwise authorized for visitor access.
- Visitors may not proceed directly to classrooms, playgrounds, offices, or other areas of campus to locate a student or employee. Unaccompanied siblings who are not enrolled at St. Mary Parish School are not permitted on campus during school hours without prior authorization.
- Pets are not permitted on campus unless specifically authorized by school administration.
- St. Mary Parish School reserves the right to deny, limit, or revoke access to campus or school buildings when the principal or designee determines that doing so is necessary to protect student safety, preserve the learning environment, or support the orderly operation of the school.

CLASSROOM VISITS

- Parents/guardians wishing to visit or observe their child's classroom must arrange the visit in advance with the teacher and principal. The principal reserves the right to approve, limit, reschedule, or decline classroom visits when necessary to protect student privacy, minimize disruption to instruction, or support the orderly operation of the school.
- Children who are not enrolled at St. Mary Parish School may not accompany adults into classrooms or participate in classroom activities without prior authorization.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS and GUIDELINES

Parents, guardians, grandparents, relatives, and other adults who volunteer at school events, drive on field trips, help in classrooms, coach or assist with coaching, or otherwise serve in a volunteer capacity must complete all requirements established by St. Mary Parish School and the Diocese of Sacramento before volunteering.

Before serving, volunteers must complete the required fingerprint/background clearance, Safe Environment training, Mandated Reporter training, Volunteer Agreement, and Adult Liability Waiver. Additional requirements apply to adults who transport students.

Volunteer clearances and training must remain current as required. St. Mary Parish School may limit, suspend, or revoke volunteer privileges at its discretion. Volunteering at St. Mary Parish School is a privilege, not a right.

ADDITIONAL DRIVING and INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Current Signed School/Parish Volunteer Driver Information Form with copies of documents as indicated provided to school office.
2. All volunteers who drive children for school-sponsored activities must be 25 years of age or older with a valid, non-probationary driver's license and at least 3 years of driving experience. The driver may have no physical or cognitive limitations that impair safe driving.
3. The privately owned vehicle policy must provide liability coverage on the driven in the amounts no less than \$100,000.00 individual/ \$300,000.00 cumulative each loss or occurrence, bodily injury; \$50,000.00 property damage; \$5,000.00 per person medical; and \$100,000.00 uninsured motorist insurance. Owner's insurance is primary.
4. Vehicle must be in roadworthy condition: tires, lights, wipers, mirrors, brakes, and seatbelts fully functional; no warning lights present.

5. No vehicle larger than a 10-passenger vehicle may be used, but no more than 8 riders (including the driver) may occupy the vehicle (removal of seats to meet these requirements is not allowed).
6. The number of persons in a car should not exceed the number for which the car was constructed.
7. The school must have a copy of the driver's license and current proof of insurance for any volunteer who will be driving students in connection with the school activity.
8. Volunteer drivers must strictly adhere to the itinerary of the planned trip; no deviation is allowed.
9. Field trips must begin and end at school.
10. Drivers may not bring siblings or younger children.
11. Those not designated as chaperones or drivers may not participate in the field trip in such a way as to interact with students or other adults, even if the field trip is in a public venue. Parents and relatives may patronize the public venue but not join the field trip participants.
12. It is the policy of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Sacramento that field trips are an extension of the normal school day, and that they therefore constitute "school zones" for purposes of the Gun-Free School Zones Act of 1995 (CA Penal Code section 626.9). Accordingly, chaperones and drivers on a school field trip may not carry a firearm in their vehicle or on their person at any time during that activity, regardless of whether they otherwise possess a valid license to do so. A violation of this policy may result in suspension of volunteer rights or other more serious disciplinary response.

SEAT BELTS AND CAR SEATS

(Through Dec. 31, 2026): All children must wear a seat belt or be secured in an appropriate child passenger restraint system meeting federal motor vehicle safety standards as appropriate for their age and weight. Any child under 8 years of age must be secured in a car seat or booster seat in the back seat of the vehicle (unless all back seats are already occupied by younger children). A child under the age of 8 who is 4'9" in height or taller may be properly restrained by a safety belt instead of child passenger restraint system.

(Beginning Jan. 1, 2027): A new law, AB 435, effective January 1, 2027, updates safety standards for older children, likely requiring many to use booster seats longer, moving from an age/height requirement to a 5-step, fit-based safety standard to prevent injuries to pre-teens.

5-Step Proper Seat Belt Fit Test (without a booster seat):

- Child sits all the way back against the seat.
- Knees bend comfortably at the edge of the seat.
- Lap belt rests on the top of the thighs (not stomach).
- Shoulder belt rests on the collarbone (not neck or face).
- Child can stay seated like this for the whole trip.

OVERNIGHT EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

As part of St. Mary Parish School's commitment to educating the whole child, students in grades 5, 6, and 7 participate in grade-level overnight educational experiences. These trips extend learning beyond the classroom and provide opportunities to deepen understanding of science and the natural world while developing independence, responsibility, resilience, collaboration, leadership, and stronger relationships with classmates and teachers.

- Grade 5 — NatureBridge at Golden Gate
- Grade 6 — Sly Park Environmental Education Center
- Grade 7 — Westminster Woods

Families will receive detailed information regarding each trip, including dates, transportation, accommodations, supervision, health and safety requirements, packing information, and required forms.

The cost of each student's overnight educational experience will be billed to the family's FACTS account in three installments in July, August, and September.

Families experiencing financial difficulty are encouraged to contact the principal so that available options for supporting student participation may be discussed confidentially.

- Students must have a signed permission slip for each trip which is distributed by the students' teacher. No other signed form can be substituted, and no phone call authorization can be taken.
- Those transporting children must have completed all requirements as listed above, must drive site-to-site according to the field trip form, follow routes given by teacher, and follow the volunteer guidelines as listed in this handbook. The minimum age for a driver is twenty-five (25). Those driving or chaperoning may not bring younger children on the trip. No detours or unscheduled stops may be taken.
- As students are representing St. Mary Parish School, they are required to wear the school uniform on all trips away from school unless the principal decides otherwise.

VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS

Adults working with children/youth as part of the ministry of the Diocese of Sacramento must strictly follow the following rules and guidelines as a condition of providing services to the children and youth of the diocese. This Code of Ethics also applies to parents/guardians who are on campus or attending a school event where children are present.

Adults working with children/youth will:

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration;
- Collaborate with other adults in service to children and/or youth;
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth;
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth with whom the adult comes in contact;
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth with whom the adult comes in contact;
- Report suspected abuse or neglect in accordance with California mandated-reporting requirements. The obligation to report belongs to the individual who observes or suspects the abuse or neglect and may not be impeded by a supervisor or administrator;
- Cooperate fully with authorities in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

Adults working with children/youth will not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of, or provide these products to, children and/or youth;
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or marijuana at any time while volunteering, and will not make alcohol or marijuana available to anyone under the age of 21;
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time, and will not make illegal drugs available to children and/or youth;
- Pose any serious health risk to children and/or youth (e.g., contagious illnesses);
- Strike, spank, shake, grab, or slap children and/or youth (unless the physical action is necessary to prevent harm or injury);
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or youth;
- Touch a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner;

- Use any discipline that unreasonably frightens or humiliates children and/or youth;
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth;
- Share personal contact information with youth or e-mail, text, or message youth unless principal and parents are included; or
- Take photographs or videos of students or post these to any social media site unless expressly requested to do so by the Principal; these must be checked for authorization by parent/guardian to release.

FIELD TRIPS

- Students must have a signed permission slip for each trip which is distributed by the students' teacher. No other signed form can be substituted, and no phone call authorization can be taken.
- Those transporting children must have completed all requirements as listed above, must drive site-to-site according to the field trip form, follow routes given by teacher, and follow the volunteer guidelines as listed in this handbook. The minimum age for a driver is twenty-five (25). Those driving or chaperoning may not bring younger children on the trip. No detours or unscheduled stops may be taken.
- As students are representing St. Mary Parish School, they are required to wear the school uniform on all trips away from school unless the principal decides otherwise.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES and REQUIREMENTS

St. Mary Parish School offers families many opportunities to fulfill their annual service commitment through schoolwide events, major fundraisers, Parent Club activities, classroom and campus support, athletics, field trips, class hospitality responsibilities, and approved service to St. Mary Parish. Families are responsible for selecting volunteer opportunities that allow them to complete the required 25 service hours and for recording completed hours in FACTS by March 31. Ten hours must support a major school fundraising event (Jogathon, Auction, or Golf Tournament); the remaining 15 hours are general volunteer hours, with up to 10 of those hours permitted in service to St. Mary Parish. All volunteers must satisfy the clearance, Safe Environment, waiver, and other requirements described in this handbook before serving in a volunteer capacity. See also PARENT/GUARDIAN SERVICE AND INVOLVEMENT, COMMITMENT TO VOLUNTEER SERVICE, and CLASS HOSPITALITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE.

Curriculum

St. Mary Parish School embraces the vision of a Catholic educational philosophy. Christian values and traditions of the Catholic faith are integrated into the curriculum and all teaching/learning situations, within and beyond the classroom.

Guidelines for the curriculum at St. Mary Parish School are developed and implemented in cooperation with the Catholic School Department of the Diocese of Sacramento. The curriculum is carefully coordinated throughout all grades. Teachers and school administration review and evaluate textbooks cyclically and sequentially according to specified curriculum areas to insure that Diocesan standards are met. In math and language arts, the school has adopted the California State Common Core Curriculum Standards; in science, next-generation science standards have been adopted. All other subjects will remain aligned to the California State Standards and Diocesan Religion standards. Further specifics regarding the curriculum can be provided by the principal.

ESSENTIAL CORE CURRICULUM

St. Mary Parish School provides complete academic instruction in essential core curricular subjects: English/language arts, reading/literature, religion, mathematics, science, history/social studies, and physical education.

NATIVE PEOPLES and MISSIONS COURSE for all CALIFORNIA CATHOLIC SCHOOL FOURTH GRADERS

The following e-course is a required part of the fourth grade Social Studies curriculum, per the California Bishops: <https://mlearn.smp.org/>

All fourth grade teachers must include and teach this course which covers three out of the five 4th grade History/Social Studies Standards (4.1, 4.2, and 4.3). More information may be obtained from the Principal.

CIRCLE of GRACE

Circle of Grace is a Safe Environment curriculum required by the Diocese of Sacramento that helps to form and educate children and youth about the value of proper, positive relationships with God and others.

EDUCATION in VIRTUE

The Education in Virtue curriculum is a requirement for all grades.

ENRICHMENT CURRICULUM

Students participate in programs of study in music, art, and Spanish as an enrichment of the academic curriculum.

MODIFIED CURRICULUM and/or ACCOMMODATIONS for STUDENTS with DISABILITIES

- Students with identified learning disabilities may receive reasonable accommodations to assist with their academic success. Such accommodations may include added time to complete class work or homework, preferred classroom seating, minimizing distractions, etc. These accommodations will be discussed on an individual basis with the family, teacher(s), and principal.
- Students with identified learning disabilities who require that the curriculum be reasonably modified to meet their learning needs will have such modifications noted on grade reporting or transcripts with an “M”; however, such notification will not indicate the reason for the modification. A modified curriculum will be the result of collaboration with the family, teacher(s), and principal.

Families with students coming from a public school with an already-established IEP (Individualized Educational Program or Plan) or a 504 Plan are advised that such plans relate to public school; if a family wants the full implementation of an IEP (or full access as outlined in a 504 Plan) from the public system, they must enroll the student in public school. Catholic schools endeavor to work with the public school and the family to address whatever needs they can in terms of an IEP or 504 but are only required to implement reasonable accommodations.

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM

A Student Success Team is used to identify student needs and develop a plan to address those needs in order to assist individual students. A Student Success Team consists of the classroom teacher, principal, parents, and the student, as appropriate. Intervention responsibilities are clarified for the school, parents, and the student.

RELIGION CLASSES, SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION, and WORSHIP

- Consistent with its status as an educational ministry and apostolate of the parish and diocese, St. Mary Parish School provides daily religious instruction (Catechesis) that educates children every year, at every grade level, in the four pillars of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Profession of Faith, The Celebration of the Christian Mystery, Life in Christ, and Christian Prayer. This age-appropriate approach invites students to discover the meaning and presence of God’s activity in their lives and to encounter and know the faith of our Catholic Christian community.

- Students in 2nd Grade prepare for, and receive, the sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist during the school year.
- Students at St. Mary Parish School begin preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation in 7th grade and receive the sacrament in 8th grade.
- All students who receive sacraments must be baptized and active, participating members of the Catholic faith.
- Each school day begins with prayer in the classroom. Opportunities for community and personal prayer are offered throughout the school day (e.g., M&Ms, Lunch Blessings, Dismissal Prayers). Prayer services celebrating the church calendar are offered throughout the school year.
- Mass is celebrated as a school community weekly.
- Opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation are offered during Advent and Lent, as parish scheduling permits.

