



St. Mary School

S W O R M V I L L E

History and Philosophy

From 1836, St. John Neumann desired that every family would have the opportunity to educate their children in both academics and in our Catholic faith. Our parish school was established in 1849 and today, more than 160 years later, St. John Neumann's vision continues as St. Mary's serves students and their families from more than ten area school districts.

Our Mission Statement

St. Mary School provides a Catholic Atmosphere of concerned and supportive involvement. Students use their God-given talents to reach their full potential academically, socially and spiritually. Then, they can joyfully and enthusiastically contribute to the growth of their community and continue to broaden their faith.

Our Core Values

- **Faith** – embodied as followers of Jesus Christ, reflecting His love for all;
- **Family** – embraced as we accept our integral roles as family members, community members, and global citizens;
- **Knowledge** – inspired through an active spirit of inquiry, discovery and joy in every classroom;
- **Service** – imbued in the daily and monthly activities of each classroom;
- **Tradition** - instilled as we honor the dignity and heritage of all;

Because St. Mary's is a Christ-centered school, we are committed to hiring teachers, assistants and staff members who practice their Catholic or other Christian faith as defined by the *Apostle's Creed*, and who invite and fully support the presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in each classroom and throughout the halls of St. Mary School.

ADMISSION

The school, mindful of its mission to be a witness to the love of Christ for all, admits students regardless of race, color, or national and/or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, sex, or national and/or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies and practices, scholarship programs, athletic and other school-administered programs, although certain athletic leagues and other programs may limit participation.

While the school does not discriminate against students with special needs, a full range of services may not always be available to them. Decisions concerning the admission and continued enrollment of a student in the school are based upon the student's emotional, academic and physical abilities and the resources available to the school in meeting the student's needs.

PROMOTION

The following factors are considered in the promotion of a student:

- Class performance according to grade level requirements
- Student age and ability
- Student achievement on examinations, class work and standardized tests
- In grades 3-8, an overall average of 70% or higher

OUR PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM

The curriculum of St. Mary School follows the guidelines of the Department of Education of New York State and the Catholic Diocese of Buffalo. The curriculum is designed to meet the individual needs of the student. Students in Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade are guided in Religion, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Foreign Language, Art, Music and Physical Education. Cross-curricular activities in each of these areas facilitate an integration of arts and crafts, science, music, drama and literature, music and dance, and our Christian and multi-cultural heritages into each and every classroom setting.

As a STREAM (Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Art and Math) school, additional emphasis is placed upon hands-on activities and clubs that support learning for college and career readiness.

All students, regardless of religious affiliation, participate in religion classes, Masses and religious celebrations.

We strive to help all students develop skills in written and spoken communication; reading and comprehension; listening, observing, discovering; memorization; logical reasoning; critical thinking; active learning; research and information gathering.

We honor and promote the Christian conscience that engenders respect among all, honesty, integrity, self-discipline, dedication, loyalty, cooperation, community spirit, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity, patriotism, social justice, service and stewardship.

We endeavor to help our students respect their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit and their lives as gifts from our Creator through educational experiences presented in a Christian context that emphasizes the development of positive and safe health habits, universal precautions, physical fitness and sportsmanship, understanding of physical and biological functions and the sanctity of life.

We practice *respect for self, respect for others, respect for the environment*, and help our students develop a positive self-image that assures a healthy sense of self-esteem and self-worth; the courage to make mistakes and the dedication to persevere in the process of developing personal strengths and talents; the ability to know and form healthy relationships; the ability to discern right from wrong, and the confidence to make choices that enhance dignity.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States says “Parents have a right and a duty to be intimately involved in preparing their children for First Eucharist. Catechesis aims to help parents grow in understanding and appreciation of the Eucharist and participate readily in catechizing their children.”

We at St. Mary’s, by taking into consideration these directives, ask all parents to take an active role in preparing their children to receive the sacraments. This is accomplished by parents doing the actual preparation for the sacrament at home as a family. In addition, children will be attending religious education classes through either a Catholic school or a religious education program. Questions regarding our sacramental program may be directed to Holly Hooton in the Family Faith Formation office, 688-0599.

First Eucharist Mass Policy: At St. Mary’s, we celebrate First Communions during our regularly scheduled Mass times as a parish event. First Eucharist is a sacrament of initiation. St. Mary’s parishioners welcome the children prepared to receive the Eucharist as full and participating members of our faith community. Parents are given a choice of several Masses on three consecutive weekends during the Easter season. Ideally parents should choose a Mass that they normally attend on a regular basis as a family. Everyone is given fair and equal opportunity to make Mass selections. Every family is instructed to make a first and second Mass selection choice. We try to accommodate your first choice whenever possible.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

- **Just for Kids** – Our extended day program for students in full-day Montessori through 8th grade from 2:15 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. is available at an additional cost.
- **Weekly Mass:** Students from each grade year (K-8) attend weekly Mass together, providing a sense of connection across the grade levels. Students practice and model grace and courtesy, care for one another, and build self confidence and esteem in their multi-age relationships.
- **Altar Servers:** Students in grades 4 - 8 may train to become altar servers at Friday and Sunday Mass.
- **Musical Productions:** Christmas and Spring provide two of our many opportunities for school-wide musical performances. The annual musical is a tradition that celebrates the talent and community spirit of St. Mary’s!
- **Band:** Students in grade 3 through 8 may participate in the after-school performance program.

- **After-School Sports:** The purpose of the athletic program at the elementary level is to complement the development of the “whole person”. Our after-school sports program provides opportunities to develop skills in sports and sportsmanship, beginning with seasonal sports for boys and girls.
- **Homework Club:** On most Tuesdays through Thursdays homework club provides students in grades 3- 8 with after-school opportunities to work in the presence of teachers who are available to advise.
- **STREAM Academies:** Students at all grade levels may participate in a variety of during- and after-school academies that focus on primary engineering applications, robotics, electronics, arcade