FIELD TRIPS

Faculty members may arrange, in collaboration with and approval of school administration, field trips of an interesting and educational nature for their students. See also VISITING the SCHOOL and VOLUNTEERING.

LIBRARY

All St. Mary Parish School students in grades TK–8 visit the library as part of the school program. Students are encouraged to seek the assistance of the librarian/teacher when needed. Students are responsible for library materials checked out to them, and families are responsible for the cost of replacing library books that are lost or damaged beyond normal use.

TEXTBOOKS

Most textbooks are loaned to students and remain the property of St. Mary Parish School. Students are responsible for the care of all textbooks issued to them. Textbooks must be covered to help protect them from damage and must be returned at the end of the school year in good condition. Lost or badly damaged textbooks must be replaced at the family's expense.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE PROGRAM

St. Mary Parish School students are expected to bring their faith to others through the concept of “Love in Action.” It is one thing to discuss our faith during class time, but it is through caring for and serving others that students learn to recognize and respond to the presence of God in their lives.

The Christian Service Program is designed to help students build the habit of service through regular, age-appropriate opportunities to serve others. Students are expected to complete the following minimum service hours during the school year by May 1:

- TK — 1/2 hour
- Kindergarten — 3/4 hour
- Grade 1 — 2 hours
- Grade 2 — 3 hours
- Grade 3 — 4 hours
- Grade 4 — 5 hours
- Grade 5 — 6 hours
- Grade 6 — 7 hours
- Grade 7 — 8 hours
- Grade 8 — 9 hours*

*Does not include Sacrament hours

Christian service is time spent helping another person or serving the community without compensation. As students grow, they are encouraged to take increasing ownership of identifying meaningful ways to serve. Students in grades 6–8 are expected to complete a Personalized Christian Service Plan. Students are expected to dress appropriately for the service performed and to serve courteously and enthusiastically.

Student Evaluation

PARENTS as PRIMARY EDUCATORS

As the primary educators of their children, parents are expected to make frequent use of FACTS SIS to monitor student progress and to take the initiative to contact teachers should they develop a concern.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

The Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Sacramento use a comprehensive, formative assessment program called STAR Renaissance. These assessments of Common Core standards are administered to grades K - 8 four times per year. They are criterion-referenced and indicate a student's mastery level of specific grade-level standards. No student may be opted out of standardized testing.

HOMEWORK

Homework is assigned for the purpose of applying and reinforcing concepts, skills, and values being learned in the classroom. Homework supports and enhances previously introduced material and is a valuable way of fostering good, independent study habits. Homework is an effective method for enrichment, as well as extending the curriculum beyond school hours.

HOMEWORK TIME ALLOTMENT GUIDELINES

Actual homework time will vary by student; the amount of time provided to work on assignments during the school day, the instructional calendar, and individual use of time are factors impacting the amount of homework a student may have on a given day.

Homework will be assigned on a regular basis Monday through Thursday. Written homework is ordinarily not assigned over the weekends and/or holidays with the exception of assignments not completed and/or special projects. Homework time allotment guidelines per day for Catholic schools within the Diocese of Sacramento are as follows:

- Grades 1st and 2nd 20-30 minutes
- Grades 3rd and 4th 30-45 minutes
- Grades 5th and 6th 45-60 minutes
- Grades 7th and 8th 60-120 minutes

MISSED HOMEWORK DUE to ABSENCE

- Missed assignments are the student's responsibility.
- Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each class period absence to make-up the missed assignments, quizzes, or tests. For example, a student who was absent three days would be given three school days to complete the missed work.
- When a student is absent for three or more days due to illness, a parent may call the school office before 9:30 a.m. to arrange for the pick-up of homework assignments.

- Any absence that is not due to personal illness or injury, medical/dental appointment, funeral, or for religious observances/celebrations is considered unexcused. When parent(s) wish to take their child out of school for several days for personal reasons, they should discuss the student's progress with the teacher and principal who will advise them of the effect such an absence would have on the pupil's school work.
- The school is under no obligation to provide tutoring, makeup work, or special testing schedules for unexcused absences. The principal, in consultation with the teacher, has final and absolute discretion to determine the conditions and terms governing such absences.
- If a student must leave school prior to the last day of school, an incomplete grade may be given in any affected subject areas. All work necessary to clear the incomplete from the transcript must be completed during the summer in order for grades to be entered for the third trimester for the year. The principal has final and absolute discretion to determine the conditions and terms governing such absences.
- The school calendar provides for extended weekends and vacations throughout 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.

GRADING

The following academic grading scales have been adopted by St. Mary Parish School for essential curricular subjects in accordance with the report card standards determined by the Catholic School Department of the Diocese of Sacramento. St. Mary Parish School uses a Standards-Referenced Grading report card in grades TK–4. Students in grades 5–8 are evaluated using a percentage scale.

GRADES TK–4 — STANDARDS-REFERENCED GRADING

- Exceeds the Standard — 4.0
- Mastery of Grade-Level Standard — 3.0
- Progressing Toward Grade-Level Standard — 2.0
- Initial Progress Toward Grade-Level Standard — 1.0
- Not Evaluated — NE

For students in grades TK–4, 3.0 is the target for mastery of a standard.

GRADES 5–8 — PERCENTAGE SCALE

- 96–100% (A)
- 90–95% (A-)
- 87–89% (B+)
- 83–86% (B)
- 80–82% (B-)
- 77–79% (C+)
- 73–76% (C)
- 70–72% (C-)
- 67–69% (D+)
- 63–66% (D)
- 60–62% (D-)
- 0–59% (F)

CONDUCT / EFFORT

Students are expected to be prepared for daily studies, diligent in their academic work, prompt in completing assignments, and positive contributors to the learning environment. Conduct and effort are reported using the grade-level reporting standards established by St. Mary Parish School.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Assessment

Assessment is a comprehensive set of practices that analyze, inform, and drive student learning. The school will employ a system of integrated assessment that includes:

- Routine, ongoing, and developmentally appropriate formative assessment at the classroom level toward the goal of responsive instruction for each student.
- Ongoing summative assessments at the classroom level measuring student mastery of content standards and extending the practice of responsive instruction for each student.
- Intermittent school-wide assessment providing normative data for progress monitoring of individual students, student groups, and school improvement.
- Standardized summative assessment to direct ongoing school improvement.

Grading Practices

Effective grading practices are necessary for improved teaching and learning which will support the following guiding principles:

- Assessment and grading are ongoing processes that guide continuous learning.
- Grading should be standards-based and reflect what students know and are able to do.
- Grading should be transparent and promote common understanding between students, parents, teachers, and schools.
- Grading should support a growth mindset.
- Grading should only reflect student achievement toward the standard.
- The purpose of homework is to check for understanding, provide feedback, reinforce the standards and prepare students for summative assessments.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Student academic progress is available to parents/guardians through FACTS. At a minimum, formal progress reports are provided at the midpoint of each trimester for students in grades 1–8. A progress report is not a report card; rather, it provides an indication of the student's progress to date. Parents/guardians and students are encouraged to review progress together and contact the teacher when there are questions or concerns regarding academic performance. Progress report dates are identified on the school calendar.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued for students in grades TK–8 at the close of each trimester. Report cards are available through FACTS SIS, and a printed copy is sent home with each student. Parents/guardians are not required to sign and return report cards.

Students who have been absent 10 or more school days during a trimester may receive an Incomplete in affected subject areas.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences provide an opportunity for parents/guardians and teachers to discuss a student's academic progress, work habits, conduct, and overall growth. Scheduled conferences are held during the school year as indicated on the school calendar. Parents/guardians or teachers may request additional conferences whenever concerns arise or additional communication would benefit the student.

Conferences should be scheduled in advance so that teachers can provide their full attention to the conversation and instructional time is not interrupted.

ACADEMIC WARNING AND PROBATION

Students whose academic performance, effort, and/or grade-level skills indicate a need for significant improvement will be placed on an academic contract outlining steps for improvement. Signatures of all parties may be required for continued enrollment.

An academic contract may be considered academic warning. If the student's performance does not improve, the contract will be reissued for a second trimester.

If, at the end of the second trimester, the student has not met the goals established in the academic contract, the student will be placed on academic probation at the beginning of the next academic trimester. Students on academic probation may be subject to academic dismissal from the school at the end of any academic trimester in which their efforts have been unsatisfactory.

Final end-of-year grading from the previous school year determines a student's initial eligibility status. Students on academic probation may not participate in extracurricular activities such as athletics, drama, and clubs.

BEHAVIORAL PROBATION

A student whose behavior demonstrates serious or ongoing concerns may be placed on behavioral probation. A behavioral contract will identify the specific behaviors of concern, expectations for improvement, supports and/or interventions to be provided, and the timeframe in which improvement is expected.

The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed of the terms of the behavioral contract. Continued enrollment may be contingent upon the student's successful completion of the contract and demonstrated improvement in behavior.

Failure to meet the expectations established in the behavioral contract may result in additional disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from St. Mary Parish School.

Students on behavioral probation may not participate in extracurricular activities such as athletics, drama, and clubs.

PROMOTION

Students who satisfactorily complete the academic requirements of their grade level and demonstrate appropriate readiness for advancement will be promoted to the next grade.

RETENTION

When a student's academic progress and/or developmental readiness indicate that retention may be appropriate, the teacher will consult with the principal and a conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be arranged as soon as possible. Retention decisions will be made after careful consideration of the student's individual needs and overall development.

PLACEMENT

A student who has exceeded the allowable number of absences and/or tardies during the school year may be placed in the next grade rather than promoted. Placement may be used when a student's attendance has resulted in insufficient participation in instructional time for the school to confidently determine that the student has satisfactorily completed the academic requirements of the current grade, but retention is not determined to be in the student's best educational interest.

A decision to place a student will be made by the principal in consultation with the student's teacher(s), taking into consideration the student's academic performance, attendance, developmental needs, and overall educational well-being.

Placement in the next grade is not the same as promotion and may be accompanied by recommendations or requirements intended to support the student's successful transition to the next grade.

ACCELERATION

Acceleration of a student may be cautiously granted upon the recommendation of the teacher, at the discretion of the principal, and with the approval of the parent(s)/guardian(s). The student's academic readiness and social and emotional maturity must be carefully evaluated whenever acceleration is considered.

TRIMESTER STUDENT RECOGNITION

St. Mary Parish School recognizes students each trimester for growth and the development of virtue. These awards celebrate the whole child and acknowledge that student growth may be demonstrated academically, socially, behaviorally, spiritually, or personally. All students in grades TK–8 are eligible for trimester recognition.

- **MUSTANG STRIDE AWARD — SIGNIFICANT GROWTH**

The Mustang Stride Award recognizes students who have demonstrated significant growth during the trimester. Growth may be demonstrated in academics or in other areas of a student's development.

- **MUSTANG GALLOP AWARD — TREMENDOUS GROWTH**

The Mustang Gallop Award recognizes students who have demonstrated tremendous growth during the trimester, reflecting exceptional progress from where they began.

- **CARDINAL VIRTUE AWARDS**

Each trimester, each teacher recognizes one student for each of the four Cardinal Virtues: Justice, Prudence, Fortitude, and Temperance. These awards recognize students who demonstrate exemplary growth in and practice of these virtues through their choices, actions, and interactions with others.

AWARDS

St. Mary Parish School recognizes students for academic achievement, growth, Christian virtue, leadership, service, citizenship, athletics, and other areas of accomplishment throughout the school year. Additional awards and scholarships may be presented to graduating eighth-grade students as appropriate.

EIGHTH GRADE PROMOTION

Promotion from eighth grade to high school may require the following:

- Achievement of a passing grade in all subject areas
- Completion and submission of required assignments
- Completion of the SLE Portfolio
- Return of all school property in good condition
- Return of athletic uniforms, if applicable
- Payment of all outstanding student balances by May 1, or an alternative payment plan approved by the principal

Eighth-grade promotion marks an important transition from elementary and middle school to high school. To mark the spiritual significance of the Catholic elementary and middle school experience, the Bishop celebrates a diocesan-wide Mass at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament for eighth-grade students. Families will receive specific information regarding the Mass.

Eighth-grade promotion activities and ceremonies are privileges reserved for students in good standing. Students on academic or behavioral probation, students whose school financial accounts are not current or covered by an approved payment plan, or students whose behavior poses a significant disruption to school activities may be restricted from participating in promotion celebrations or ceremonies.

The School Day and Attendance

SCHOOL and OFFICE HOURS

The regular school day for students in grades TK–8 is **8:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday** and **8:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. on Thursday**.

Student supervision begins at **7:45 a.m.** Students who arrive before 7:45 a.m. must be signed into the Extension Program.

Office hours and special-day schedules are communicated to families through FACTS and school communications.

CLOSED CAMPUS

St. Mary Parish School is a closed campus. Once students arrive on campus, they may not leave at any time during the school day unless they are signed out by an authorized adult. At the end of the day, students must follow the dismissal guidelines outlined below.

ARRIVAL

Students may be on campus beginning at 7:45 a.m. Students arriving before 7:45 a.m. must be signed into the Extension Program.

TK and Kindergarten students enter through the Front Gate. Students in grades 1–4 use the Loop for morning drop-off. Students in grades 5–8 may use either the Front Gate or the Loop.

Families using the Loop must remain in their vehicles and follow the directions of supervising staff. Parking, leaving a vehicle unattended, or allowing a student to cross active traffic lanes is not permitted in the Loop.

The Front Gate and Breezeway Gate are secured at 8:00 a.m. TK–8 students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must enter through the Front Office and be signed in by a parent/guardian.

DISMISSAL

TK and Kindergarten students are dismissed through the Front Gate. Students in grades 1–4 are dismissed through the Loop. Students in grades 5–8 may be dismissed through the Loop or through the Front Gate when the family has completed the school's Walk-Off permission process.

When siblings use different dismissal locations, the older sibling will retrieve the younger sibling and the family will use the dismissal method assigned to the older child.

Students who are not picked up during their designated dismissal period will be escorted to Extension unless they are participating in another school-approved, supervised activity.

DROP-OFF and PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Families must follow the arrival and dismissal procedures established by St. Mary Parish School and the directions of supervising staff at all times. Drivers must proceed slowly and cautiously, use only designated loading areas, and may not create alternate drop-off or pick-up locations.

Students may not be released from or picked up in an active traffic lane except through the school's established Loop procedure. Parents/guardians who need to park or conduct school business must use an appropriate legal parking space and enter through the Front Office.

WALKERS and BIKE RIDERS

Students who walk or bike to school must have written parental permission on file in the School Office. Students riding bicycles must wear helmets. Bicycles may not be ridden on school grounds but must be walked to and from the bicycle rack. Bicycles are not to be left at school overnight. The school is not responsible for bicycles left in the bicycle rack, and students are encouraged to use locks to secure their property. Students who walk or ride to school may not leave campus once they have arrived until dismissal.

MINIMUM DAYS

Certain school days are designated minimum days; dismissal is at 12:15pm. These days are noted on the calendar.

ABSENCES

- If a student is absent, a parent/guardian must notify the school before 8:30am on the date of the absence with the reason. If the office does not receive a phone call, parents/guardians will be contacted.
- Parents/guardians must notify the office if a child has been diagnosed as having a contagious condition (e.g., chicken pox, strep, lice, etc.) so that precautions can be taken and notifications sent home. Student confidentiality will be observed.
- A written excuse from the parent/guardian stating the reason for an absence must be presented to the office by the student upon returning to school.
- Medical/dental appointments are considered excused absences. Parents must send a note to the office prior to the appointment informing the teacher and the office that the student will be leaving the school premises or arriving late. Before leaving the school grounds and upon returning, the parent/guardian or designated adult must sign-in the student at the school office.
- A student must attend at least half the school day to be eligible to participate in any extracurricular activity scheduled that same day (e.g., athletic games, class parties, field trips, etc.).

TARDIES

- It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to see that their children arrive by 8:00am. A child is considered tardy if he/she is not in line or in the classroom by the 8:00am bell.
- The parent/guardian must sign-in the tardy student at the office; students must not be taken directly to the classroom. Students who are tardy must receive a tardy slip from the office prior to admittance to class.

EXCESSIVE ABSENCE and TARDINESS

- Excessive absence is considered a total of 18 days per school year. Any student who reaches that level of absences is subject to disenrollment from the school.
- Excessive absence for reasons of illness will be handled on an individual basis because the school expects any student who is ill to stay home so as not to expose others.

- Cases of absence for reason of a mandated quarantine will also not be counted in the tally of excessive absences.
- In periods of school closure when distance learning is implemented, families must follow the school's procedure for taking attendance daily.
- Excessive tardiness or absence will result in a parent conference with the teacher and/or principal. Persistent tardiness or absence may, at the discretion of the principal, result in decreased academic credit or disciplinary action including withholding promotion to the next grade or dismissal from school.
- Any student who is absent from school without a valid excuse or who is tardy in excess of thirty minutes may be considered truant. A school employee may contact an appropriate government entity if there is concern regarding neglect.

Appearance and Student Uniform Requirements

The St. Mary Parish School uniform is an outward sign of shared identity and belonging as a school community. A neat, clean, and appropriate appearance helps create an environment focused on learning and reflects respect for oneself, others, and the dignity of each person.

Students are expected to arrive at school each day in the appropriate uniform unless otherwise authorized. Uniform clothing should be clean, appropriately sized, in good repair, and worn as intended.

Maintaining the uniform and dress code is a shared responsibility among students, parents/guardians, and school personnel. Parents/guardians are responsible for helping students arrive appropriately dressed; students are responsible for following uniform and appearance expectations throughout the school day; and faculty/staff are responsible for consistently reinforcing these expectations.

Because clothing, hairstyles, accessories, and fashion trends change over time, the handbook cannot anticipate every possible item or style. The principal reserves the right to determine whether a student's clothing, grooming, accessories, or appearance is consistent with the purpose and expectations of the St. Mary Parish School uniform and dress code.

BASIC UNIFORM GUIDELINES

Students may wear the school plaid jumper, skirt, or skort, or uniform-style khaki shorts or pants. Uniform-style khaki shorts and pants must have a traditional school-uniform appearance and may not have cargo pockets, rivets, or other denim-style detailing. Navy or black bike shorts must be worn underneath skirts and jumpers.

All students in TK–8 wear the navy polo with the St. Mary Parish School crest. The approved navy school sweatshirt or fleece may be worn as permitted.

Students may wear athletic shoes in any color. Shoes must be appropriate for safe participation in school activities and must have non-marking soles. Athletic shoes must be secured with laces or Velcro as designed. Girls may also wear Mary Jane-style school shoes with non-marking athletic soles. Stride Rite and Skechers are examples of brands that offer this style; families are not required to purchase a particular brand.

White, logo-free socks must be visible above the ankle. Black or white tights are permitted. Black leggings may be worn under the uniform when they have the appearance and fit of tights.

MASS UNIFORM

Students wear the St. Mary Parish School Mass Uniform each Wednesday and on other occasions identified by the school.

The Mass Uniform consists of a white short- or long-sleeved polo shirt; navy St. Mary Parish School sweater or vest with the school crest; uniform-style long khaki pants or the school plaid jumper, skirt, or skort, as applicable; and regular uniform shoes and socks/tights as permitted by the Basic Uniform Guidelines.

Uniform-style khaki pants may not have cargo pockets, rivets, or other denim-style detailing. Plaid skirts, skorts, and jumpers must meet the fingertip-length requirement. Navy or black bike shorts worn underneath skirts and jumpers must not be visible below the hem.

Students are expected to arrive at school in the complete Mass Uniform. The school may modify uniform requirements when appropriate because of weather or other circumstances.

PE UNIFORM

The St. Mary Parish School PE uniform consists of the approved gray St. Mary PE shirt and navy St. Mary gym shorts. Approved St. Mary fleece sweatpants, joggers, and sweatshirts may also be worn as permitted. Students wear their PE uniform for the entire school day on scheduled PE days.

GENERAL DRESS CODE AND UNIFORM REGULATIONS

- All uniform clothing and personal belongings should be clearly labeled with the student's first and last name.
- Uniform items must be appropriately sized, fit properly, and be worn as intended. Skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be at least fingertip length when the student stands upright with arms naturally extended straight at the sides. Garments may not be rolled, altered, or worn in a manner that shortens them above the required length.
- Navy or black bike shorts must be worn underneath skirts and jumpers. These shorts are worn as an undergarment and may not be visible below the hem. Wearing shorts or another garment underneath does not change the required fingertip length.
- Sandals, open-toed shoes, boots, and Ugg-style boots are not permitted, including on Casual Dress days.
- Only approved St. Mary Parish School sweatshirts, sweaters, fleeces, or jackets may be worn in the classroom. Outer coats may be worn outdoors over the uniform but must be removed in the classroom.
- Temporary tattoos, body art/henna, writing, or drawings may not be visible at school. Temporary tattoos must be removed before arriving at school.
- Students may not wear makeup to school. This includes, but is not limited to, foundation, concealer, blush, bronzer, mascara, eyeliner, eye shadow, lipstick, tinted or colored lip products, and other cosmetic products. Clear lip balm is permitted. Students who arrive wearing makeup will be required to remove it.
- Artificial nails, nail extensions, colored nail polish, and French manicures are not permitted. Clear nail polish may be worn on natural nails.
- Acne/pimple patches may be worn when needed but must be clear or neutral in color. Decorative, brightly colored, patterned, or novelty-shaped pimple patches are not permitted.

HAIR AND GROOMING

- Hair must be clean, neat, and well-groomed and must be worn in a manner that does not interfere with the student's vision, safety, or participation in school activities.

- Hair must remain the student's natural hair color. Hair coloring, highlights, bleaching, or other artificial changes to hair color are not permitted.
- Boys' hair must be out of the eyes, above the ears, and off the collar. Boys must be clean-shaven when applicable.
- Hair accessories must comply with the Basic Uniform Guidelines.

JEWELRY AND ACCESSORIES

- Earrings: Students may wear one pair of small stud earrings, with no more than one earring in each earlobe. Hoop, dangling, or other hanging earrings are not permitted.
- Necklaces: Students may wear one religious necklace, such as a cross, crucifix, or religious medal. Other necklaces are not permitted. Religious necklaces may be required to be removed during PE, athletics, or other activities when necessary for safety.
- Watches: Students may wear one traditional analog watch. Smartwatches and other electronic communication devices are governed by the Personal Electronic Devices policy and must be turned in to the teacher for secure storage during the school day.
- Bracelets and rings are not permitted.

SPIRIT WEAR DAY DRESS CODE

On designated SPIRIT Wear Days, students may wear an approved St. Mary Parish School SPIRIT wear top with the uniform bottom designated for that day. All other uniform and appearance expectations remain in effect unless the school specifically communicates an exception for a particular event. Students who choose not to wear a SPIRIT wear top should wear the complete uniform designated for that day.

CASUAL DRESS

On designated Casual Dress days, students may wear non-uniform clothing appropriate for a Catholic elementary school environment. Casual Dress is a privilege and does not eliminate the school's expectations regarding modesty, safety, neatness, and appropriate appearance.

- Clothing must be appropriately sized, clean, in good repair, and provide appropriate coverage throughout the school day. Clothing may not contain words, images, symbols, or messages that are offensive, inappropriate, promote substances or activities prohibited for minors, or are inconsistent with the mission and values of St. Mary Parish School.
- Shorts, skirts, skorts, and dresses must meet the school's fingertip-length requirement. Leggings or other form-fitting bottoms may be worn only when the garment worn over them meets the fingertip-length requirement.
- Tops must provide appropriate coverage of the chest, back, shoulders, and midriff. Crop tops, low-cut tops, strapless tops, spaghetti straps, and clothing that exposes the midriff are not permitted.
- Pajamas and slippers may not be worn unless specifically authorized as part of a school-sponsored theme day. Regular school requirements regarding shoes, jewelry, makeup, nails, hair, grooming, and temporary tattoos/body art remain in effect unless the school specifically communicates otherwise.

Health and Safety

IMMUNIZATIONS AND STUDENT MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

Referenced in the ADMISSIONS section

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping current contact information, emergency contacts, and authorized pickup information in FACTS. Any change in address, telephone number, emergency contact, or authorized pickup information must be updated promptly so the school can reach the appropriate adults if a student becomes ill, is injured, or an emergency occurs.

SCHOOL INSURANCE COVERAGE

St. Mary Parish School students are covered by student accident insurance for injuries incurred on school grounds, during school-supervised activities, and while traveling to and from school and school-supervised activities. The registration fee includes this coverage.

In the event of an injury, parents/guardians may obtain claim information from the school office. Injuries must be reported to the school office on the day the incident occurs.

Student accident insurance is secondary to the family's primary insurance coverage.

ILLNESS and NOTIFICATION

- Parents should notify school office personnel on the first day of a child's illness.
- Parents should notify the school immediately if they receive a diagnosis that their child has a communicable disease.
- Students who are obviously sick or feverish may not attend school; a child must be fever-free (without fever-reducing medication) for 24 hours before returning to school.
- A handwritten absence note from the student's parent or guardian is required upon the child's return to school.
- An absence of three or more days requires a doctor's note upon the child's return to school.

MEDICATIONS

- The school does not provide medications of any kind.
- Students are prohibited from having any medications, prescribed or over-the-counter, on their persons on school grounds, and all such medications must be kept in the school office. If a student's condition potentially requires epi-pens for severe allergic reaction, insulin shots, or inhalers, etc., the school will develop a plan with the parent and physician for the maintenance and potential use of those medications.
- Prescribed or over-the-counter medications must be brought to the school office by the parent in the original container.
- Only in RARE instances will the school permit a student to take medication at school. The parent is urged, with the help of the family health care provider, to work out a schedule of taking medication outside of school hours. The only exceptions involve special or serious problems where a physician indicates it is absolutely necessary to take the medication during school hours; the principal has final authority, in consultation with the Catholic School Department and Catholic Mutual Group, in determining what procedures or administration of medications can or cannot be undertaken by school staff.
- If it is essential that medications be administered at school, these medications must be administered from the school office only. Families must provide the following:
 1. A signed written statement from the parent or guardian of the child.

2. A written statement from the physician detailing the method, amount, and schedule by which the child will come at the designated time with specific instructions included for emergency treatment if an allergic reaction should occur.
3. All medication must be kept in its original container which must be clearly identified with a prescription label with the child's name, drug identity, dosage instructions, physician's name, and prescription date (for over-the counter medications, the original commercial container will suffice); the prescription must be current (and over-the-counter medications within the expiration limits).
4. Medical treatment is the responsibility of the parent and the family health care provider. While office personnel will make every attempt to administer medications as requested, the school will not be held responsible for missed doses or mis-administration of any kind.

MEDICATION FORMS

The school office can provide the appropriate medication forms that cover the above requirements. These forms must be updated annually. A new form **MUST** be completed by the physician and parent each school year if the need continues.

ILLNESS at SCHOOL, INJURY, and FIRST AID

Should a student become ill or injured, the school will make every effort to contact the parent(s) of the student for information and instructions. However, the school may contact emergency agencies (911) first depending on the nature of the situation. This action does not obligate the principal or the school to assume financial responsibility for the treatment of the student.

- All injuries to the head, no matter how small, must be made known to the parent as soon as possible.
- Students who become ill or injured at school may not leave the school on their own; parents/guardians or another adult authorized in FACTS are required to pick up an ill or injured student as soon as possible after being notified.
- In the case of an injury at school, school staff will render first aid, with or without parental consent, using a reasonable and ordinary standard of care.
- If a student is stabilized, school staff will await instructions from parents or emergency staff regarding further action.

STUDENTS with SEVERE ALLERGIES

Families with students who have identified severe allergies should work with the school as follows:

- Provide written notification (health record, letter from physician, etc.) to the school of an at-risk student's allergies that pose a serious threat to the student.
- Confer with qualified school representatives/administration to develop a plan that reasonably accommodates the at-risk student's needs throughout the school campus and facilities.
- Provide the school with written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician or health care professional.
- Include a photograph of the student on the written form.
- Indicate the allergy on the child's Medical section of the FACTS profile.
- Provide properly labeled medications and replacement medications, as required after use or upon expiration.
- Provide and update current emergency contact information.
- Educate the child in the self-management of his/her allergy including the following:
 - safe and unsafe foods and exposures

- strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods or other items such as sharing foods with others or consuming food or drink where ingredients are unknown
- symptoms of allergic reactions
- how and when to tell an adult he/she may be having an allergy-related problem
- how to read food labels (if age-appropriate)

HEAD LICE

Head lice (or pediculosis) is a common occurrence in elementary and middle schools. When it is identified, procedures that follow must be taken. The school understands that pediculosis may not be an indication of neglect or lack of cleanliness, and where possible, confidentiality will be observed.

- When a student has been identified as having nits and/or lice, the school will contact the parents/guardians to pick up their child for immediate treatment.
- The siblings of the infected student will also be screened.
- The classmates of a student identified as having nits and/or lice may also be screened.
- The student and family will receive information about pediculosis and instructions on treating their child and their home to remove all nits and/or lice.
- Upon return to school, the student will need to be screened at the school office by a school employee for nits and/or lice before being allowed to return to the classroom.

MANDATED REPORTING

St. Mary Parish School is legally required to comply with the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act. Those employees of the school who are designated “mandated reporters” by law are responsible to report suspected occurrences of child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities (Child Protective Services, police department, sheriff department, etc.); as of Jan. 1, 2026, all volunteers working with children are considered mandated reporters. Although such reports are typically confidential, if a parent/guardian discovers the identity of a school employee or volunteer who made a report of child abuse, the parent/guardian may not retaliate against the employee or volunteer in any way for making the report.

PROCESS for MANDATED REPORTING

All instructional staff, administrative staff, and volunteers must immediately report any cases of suspected or observed child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services or the police/sheriff department. Written notification of suspected child abuse or neglect must be sent by the reporting person to Child Protective Services within 36 hours of the initial report.

1. The obligation to report is incumbent on the individual who observed or suspected the abuse, and no supervisor or administrator may impede or inhibit such reporting.
2. No person making a report of child abuse shall be subject to any sanction for making the report.
3. If a person is unsure if the suspected abuse rises to the level of reporting, a report should still be made. The reporting agency will make the determination regarding proceeding.
4. Though not required, it is a good idea to alert the principal that such a report has been made; at the request of the reporting individual, the principal may be present when the report is made or assist the individual employee in making the report.
5. No parties (other than the agency to which the report is made) are informed that a report has been made, and school personnel do not reveal who made a report.
6. To make a report, an individual will call the county Child Protective Services agency. This number should be available from school administration. It can also be found by county on the website of the California Department of Social Services.

7. Prior to making the call, the reporting individual should fill out the Suspected Child Abuse Report (see #9 below) in order to have the information which will be asked by the interviewer; however, technicalities of the form should not dissuade the reporting individual from making the call. The following information is necessary to make a report:
 - Full name of child
 - Birthdate of child (or age, grade level, etc.)
 - Sibling information
 - Name(s) and addresses of parent(s) or guardian(s) and contact information
 - An account of the incident or facts for which the call is being made with date(s) of occurrence if known
8. The reporting individual should follow the prompts and answer the questions of the interviewer.
9. The written “Suspected Child Abuse Report” must be filed with CPS within 36 hours. The school administration can assist in providing the form, or it can be obtained here:

https://oag.ca.gov/sites/all/files/agweb/pdfs/childabuse/ss_8572.pdf
10. California law requires all employees and volunteers who work with children to be certified as a Mandated Reporter each year. The course may be accessed online at <http://mandatedreporterca.com/>; the General Training course is taken only once and followed by the School Personnel course; thereafter, the School Personnel course is taken annually. Each volunteer must print out the certificate of completion and provide it to the school office before volunteering.

STUDENT THREATS OF HARM TO SELF OR OTHERS

St. Mary Parish School will treat student threats to inflict harm to self, to others, or to destroy property very seriously. Practical jokes or offhand comments of a threatening nature will be considered serious and will be treated in the same way as actual threats. Any threats may result in disciplinary actions, up to and including dismissal.

- Any threat of homicide requires notification of law enforcement.
- Anyone hearing or becoming aware of any threat is to report it directly to the principal or his/her designee.
- Threats of harm to self will be treated differently than threats of harm to others or property.
- The student making the threat may be removed to the office and kept under adult supervision; the student may be suspended pending an investigation.
- All threats will be reviewed and investigated in a prompt and thorough manner, and the investigation will be kept confidential to the extent practicable.
- If the threat is judged credible and serious, the principal will notify appropriate people or agencies.
- The student may not be allowed to return to school until the investigation has been completed and final disciplinary or therapeutic action, if any, has been determined.
- If the principal, after investigation and consultation, determines there is sufficient evidence of a risk of harm by a student to others, and/or to property, the principal will continue the student’s suspension and not consider the readmission of the student to the school until appropriate counseling which is acceptable to the school occurs; the guidelines for this procedure will be handled on an individual basis. Any costs for counseling will be the responsibility of the family.
- The school may require an “authorization for the release of information” from the counselor/therapist which is signed by the parent to ensure continued enrollment.
- In some cases, the nature and credibility of the threat is such that the principal may request withdrawal of the student, or expel the student, without possibility of returning to the school.

PREGNANCY

Human life at all stages, including the preborn child, is a sacred gift from God, and an abortion is never an alternative at any stage of pregnancy. Students who become pregnant deserve and need the full support of the school administration, teachers, and other students.

- Ordinarily the expectant student shall be allowed to remain in school.
- The school will continue to assist the student through graduation, including the ceremony and other related activities. However, if attendance in the classroom is judged not to be in the best interest of the student or the school community, other arrangements will be made. Counseling will be required of the students involved; any costs for counseling will be the responsibility of the family.
- Any student who publicizes and advocates an abortion either planned or already obtained will be asked to leave school.
- This policy pertains to the boy or girl directly involved, or to any student continuing to spread rumors about an alleged abortion.

PARKING LOT SAFETY

Families are required to observe the following guidelines to provide a safe, quick, orderly, and consistent dismissal and arrival process:

- Drivers should not exceed 5 mph while driving on campus.
- Children are to exit/enter vehicles from the passenger side ONLY during the morning.
- Parents must not deviate from the prescribed drop-off and pick-up locations and procedures even if it appears safe as these have been carefully determined to keep students out of traffic lanes. See DROP-OFF and PICK-UP PROCEDURES in ATTENDANCE above.
- All instructions of supervising staff must be followed at all times.
- No traffic will be allowed on the playground during school hours except during the designated drop-off and pick-up times.

SEVERE ILLNESS OUTBREAK

In the event of a severe illness outbreak among students and/or staff that makes the safe and effective operation of St. Mary Parish School infeasible, the school may temporarily close until conditions allow for safe and effective operation.

Before or during a closure, school administration may implement measures intended to support the continued operation of the school, including enhanced cleaning and sanitation, staffing or schedule adjustments, and modifications to classes, programs, or other school activities.

Preschool programs may operate independently based on their particular circumstances and applicable requirements.

If circumstances warrant, distance learning may be implemented to support continuity of instruction during an extended school closure.

Concussion Information

CONCUSSION DEFINITION

A concussion is a complex injury that causes a disturbance in brain function. It usually starts with a blow to the head, face, or neck, and is often associated with temporarily losing consciousness. However, it is important to understand that a blackout is only one possible symptom. When an athlete suffers a concussion, the brain

suddenly shifts or shakes inside the skull and can knock against the skull's bony surface. If left untreated, a concussion can lead to a slow brain bleed.

SYMPTOMS

The signs and symptoms of a concussion can be subtle and may not show up immediately. Symptoms can last for days, weeks, or even longer. Common symptoms after a concussive traumatic brain injury are headache, loss of memory (amnesia), and confusion. The amnesia usually involves forgetting the event that caused the concussion. Signs and symptoms of a concussion may include:

- Headache or a feeling of pressure in the head
- Temporary loss of consciousness
- Confusion or feeling as if in a fog
- Amnesia surrounding the traumatic event
- Dizziness or "seeing stars"
- Ringing in the ears
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Slurred speech
- Delayed response to questions
- Appearing dazed
- Fatigue
- Loss of consciousness
- Seizure or convulsions

The injured person may have some symptoms of concussions immediately. Others may be delayed for hours or days after injury:

- Concentration and memory complaints
- Irritability and other personality changes
- Sensitivity to light and noise
- Sleep disturbances
- Psychological adjustment problems and depression
- Disorders of taste and smell

Symptoms in younger children:

- Appearing dazed
- Listlessness and tiring easily
- Irritability and crankiness
- Loss of balance and unsteady walking
- Crying excessively
- Change in eating or sleeping patterns
- Lack of interest in favorite toys or hobbies

With a loss of consciousness, it is clear that emergency medical services are needed. However, the non-blackout symptoms listed above must not be ignored. Unfortunately, a pervasive mindset in some sports is that getting “dinged” is part of the game and the athlete needs to tough it out. This thinking is dangerous because it exposes

the child to further injury when his or her brain needs a rest and prevents him or her from obtaining a proper medical assessment as soon as possible.

FOLLOWING INJURY

Parents should work closely with physicians regarding any head injury or concussion and provide the school with any physician communication regarding accommodations and/or return to normal activities. Parents should familiarize themselves and their students with the Concussion Factsheet.

Sudden Cardiac Arrest Information

SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) occurs suddenly and often without warning. It is triggered by an electrical malfunction in the heart that causes an irregular heartbeat. With the heart's pumping action disrupted, the heart cannot pump blood to the brain, lungs, and other organs. Seconds later, a person loses consciousness and has no pulse. Death occurs within minutes if the victim does not receive treatment.

WHO is at RISK for SCA?

Thousands of sudden cardiac arrests occur among youth each year, as it contributes to the #2 medical cause of death of youth under the age of 25 and is the #1 cause of death of student athletes during exercise. While a heart condition may have no warning signs, studies show that many young people do have warning signs or symptoms but neglect to tell an adult. This may be because they are embarrassed, they do not want to jeopardize their playing time, they mistakenly think that they are out of shape and need to train harder, or they simply ignore the symptoms, hoping the signs will go away.

POSSIBLE WARNING SIGNS AND RISK FACTORS

- Fainting or seizure, especially during or right after exercise
- Fainting repeatedly or with excitement or startle
- Excessive shortness of breath during exercise
- Racing or fluttering heart palpitations or irregular heartbeat
- Repeated dizziness or lightheadedness
- Chest pain or discomfort with exercise
- Excessive, unexpected fatigue during or after exercise

Parents should work closely with physicians regarding the potential for Sudden Cardiac Arrest and provide the school with any physician communication regarding accommodations. Parents should familiarize themselves and their students with the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Factsheet.

Opioid Use Information

Parents should work closely with physicians regarding the use of opioids to treat pain and familiarize themselves and their students with the Opioid Factsheet.

OPIOID, CONCUSSION, and SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST FACTSHEETS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

California law requires each athlete (and his or her parent for those 17 and younger) participating in an athletic program that takes place outside of the regular school day sign an acknowledgment of receipt that the athlete and his or her parent have received an Opioid Factsheet, a Concussion Factsheet, and a Sudden Cardiac Arrest factsheet before the athlete may participate in practices or competition. The factsheets will be distributed by the school annually.

Emergency Procedures

EMERGENCY CARE PLAN

The school's emergency care plan follows clear and practiced safety procedures in the event of fire, earthquake, lockdown, active shooter, bomb threats, and other emergencies.

- In the event of an actual school-wide emergency, the automated FACTS SIS system will provide parents/guardians rapid notification by text message and/or email.
- Parents should not call the school directly but wait for notification; school lines need to be used for calling out only.
- Parents should not block access to the school—access needs to be available for emergency vehicles.
- Should it ever become necessary to evacuate and relocate off campus, St. Mary Parish School has arranged safe haven at locations nearby.
- In the event of a city/countywide disaster, parents should tune to a local Emergency Broadcast Station to receive emergency instructions.
- All students will be accounted and cared for by school staff and necessary emergency steps will be taken. Parents will be notified as soon as possible through FACTS SIS emergency features and/or school emergency phone contacts.
- No student will be released until all St. Mary Parish School students are accounted for. No student will be allowed to leave school care unless an appropriate, competent adult comes to sign a release.

EMERGENCY DRILLS and EVENTS

- Any threat of homicide requires notification of law enforcement.
- Families are required to follow school-provided guidelines for the safe storage and use of firearms.
- **FIRE:** Fire drills take place regularly. The school will follow instructions of the Fire Department.
- **EARTHQUAKE:** An earthquake drill will take place periodically after fire drills once the students return to class. In the event of an actual earthquake, school staff will remain on site until parents can be notified, all students are accounted for, and all students have been released to appropriate adults. Parents should be aware that routes to school may be blocked or impassable.
- **LOCKDOWN/ACTIVE SHOOTER:** Lockdown drills will take place periodically. In event of an actual lockdown, law enforcement will be involved as soon as possible (or may call for the lockdown). The school will notify parents via FACTS SIS as soon as possible. However, the safety of students is the primary importance; this may mean that the school needs to be made secure before parents can be contacted.
- **BOMB THREAT:** Law enforcement will be called, and the school will follow their instructions. Parents will be notified when the school is instructed to do so.
- **FLOOD:** The school will follow emergency agency instructions. Students may be evacuated if called for. Parents should await notification via FACTS SIS.
- For any other emergencies, the steps of the Emergency Care Plan above will be followed.

SCHOOL CLOSURE and COMMUNICATION

St. Mary Parish School may close, delay opening, dismiss early, or modify the school day when weather conditions, utility interruptions, emergencies, hazardous conditions, or other circumstances make normal school operations unsafe or impractical.

When a change to the regular school schedule is necessary, St. Mary Parish School will communicate with families through its established emergency and school communication systems. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their contact information in FACTS is current so they can receive timely notifications.

Families should follow the directions provided by St. Mary Parish School regarding arrival, dismissal, Extension Program availability, and other procedures associated with the closure or schedule change.

COMMUNICATION

The Principal will notify all stakeholders (staff, parents, etc.) through the FACTS SIS system as early as possible the evening before a closure and no later than 6:00am on the day of a closure.

- In the rare case that FACTS SIS is not functional, an alternate procedure for communication will be implemented and parents notified.

MAKE-UP DAYS

- If more than 2 days are missed due to unscheduled school closures, these days may be made-up at the end of the school year; alternately, the principal may decide to implement changes to the daily schedule to make up the lost time.
- During extended closures when distance learning is implemented, make-up days are not necessary as teaching/learning continues through the closure of the physical campus.
- Tuition payments continue during all closures.

Student Discipline

GENERAL POLICY

The values of Catholic education are the foundation for all interactions and relationships at St. Mary Parish School. A student is considered at all times and places a member of the St. Mary Parish School student body. This is an honor and privilege and therefore, students must be conscious of their actions at all times, whether on or off campus, including but not limited to, games, dances, rallies, assemblies, service projects, field trips, and other gatherings. Courtesy and respect should be manifested at all times. Any behavior or attitude that stands in opposition to Catholic Christian values, on or off campus, toward anyone in the community, will be viewed as a very serious violation of the school's code of conduct. St. Mary Parish School reserves the right to review and consider instances of student conduct and actions, regardless of when or where such conduct or actions occur, if they express or show an incompatibility with the mission and philosophy of the school; such actions may result in a student being barred from participation in school activities and may subject a student to the full range of disciplinary sanctions up to and including termination of enrollment.

EXPECTATIONS

Students at St. Mary Parish School are expected to conduct themselves according to principles of Catholic Christian behavior:

- To be honest in all dealings with fellow students, teachers, and school personnel;
- To cooperate positively with fellow students, teachers, and school personnel;
- To respect always the person and the rights of all;
- To obtain permission from the proper authority for the use of any of the school facilities or materials (other than those typically used under staff supervision);
- To be courteous, attentive, and respectful when fellow students, teachers, administrators, visitors, or performers address individual classes or the assembled student body;
- To be responsible for the care of all materials loaned to the student for the course of studies during the year; and
- To respect parish and school property at all times.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Personal academic integrity is essential for building community and promoting social justice. To cheat is to act dishonestly or in violation of established rules, procedures, or codes of conduct. In an academic environment, there are three principal forms of cheating:

- Violating the procedures of a test, including, but not limited to, copying answers, accessing test keys, using a copy of a previous test, using notes or materials not allowed, or altering answers on a corrected test which has been returned.
- Plagiarizing, which pertains to the rights of intellectual property; plagiarism is the appropriation of another's ideas and/or language, in part or whole, without necessary assignment or credit. Plagiarism includes copying homework/labs, and quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing another's written work including sources off the internet or through artificial intelligence (AI) or oral statements without proper citation.
- Knowingly enabling another student to cheat.

Sanctions for cheating are the discretion of the teacher (and, when necessary, the principal) and may include receiving a zero on the exam or work in question, loss of privilege, or suspension.

VANDALISM

Students and their parent(s) are liable for all damage to equipment or school property caused by the student and appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken.

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

Students are expected to follow school and classroom rules and to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the mission, values, and behavioral expectations of St. Mary Parish School. Specific age-appropriate procedures and expectations may be established by teachers and school administration as needed.

Gum is not permitted on campus.

BITING

Biting is an unwanted behavior that can result in serious injury. If it should occur, the offending student will be suspended immediately. Parents of the offending student and the victim will be notified following the administration of appropriate first aid. Continued biting behavior may result in dismissal of the student.

RIGHT to SEARCH

While students generally possess the right of privacy of person and personal effects, that right must be balanced against the school's responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the whole school community. Because school officials have a legitimate interest in personal safety and protection of all students within their care and custody, the school administration reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable suspicion that the search will reveal evidence that the student is violating the law or school policies. School officials do not need a warrant or permission from a parent or guardian to conduct such a search.

School officials therefore reserve the right and responsibility to conduct, and a student must submit to, a search of his/her person, clothes, bags, cell phone, and electronic equipment when reasonable suspicion exists. A search of a student's person would occur only with appropriate supervision by a faculty or administration member of the same sex, and the school will notify the parents/guardians of the fact that the search was conducted. The school also reserves the right to search any area of campus and school property including all lockers and school computers and all electronic devices. Refusal to comply with a search process will be grounds for disciplinary action, which may include expulsion.

INTERVIEWS of STUDENTS

- A principal (or other staff designated by the principal) has the right at all times to interview students regarding any suspected misconduct that violates school policies. It is in the principal's discretion whether to permit the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to be present for the conversation. And because this is a private religious school and not a government entity, families have no right to have an attorney present during any questioning of a student by the principal or other school staff.
- In some instances, law enforcement or Child Protective Services may come to a school campus to conduct interviews in connection with an investigation of a violation of law or suspected child abuse or neglect. School officials will first confirm the identity of the individual seeking access to interview a student (by checking for appropriate identification) and that the interview is connected to official agency business, before permitting access to any student.
- Once the school has verified the credentials and purpose of a law enforcement or CPS representative, the school will permit the agent to have contact with a student but will ensure that either a parent/guardian or adult school staff member is present for any interview, unless the student asks to be interviewed alone. Any school staff member present during such an interview will be expected to keep the details of the interview confidential, and to avoid disclosing them to anyone but the principal.
- The policy of the school is to inform the parents/guardians of an interview of their child by law enforcement or CPS, unless the school is specifically directed not to inform the parents/guardians, in which case the school will comply with that directive.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS and SANCTIONS

The principal and other school personnel may interview students at any time for the purpose of investigation. Parents may not attend such investigations unless they are invited to do so by the principal. The following sanctions may be imposed upon students in the sole discretion of the school in any order:

- Parent and student conference
- Denial of specified privileges
- Detention: Students are assigned to after-school detention by a member of the faculty or school administration. During detention, a student may be assigned work to do around the campus. Detention takes precedence over any co-curricular or extracurricular activity. Failure to serve detention will result in additional disciplinary action.
- Behavioral Contract: The principal may require parents and students to sign a behavioral contract in order for the student to remain at or to return to school.
- Probation: The principal may place a student on behavioral probation which has the additional restriction of no sports or extra-curricular activities.
- Suspension (see below)
- Withdrawal: Parents may be given the option to voluntarily withdraw their child rather than face expulsion.
- Expulsion (see below)

SUSPENSION

Suspension is a disciplinary action to be used at the sole discretion of the principal. Suspension is not intended to be corrective in and of itself; instead, suspension sends the message that the offending behavior does not belong at school. A student may be placed on suspension for serious misconduct or continuing misconduct on or off campus. Suspension is typically served off campus but may be served on campus at the discretion of the principal. Suspension ordinarily should not exceed five consecutive school days. However, a student may be suspended from campus longer than this in certain circumstances which may include, but are not limited to, the following: awaiting results of a pending investigation, awaiting documentation of professional evaluation, or when

isolation is deemed to be in the best interest of the suspended student or the community. Parents will be notified and are expected to pick up the student (if on campus) as soon as possible; parents will remain involved in the process through verbal or written communication or conferencing. Suspension does not carry an academic penalty, and the student should keep up with classwork and homework.

Since the grounds for suspension ordinarily differ in degree from the grounds for expulsion, continued or repeated misconduct may result in a recommended withdrawal or expulsion.

CONDUCT THAT MAY RESULT IN IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION

At the discretion of the principal, serious student misconduct may result in immediate suspension and may also lead to expulsion. In determining whether immediate suspension is warranted, the principal may consider the seriousness of the conduct, the student's age and developmental level, the circumstances surrounding the incident, the student's disciplinary history, and the safety and welfare of the school community.

Conduct that may result in immediate suspension includes, but is not limited to:

- Fighting, physical aggression, or intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person.
- Making serious threats of violence or harm toward another person or the school community.
- Possessing, using, displaying, or threatening to use a weapon or other dangerous object.
- Possessing, using, distributing, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or other prohibited substances.
- Serious or repeated bullying, harassment, intimidation, discrimination, or retaliation.
- Sexual misconduct, including sexting or the possession, creation, distribution, or sharing of inappropriate sexual images or content.
- Theft, serious vandalism, or intentional destruction of school, parish, or another person's property.
- Conduct that causes a substantial disruption to the orderly operation of the school or a school-sponsored activity.
- Conduct that creates a significant risk to the health or safety of the student or others.
- Other serious conduct that, in the judgment of the principal, warrants immediate suspension.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is an extreme and permanent disciplinary action enacted for the common good; the authority to expel resides solely with the principal. Ordinarily, an expulsion is the result of continued disciplinary offenses, on or off campus, that have not been remedied by lesser disciplinary actions such as detention, probation, or suspension. Immediate expulsion could result from actions, on or off campus, which are a violation of criminal law, which are serious enough to shock the conscience or harm the reputation of the school or parish community, or which pose a threat to the health, welfare, or safety of the student or the school community. The student will typically be placed on suspension (see above) if he/she is not already suspended, and parents will be notified. Conferencing will take place with the principal, parents, appropriate staff, and the pastor of the parish if he or the family so desire; the student may be included for part of the conference. If a decision is made to terminate the student's enrollment, the parents may be given the option to voluntarily withdraw the student by a specified date. Otherwise, the student will be expelled. Full credit will be given for all work accomplished by the student up to the moment of withdrawal or expulsion.

DISCIPLINARY RECORDS

Disciplinary records are private documents of the principal and are kept separate from the student's cumulative file and will not follow the student beyond enrollment at St. Mary Parish School; they are not available to students or parents.

Information and Communication Technology Policies

ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA and NETWORKING POLICY for PARENTS and STUDENTS

While the use of social media at school is not allowed, St. Mary Parish School recognizes that many different social networks and media exist on the Internet and apps on portable devices (Twitter [X], Facebook, AI Platforms, and Instagram, among others). Millions of people, including students and parents, utilize one or more of these networks on a daily basis off campus for both professional and personal purposes. These services provide different methods of communicating and interacting with other users, in both public and private ways. These tools include message and photograph posting, emailing, instant messaging, group discussions, blogging, and video/photo sharing.

Due to the popularity of social networking sites and the way they can facilitate effective and efficient communications between users, the use of social networking in connection with Catholic school activities presents many opportunities for enhancing the experience of students and their families. Without proper controls these communications are often unlimited, potentially affording access by unknown third parties (including those who would prey upon young people via the Internet). The nature of social networking sites leaves open the possibility of abuse and misuse (including by students and their parents), necessitating the following standards of conduct for all individuals connected with Catholic schools.

ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITY

When a Catholic school student or parent is using online social media or artificial intelligence (AI) (of any variety), that individual must always bear in mind that the material he or she posts reflects upon the school, the parish, the Diocese, and the Roman Catholic Church as a whole. As a consequence, it is imperative that all students and parents conduct themselves in an ethical and responsible manner when using social media or AI. Specifically, the following standards of conduct should be observed at all times:

- Any official organization of the school, such as CSAC, Parent Club, Boosters Club, etc., may only develop online media with the permission of the school administration. If approved by the school administration, it must be a link from the official website of the school. All materials placed on it must receive prior approval from the school administration. Failure to do so by any organization of the school could result in the organization being disbanded.
- Content that has the potential to be a source of scandal for the Church should never be posted. Examples of such content include, but are not limited to, obscene, harassing, offensive, derogatory, or defamatory comments and images that discredit or cause embarrassment to the school, the Diocese, or the Catholic Church, or to other students, parents, diocesan (school) employees, or parishioners.
- If a student or parent regularly identifies him or herself as a student or parent of the school in a personal website, blog, or social media account, he or she should make it clear on those personal sites that the views expressed there are his or hers alone and that they do not necessarily reflect the views of the school, the parish, or the Diocese. For example, he or she can post the following notice, in a reasonable prominent place: "The views expressed on this site are solely my own and do not necessarily reflect the view of St. Mary Parish School, or Parish, or the Diocese of Sacramento."
- Students and parents should be ethical and responsible participants in social media. They should at all times attempt to be accurate, truthful, and respectful in any public postings.

- Students and parents may not use school, parish, or diocesan trademarks, or reproduce any school, parish, or diocesan materials or logos without express permission from the principal, pastor, or their designees.

STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (SIS)

The database of the school information system (FACTS SIS) may not be used for any personal reasons by any user. For example, users may not promote personal or political agendas or use the database to create or send surveys, etc. Only information authorized by the school administration may be distributed using the SIS and/or database associated with the SIS.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS

Because digital images are easily created and reproduced, photographs and video files are extremely common on the web, and they are freely posted and passed along by users of online social media. It is the policy of the school and Diocese that privacy concerns, particularly as they relate to images of minors, are to be observed and respected in online social media use connected to its schools.

St. Mary Parish School has no desire to intrude into or restrict the rights of parents and students to freely post personal photographs on their online social media sites as they see fit. If, however, they intend to upload photographic images or video files related to Catholic school activities or members of the school or parish community or related Catholic communities, then students and parents must all observe the following guidelines:

- Prior permission should be obtained from any third parties depicted in photographic images or video files prior to being uploaded. If individuals decline such permission, their privacy should be respected and the image should not be posted.
- If photographs or videos, particularly those of minors, are posted with or without permission, and the student or parent asks that it be removed, the student or parent's wishes should be observed.
- Even if parents have granted permission for the use of photographs or video images of their children, care should be taken to ensure that any such postings do not identify the child by name, unless there is specific permission granted by the parent for the additional connection.
- Posting false images or voices (e.g, those created by AI) of any person is strictly forbidden and constitutes grounds for immediate expulsion.

RECORDING CALLS and MEETINGS

Recording a telephone call or any kind of meeting (either in-person or virtual) is strictly forbidden. Additionally, anyone present for a call or meeting (but not visible to others) must be identified to all participants. Failure to observe the foregoing guidelines may result in disciplinary measures being imposed by the school. Discipline in this context will be determined by the school, based upon the particular facts of any incident, but can mean suspension or expulsion (for student misconduct) or involuntary withdrawal of a child from the school (for parent misconduct).

ACCEPTABLE USE of TECHNOLOGY for STUDENTS

To ensure that all students comply with school rules regarding electronic equipment, the following policies and procedures have been established for using school computers, electronic devices, the wireless network, the Internet, and all peripherals; these policies also apply to the use of any personal electronic equipment which is brought to campus, either with or without permission, or used off-campus for any school-related activity or where any member of the parish or school community is in any way involved. No set of policies and procedures can provide rules to cover every possible situation or device. Instead, what follows is designed to express a framework and to set forth general principles when using electronic media and services. All policies are inclusive

of the use of computers and electronic devices including, but not limited to, iPads and other tablets and notebooks, mobile phones and other similar devices, Apple watches or similar devices, Apple AirTags or other tracking devices, Kindles or similar devices, the wireless network, the network, the Internet, and all peripherals.

St. Mary Parish School provides students with access to technology to support learning, creativity, communication, and academic growth. **Access to school technology is a privilege.** Students are expected to use technology responsibly, safely, honestly, and in a manner consistent with the mission and values of St. Mary Parish School.

Students will USE TECHNOLOGY FOR LEARNING.

- School-owned devices, accounts, networks, applications, and internet access are for educational purposes and used as directed by teachers
- Access websites, applications, programs, and digital resources authorized by school personnel.
- Follow teacher directions regarding when and how technology may be used.

Students will PROTECT THEMSELVES AND OTHERS.

- Use only the student's own school-issued accounts and keep passwords and keep login information private.
- Respect the accounts, files, work, privacy, and personal information of others.
- Communicate respectfully and appropriately in digital spaces.
- Never use technology to bully, harass, threaten, intimidate, impersonate, humiliate, or deliberately harm another person.
- Immediately tell a trusted adult about inappropriate content, a security concern, threatening behavior, or another situation that may place the student or someone else at risk.

Students will USE TECHNOLOGY HONESTLY.

- Submit work that reflects the student's own learning and appropriately acknowledge the ideas and work of others.
- Follow copyright and intellectual-property requirements.
- Follow teacher directions regarding the use of artificial intelligence and other digital tools.
- Do not use technology, including artificial intelligence, to cheat, misrepresent work, or complete an assignment in a manner not authorized by the teacher.

Students will CARE FOR SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY.

- Handle school-owned devices and equipment carefully and use them only as intended.
- Do not change, disable, bypass, or tamper with hardware, software, security settings, internet filters, network configurations, or device settings.
- Do not install, download, delete, or alter software, applications, extensions, files, or system configurations without authorization.
- Do not eat or drink while using school-owned electronic devices.
- Promptly report damaged equipment or technology problems to a teacher or staff member.
- Students in grades 5–8, keep the Chromebook in the school-issued protective neoprene carrying case whenever transporting it between the homeroom and another location on campus.

School-owned technology issued to a student must be returned in the same condition in which it was received, except for normal wear from appropriate use. The student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) are financially responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing school-owned technology that is lost or damaged beyond normal

wear while assigned to the student. Repair or replacement charges will be based on the actual cost of repair or replacement at the time of the loss or damage.

Students will FOLLOW ST. MARY PARISH SCHOOL'S PERSONAL DEVICE RULES.

Students may not use cell phones, smartwatches, or other personal electronic communication devices while on campus during the school day or during school-sponsored athletic practices or other school-sponsored activities that extend beyond the regular school day, whether those activities take place on the St. Mary Parish School campus or at another venue.

If a student brings a cell phone, smartwatch, or other personal electronic communication device to school, the device must be turned over to the student's teacher as directed so that it can be secured and stored out of sight until the end of the school day.

St. Mary Parish School's personal-device rules remain in effect during applicable school-sponsored activities regardless of location, even if a parent/guardian has given the student permission to bring or use the device.

Students will UNDERSTAND THAT SCHOOL TECHNOLOGY IS MONITORED.

Students do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy when using school-owned or school-issued devices, school accounts, networks, or other school technology resources. St. Mary Parish School may monitor, access, inspect, or review these resources and activity conducted through them in accordance with school policy.

Students will ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR their CHOICES.

Failure to follow these Technology Rules and policies contained in the St. Mary Parish School Parent/Student Handbook may result in restriction or loss of technology privileges and/or other disciplinary consequences.

PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES/CELL PHONE USAGE

Students may not use cell phones, smartwatches, or other personal electronic communication devices while on campus during the school day. If a student brings a cell phone, smartwatch, or other personal electronic communication device to school, the device must be turned over to the student's teacher, who will secure the device and store it out of sight until the end of the school day.

The prohibition on the use of personal electronic communication devices also applies during school-sponsored athletic practices, activities, and other events that extend beyond the regular school day, whether they take place on the St. Mary Parish School campus or at another venue.

Students may not use a personal electronic device during these times without the express permission of a St. Mary Parish School faculty or staff member. Parent/guardian permission for a student to possess or use a device does not supersede school policy.

Students who violate this policy may have the device confiscated and may be subject to disciplinary consequences. Repeated violations may require a parent/guardian to retrieve the device from the school.

St. Mary Parish School is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of personal electronic devices brought to school.

INTERNET SAFETY AND FAMILY PARTNERSHIP

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to establish age-appropriate boundaries for their children's use of technology, monitor their online activity, utilize appropriate parental controls, and carefully consider their child's readiness before providing access to smartphones and social media.

St. Mary Parish School encourages families to consider delaying access to smartphones and social media when appropriate. Families may also choose to join together in making a voluntary commitment to delay providing smartphones to their children.

Parents/guardians are reminded that online activity occurring outside of school can affect the school community. Student conduct involving technology or social media that substantially disrupts the learning environment, threatens the safety or well-being of others, or is inconsistent with St. Mary Parish School's behavioral expectations may be addressed under the school's discipline policies.

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Students are expected to use social media and other online platforms in a manner consistent with the mission, values, and behavioral expectations of St. Mary Parish School.

Students may not access or use social media during the school day or through school-owned technology unless specifically authorized by a teacher for an educational purpose.

Student conduct on social media or other online platforms, including conduct occurring off campus, may be subject to school discipline when it materially affects the safety or well-being of members of the school community, substantially disrupts the learning environment, or significantly affects the St. Mary Parish School community.

Students may not use social media or other online platforms to bully, harass, threaten, impersonate, humiliate, or otherwise harm another person. This includes the creation, alteration, or distribution of harmful or inappropriate images, videos, recordings, or other content, including manipulated or AI-generated content.

Students and families are also expected to comply with the Diocesan Online Social Media and Networking Policy and all other applicable St. Mary Parish School technology, harassment, bullying, and student conduct policies.

USE of ELECTRONIC DEVICES OWNED or ISSUED by the SCHOOL

(also applies to personal devices brought to school with or without permission)

Students are responsible for the proper care and use of electronic devices owned or issued by St. Mary Parish School. School-owned devices are to be used for educational purposes and in accordance with all St. Mary Parish School technology policies and the Acceptable Use Pledge.

Students may not eat or drink while using school-owned electronic devices.

Students in grades 5–8 who are issued Chromebooks will also be issued protective neoprene carrying cases. Students are required to use these cases any time they transport their Chromebooks between their homeroom and another location on campus.

School-owned electronic devices must be returned in the condition in which they were received, except for normal wear and tear. If a device is lost or damaged beyond normal wear and tear, the student and/or parent/guardian is responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing the device.

School technology policies and expectations remain in effect whenever school-owned devices are being used for school purposes, including during school-sponsored activities that extend beyond the regular school day, whether those activities take place on campus or at another venue.

DISTANCE LEARNING

When St. Mary Parish School implements distance learning because of an extended campus closure or other circumstances, students are expected to participate in instruction and follow school expectations for attendance, conduct, academic integrity, technology use, and respectful interaction.

School rules and policies continue to apply in virtual learning environments. Families are responsible for helping students maintain an appropriate learning environment and for communicating with teachers when circumstances interfere with participation.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

Violation of St. Mary Parish School information and communication technology policies may result in restriction or loss of technology privileges and/or other disciplinary consequences. Consequences will be determined by school administration based on the nature, seriousness, and frequency of the violation.

The student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) are financially responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing school-owned technology that is lost or damaged beyond normal wear while assigned to the student. Law enforcement may be contacted when circumstances warrant.

Harassment and Bullying

St. Mary Parish School affirms the Christian dignity of every person, the right of each person to be treated with respect, and is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from harassment/bullying.

Harassment/bullying of or by any student is prohibited. St. Mary Parish School will treat allegations of harassment/bullying seriously and will review and investigate reports promptly and thoroughly, with appropriate regard for the privacy of those involved. Allegations that are substantiated may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

1. Elementary and secondary students are undergoing a period of rapid growth in their maturity and social skills. It is not unusual for a student to make a mistake in his or her social interaction with another student. Any mistake should be corrected so that the student may learn from it and treat other students respectfully. An honest mistake should not be considered harassment/bullying. Part of any investigation into a charge of harassment/bullying will be to determine if the incident was a mistake, normal peer conflict, or something deliberate or repeated.

Harassment/bullying is unacceptable conduct that is deliberate, severe, and repeated (conduct that falls under the following categories that is not repetitive may, at the discretion of the principal, still be subject to the same consequences/sanctions as ongoing conduct). Harassment/bullying occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment that is hostile, offensive, or intimidating based on (but not limited to) such factors as an individual's sex, race, religion, color, national origin, or physical or mental ability. Harassment/bullying can occur any time during school, school related activities, and outside the school. It includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:

- A. Verbal Harassment/Bullying: Derogatory, demeaning, or inflammatory words, whether oral, written, or electronic;
- B. Physical Harassment/Bullying: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking of movements, or intimidating interference with normal work or movement;
- C. Visual Harassment/Bullying: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, pictures, web pages or gestures;
- D. Sexual Harassment/Bullying: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following: sexually demeaning comments, sexual statements, or jokes; suggestive or obscene letters, phone calls, texts, or e-mail; deliberate, unlawful physical touching; leering, gesture, or display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures;
- E. Cyber-Harassment/Bullying: Willful and repeated harm inflicted on other persons through various forms of electronic media; provocative material, pictures, images, or attempts to be harmful or cruel to another student or individual through offensive electronic distribution using a cell phone, camera, the internet, or other electronic devices; or sexting (the sending, receiving, or forwarding of sexually explicit messages, photographs or images between digital devices or the sharing of such communication with others);
- F. Hazing: Any method of initiation, pastime, or amusement engaged in with respect to a student organization which causes, or is likely to cause, bodily danger or physical harm, or tends to degrade or disgrace a student attending the school. May be a one-time occurrence and not be ongoing.

Any individual seeing or hearing about any incident of harassment/bullying is encouraged to follow the procedures below. If the harassment/bullying stems from the principal, the person being harassed/bullied is to contact the Pastor and/or the Catholic School Department.

- 2. The following procedures are to be followed for lodging and investigating a claim of harassment/bullying:
 - A. Students who feel aggrieved because of conduct that constitutes harassment/bullying should, depending on the severity of the conduct, directly inform the person engaging in such conduct that such conduct is offensive and must stop.
 - B. If the student does not feel comfortable with the above, is unable to do so, or the offensive conduct does not stop, he/she shall direct his/her complaint to the principal or to a member of the school staff, who will then report it directly to the principal. Parents of students involved are to be contacted as soon as possible (this may occur following an initial investigation).
 - C. The student(s) alleging harassment may be asked to complete a written complaint. Students at the primary level may verbally explain their complaint rather than writing it. The claim will be investigated, and confidentiality will be maintained to the extent practicable.
 - D. The investigation will include a meeting with the student alleged to have harassed/bullied, sharing with that person the nature of the allegation. Where the school deems it appropriate, witnesses may also be interviewed.
 - E. Once the facts of the case have been gathered, the principal, in consultation with the Catholic School Department (and, when appropriate, the Pastor) will decide what, if any, disciplinary action is warranted. The disciplinary action will relate to the nature, context, and seriousness of the harassment/bullying and can include all disciplinary actions up to and including immediate expulsion; if appropriate, law enforcement may also be contacted.

- F. If a party disagrees with the decision, he or she has the right to appeal the outcome to the Catholic School Department of the Diocese of Sacramento. The Department will address the appeal according to its procedures in effect at that time.
3. If the complaint is against a non-employee or non-student, such as a parent, volunteer, or vendor, the school will take steps, within the extent of its power, to investigate and rectify the problem.
4. REPRISAL AND/OR RETALIATION: Reprisal or retaliation against any complaining student or witness, by any student or parent, is strictly prohibited. Any student or parent who engages in such a reprisal or retaliation will be subject to an appropriate disciplinary response, up to and including immediate expulsion from the school.

Controlled Substances

St. Mary Parish School emphasizes a commitment to a positive, faith-based environment for learning and the continued good health and safety of its students. Therefore, students, on or off campus, may not be in possession of, under the influence of, and/or use controlled substances, look-a-likes, or paraphernalia, nor engage in solicitation or distribution thereof.

The term “controlled substance” for the purposes of this handbook typically refers to any illegal drug, marijuana, alcohol, tobacco, tobacco products, e-cigarettes and vapor products, or the intentional misuse of prescription medication. The intentional misuse of other types of substances may also be addressed under this policy, at the discretion of the school administration.

The school expects parents and students to support all policies on the use of controlled substances:

- Parents/guardians and older siblings or family members are legally and morally responsible any time they provide to or allow the use of controlled substances by underage minors.
- Students may not possess, solicit, use, or be under the influence of controlled substances or paraphernalia, on or off campus, or at supervised or unsupervised activities or events.
- Students may not host an event where controlled substances are present or used.
- A student’s knowing presence when controlled substances are used or distributed may be considered evidence of participation and may result in disciplinary consequences.
- Students participating in any activities, real or pretend, involving paraphernalia or “look-alikes” associated with controlled substances may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Students may not sell or distribute any controlled substance on or off campus.
- Any student (or parent/guardian on behalf of a student) who freely approaches a counselor, administrator, teacher, coach, or other staff member for help regarding a controlled substance problem will be assisted in the spirit of counseling (unless the student is found to be using the counseling mechanism to avoid disciplinary action). However, this “spirit of counseling” will require strict adherence to all policies regarding controlled substances; requirements will be handled on an individual basis.
- The presence of students at after-hours school events (such as school or parish fundraising dinners) where alcohol is served to adults does not constitute a violation of this policy.

Upon at least reasonable suspicion that a student has violated this policy, any of the following actions may be taken, in any order, as deemed necessary by the school:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified.

- A search of the student's belongings (backpack, bag, clothing, electronic device, etc.), desk, locker, or cubby may take place.
- The student may be suspended from school pending an investigation.
- The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) may conference with the principal and/or other school officials.
- The student may be asked to be drug tested once or periodically at a location approved by the school; the cost of drug testing is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- The student may be placed on a behavior contract which may include professional evaluation, counseling, involvement with a support group, rehabilitation if recommended by the evaluation, random drug testing, and any other provision deemed necessary by the school administration. Any costs for the above will be the responsibility of the family.
- The student may be suspended during or following an investigation.
- The school may ask the parent(s)/guardian(s) to withdraw the student.
- The student may be expelled
- Law enforcement and/or child protective services may be contacted.

DISCLAIMER: Nothing in the school's controlled substance policy should be construed to mean that, as a result of this policy, St. Mary Parish School has undertaken a duty to detect, prevent, or treat drug or alcohol use by students, even if such use becomes apparent.

Extra-Curricular Activities

DIOCESAN EVENTS

Opportunities for participation in diocesan events may vary from year to year and may include the following:

- Academic Decathlon: a team-based academic competition (grades 6-8)
- Choral Festival: choral performances for all choirs
- Let the Children Come to Me: a team-based religion competition (grades 5-6)
- Mental Math Bowl: a team-based mental math competition (grades 1-5)
- Speech Contest: an individual speech competition (grades 7-8)
- Student Council Workshop (grades 7-8)

STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council is a leadership and service opportunity through which students help strengthen the St. Mary Parish School community. Student Council members are expected to model the school's mission, demonstrate responsible leadership, represent their classmates well, and contribute positively to school life.

Participation in Student Council is a privilege. Students must maintain appropriate academic standing, conduct, and fulfillment of leadership responsibilities. A student serving on Student Council may be relieved of duties or removed from office, permanently or for a stated period of time, at the discretion of the principal.

SOCIAL EVENTS/DANCES

St. Mary Parish School may sponsor supervised social events and dances to help students develop appropriate social skills in a Christian, Catholic context. Such events will ordinarily be held on school or parish premises unless another location is specifically approved by the school. Attendance is ordinarily limited to students enrolled at St. Mary Parish School unless the school specifically authorizes otherwise for a particular event.

A fee may be charged. Event-specific rules, eligibility requirements, dress expectations, and other guidelines will be communicated prior to the event. St. Mary Parish School behavior expectations and disciplinary policies remain in effect at all school-sponsored social events, regardless of location.

STUDENT PARTIES OUTSIDE of SCHOOL (not sponsored by the school)

Private parties and social gatherings hosted by families outside of school are not sponsored, supervised, or endorsed by St. Mary Parish School. If invitations are distributed at school, the entire class must be invited.

Although the school does not regulate private family events, serious off-campus student conduct that substantially affects the safety, welfare, or learning environment of the St. Mary Parish School community may be addressed under the school's discipline policies.

Athletics

COACHES

All coaches and assistant coaches must satisfy applicable St. Mary Parish School, Diocese of Sacramento, PAL, Safe Environment, and volunteer requirements before working with student-athletes. The St. Mary Parish School Athletic Director conducts a mandatory coaches meeting prior to each athletic season—Fall, Winter, and Spring. Coaches are required to attend the applicable seasonal meeting before beginning their coaching responsibilities.

ATHLETIC TEAMS

Students in grades 1–8 may participate in St. Mary Parish School's after-school athletic program as teams and PAL offerings permit. The athletic fee is \$100 per player, per sport.

Available teams and grade levels are communicated by the Athletic Director for each season.

PARTICIPATION on ATHLETIC TEAMS

Participation in St. Mary Parish School athletics is a privilege. Student-athletes must satisfy all participation, eligibility, health and safety, attendance, and conduct requirements established by the school and PAL.

- Availability of qualified volunteer personnel and completion of all coach/volunteer requirements.
- Try-outs, if deemed necessary by the coach and Athletic Director.
- Payment of the athletic fee (\$100 per player, per sport).
- Completion of required parent/guardian permission, emergency, and health and safety documentation.
- Continuing satisfactory academic progress and conduct in school and on the team.
- A current annual sports physical on file before participation in practice or competition.
- Completion of all required health and safety acknowledgments and protocols.
- A student must attend at least half of the regular school day to participate in that day's practices or games.
- OPIOID, CONCUSSION, and SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST FACTSHEETS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
California law requires each athlete (and his or her parent for those 17 and younger) participating in an athletic program that takes place outside of the regular school day sign an acknowledgment of receipt that the athlete and his or her parent have received an Opioid Factsheet, a Concussion Factsheet, and a Sudden Cardiac Arrest factsheet before the athlete may participate in practices or competition. The factsheets will be distributed by the school.

PAROCHIAL ATHLETIC LEAGUE (PAL)

The Parochial Athletic League (PAL) is an integral part of the educational mission of the schools who participate in the league as part of the Catholic Diocese of Sacramento – Parochial Athletic League. In order to participate in

the league, St. Mary Parish School must abide by the rules and guidelines of the league. The PAL is dedicated to fostering Christian and human development, encouraging a positive vision in boys and girls through exercise, example, and athletic competition and fully recognizing the dignity of each student in Christ's image. With this mission in mind, the following goals have been determined:

- To build a community which strives to image Christ;
- To develop Christian spirit, school spirit, team spirit and personal acceptance;
- To instill Christian sportsmanship in the life-styles of the participants;
- To teach the participants the proper attitude towards winning, losing and competing with dignity;
- To develop acceptance and appreciation of others;
- To train, instruct and follow athletic/sport rules;
- To develop the students' physical abilities and coordination;
- To help form well-rounded students by fostering good health habits;
- To provide a Christian environment and outlet for youthful energy;
- To teach the positive value of athletic participation; and
- To show the necessity of practice, hard work, and time management.

These goals are founded upon the principle of the infinite worth of each person because he/she is created in the image and likeness of God.

ATHLETE ELIGIBILITY

- Student-athletes must maintain satisfactory academic progress and conduct. Satisfactory academic progress generally means maintaining a C average or higher in courses using a letter/percentage scale and B or above in Conduct/Effort, earning scores of 2 or higher in areas assessed using a standards-referenced scale, and earning Satisfactory (S) or higher in areas assessed using a conduct, effort, or similar scale.
- Academic and behavioral eligibility will be determined using the grading and reporting standards applicable to the student's grade level. A student whose performance falls below these expectations may be placed on academic or behavioral probation.
- Students on academic or behavioral probation are ineligible to participate in practices or competitions for the duration of the probation unless otherwise determined by the principal. The principal may permit continued participation when athletics is determined to be an appropriate component of a student's academic or behavioral improvement plan.
- Student-athletes are expected to attend scheduled practices regularly. Students who do not regularly attend practices may be ineligible to participate in games or competitions. Eligibility decisions are made by school administration in consultation with teachers, coaches, and the Athletic Director, as appropriate.

CONDUCT OF STUDENT-ATHLETES

Student-athletes represent St. Mary Parish School and are expected to demonstrate Christian sportsmanship at all practices, games, and athletic events. They must treat teammates, opponents, coaches, officials, and spectators with dignity and respect; follow directions; use appropriate language and behavior; demonstrate good sportsmanship in victory and defeat; care responsibly for uniforms, equipment, and facilities; and conduct themselves consistently with the school's mission and behavioral expectations. School disciplinary policies remain in effect during athletic activities. Inappropriate conduct may result in reduced participation, removal from a practice or competition, suspension from the team, or other appropriate disciplinary action.

CONDUCT OF PARENTS AND FANS

- Parents/guardians and spectators play an important role in creating a positive Catholic athletic environment and are expected to model Christian sportsmanship and demonstrate respect for student-athletes, coaches, officials, opposing teams, and other spectators.
- Spectators may not engage in abusive, threatening, demeaning, or disruptive behavior; confront officials; interfere with coaching; or otherwise detract from a safe and positive environment for students.
- Concerns regarding coaching decisions, playing time, team strategy, or events occurring during a competition should not be addressed with a coach immediately before, during, or after a game. Parents/guardians are expected to observe a 24-hour cooling-off period before contacting the coach to request a conversation.
- When a concern remains unresolved after appropriate communication with the coach, the parent/guardian may contact the Athletic Director and, when necessary, the principal.
- Parents/guardians or spectators whose conduct does not meet these expectations may be directed to leave an athletic event and may have attendance privileges at future practices, games, or other athletic events restricted or revoked.

PLAYING TIME

Playing time is determined by the coach in accordance with applicable PAL guidelines. Coaches are encouraged to provide meaningful opportunities for all eligible team members to participate; however, equal playing time is not guaranteed. Playing time may be affected by attendance and participation at practices, effort, conduct, eligibility, safety considerations, and applicable PAL rules.

REPORTING INJURIES and SPECIAL LIMITATIONS

Student-athletes and parent(s)/guardian(s) must report injuries or significant health concerns to the coach as soon as possible. Before participation begins, parent(s)/guardian(s) must inform the school and coach of any medical condition, physical limitation, or other health-related restriction that may affect the student's safe participation in athletics. Required information must also be included on applicable medical and athletic forms.

CONCUSSION and SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST

Please see the detailed Concussion and Sudden Cardiac Arrest policies in the Health and Safety section of this handbook.

COMMUNICATION WITH COACHES

- Whenever possible, students should develop self-advocacy skills by communicating directly with their coach about questions or concerns.
- Student → Coach: The student-athlete speaks directly with the coach.
- Parent/Guardian → Coach: If the concern is not resolved, the parent/guardian may request a conversation with the coach after the required 24-hour cooling-off period for concerns arising from a game or competition.
- Parent/Guardian → Athletic Director: If the concern remains unresolved, the parent/guardian may contact the Athletic Director.
- Parent/Guardian → Principal: If additional review is necessary, the concern may be brought to the principal. Conversations regarding another student's participation, performance, discipline, or playing time are not appropriate. The principal has final authority regarding school athletic decisions.

ATHLETIC UNIFORMS

School-issued athletic uniforms are the property of St. Mary Parish School and are the responsibility of the student-athlete and family while in their possession. Uniforms must be returned within one week of the final game of the season, unless otherwise directed by the Athletic Director. Uniforms must be laundered, placed in a bag clearly labeled with the athlete's name, and returned in good condition. Families will be charged the replacement cost for uniforms that are lost, not returned, or damaged beyond normal wear. A \$25 administrative fee will be assessed for uniforms returned after the established deadline. Athletic uniforms may be worn only for games or other occasions authorized by the coach or Athletic Director.

TRANSPORTATION

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for arranging transportation to and from athletic practices, games, tournaments, and other athletic activities. Any volunteer who transports students other than their own child as part of a school-sponsored athletic activity must meet all St. Mary Parish School and Catholic School Department volunteer-driver requirements. A student may ride with another authorized adult only with permission from the student's parent/guardian and in accordance with school transportation and volunteer-driver procedures.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

The St. Mary Parish School athletic program depends upon the participation and support of families. Parent(s)/guardian(s) of student-athletes may be required to assist with responsibilities necessary for the successful operation of home games, tournaments, and other athletic events. These responsibilities may include admissions, concessions, scorekeeping, event supervision, setup or cleanup, or other duties identified by the Athletic Director. Specific volunteer expectations and assignments will be communicated during each athletic season.

Transfer, Custody, and Student Records

TRANSFER of STUDENTS

St. Mary Parish School is committed to making reasonable efforts to support students in accessing and benefiting from the school's educational program. In some circumstances, however, the school may determine that it is unable to adequately meet a student's academic, behavioral, social-emotional, or other educational needs, or that continued enrollment is no longer appropriate because of serious or persistent conduct by the student and/or parent(s)/guardian(s) that significantly interferes with the school's ability to provide its educational program.

- Before recommending a transfer, the school will ordinarily make reasonable efforts to identify and respond to the student's needs and consider reasonable remedial actions or supports.
- The school will confer with parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding the concerns, possible interventions, and educational alternatives.
- The final decision regarding a recommended transfer is made by the principal in consultation with the pastor, appropriate teacher(s) and school personnel, and the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- When appropriate, the school will assist the family in identifying other schools, programs, or agencies that may be better equipped to meet the student's needs.

TRANSFER of STUDENTS BECAUSE of PARENTAL BEHAVIOR

Ordinarily, a student will not be deprived of a Catholic education or otherwise penalized solely because of the actions of a parent/guardian. However, a cooperative partnership between home and school is essential. The principal and/or pastor may recommend transfer when the conduct of a parent/guardian or other adult acting on

behalf of the family is consistently uncooperative, abusive, disruptive, or otherwise significantly interferes with the school's ability to maintain appropriate relationships, administer its programs, or fulfill its Catholic mission. If a parent/guardian refuses to accept a recommended transfer, the school may proceed according to the procedures for expulsion. In sufficiently serious circumstances, immediate termination of enrollment may be warranted.

TRANSFER OF STUDENTS BETWEEN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Before accepting a student transferring from another Catholic school, the principal will contact the principal of the student's current or previous school to discuss relevant information regarding the student's performance, family involvement, financial obligations, and other matters related to enrollment. Students may not transfer to a Catholic elementary school or Catholic high school from another Catholic or private school until all outstanding financial obligations at the previous school have been satisfied. Catholic high schools may be notified of outstanding balances associated with eighth-grade applicants.

CUSTODY OF MINORS

St. Mary Parish School remains neutral in matters of parental custody and will follow current court orders and other legally valid documentation provided to the school. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing the school with complete and current copies of any court orders or legal documents that restrict custody, access, communication, or release of a student.

Unless the school has been provided with a court order or other legally valid documentation limiting a parent's rights, the school will ordinarily recognize the rights of both legal parents consistent with applicable law and school policy.

Students will be released only to a parent/guardian or another adult authorized through the school's current records and procedures. The school will not serve as an intermediary between parents in custody disputes. If a parent believes the school is interpreting a court order incorrectly, it is the parent's responsibility to obtain clarification from the court.

STUDENTS NOT LIVING WITH LEGAL GUARDIANS

When a student is living with an adult who is not the student's legal parent or guardian, St. Mary Parish School must receive appropriate documentation establishing that adult's authority to make educational, medical, enrollment, release, and other decisions on behalf of the student.

Parents/guardians are responsible for providing current documentation and notifying the school promptly of any change in the student's living arrangement or in the authority of the adult caring for the student. The school may require additional documentation when necessary to verify authority or to protect the student's safety and welfare.

ACCESS to STUDENT RECORDS

Custodial Parent(s)/Guardian(s) have access to all permanent records (the Cumulative File) maintained by the school related to their children. Students, 18 years of age or older, have this same right of access.

- Permanent records may be withheld for non-payment of fees.
- Parent(s) may request an appointment during school hours to inspect and review the cumulative file for their children.
- The principal or other school staff member will be present for such a review.
- Anecdotal notes (such as a behavioral record) and psychological test results are not part of a permanent record. Parent(s) do not have a right of access to these records, nor do these records follow the student.

- Parent(s) may request and receive a copy of their child’s permanent records contained in the cumulative file; parents must allow school personnel a reasonable length of time to accomplish this task. The copy will be clearly marked as a copy. Originals or the original complete file cannot be released to parents at any time.
- The Cumulative File is only forwarded to the next school at that school’s request; otherwise, it remains on site.
- Schools will comply with any court order (subpoena) requesting a copy of the permanent records.

PARENTAL ACCESS

In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide all the child’s parents, custodial or non-custodial, with equal access to the child and equal access to academic records and other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is a restriction on one parent’s access to information about the child, contact with the child, etc., it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

Miscellaneous Information and Policies

CLASSROOM PARTIES/BIRTHDAYS

Teachers will communicate classroom-specific procedures, including any allergy or food-safety considerations that families must follow when providing food or treats.

St. Mary Parish School enjoys celebrating special occasions with students while keeping classroom celebrations simple and minimizing disruption to instructional time. Parents/guardians wishing to provide a birthday treat or contribute food or other items for a classroom celebration must contact the homeroom teacher in advance. Birthday treats should be simple, individually portioned, and ready to serve. Please do not send items that require refrigeration, preparation, utensils, or serving ware. Balloons, gifts, and other birthday deliveries should not be sent to school. Classroom celebrations for holidays or other special occasions will be coordinated by the teacher.

FUNDRAISING GUIDELINES and RESTRICTIONS

Fundraising activities conducted in the name of St. Mary Parish School or involving St. Mary Parish School students, families, teams, clubs, classes, organizations, campus, directories, or communication channels must be approved in advance by the principal. Students and families may not independently solicit donations, sell goods or services, conduct raffles or other games of chance, collect money, or organize fundraising activities at school or through school resources without prior authorization. School resources and family contact information may not be used to promote personal businesses, outside organizations, or unapproved fundraising activities. Approved fundraising must comply with St. Mary Parish School, St. Mary Parish, Diocese of Sacramento, and applicable legal requirements.

LOST AND FOUND

St. Mary Parish School maintains a Lost and Found in the Breezeway. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to clearly label children’s belongings with the name of the student using or wearing the item during the current school year. Please label sweaters, jackets, PE uniforms, lunchboxes, water bottles, backpacks, and other personal belongings. Students and families should check Lost and Found promptly when an item is missing. Unclaimed items may be donated or discarded periodically after reasonable notice to families.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

St. Mary Parish School offers an optional hot lunch program provided by Darling Catering, a longtime partner of the St. Mary community. The program includes a salad bar stocked with fresh fruits and vegetables. Menus are provided to families in advance, and parents/guardians who wish to purchase hot lunch must place orders through FACTS by the established deadline for the following month. Students who do not participate should bring a lunch from home.

SCHOOL PICTURES

St. Mary Parish School partners with Payne & Payne Photography for school and student photographs. Fall pictures are taken of every student for inclusion in the yearbook; students wear the Mass Uniform. Optional spring pictures are offered to families, and participating students may wear Casual Dress in accordance with school guidelines. Student-athletes may also have opportunities to participate in team and individual sports pictures.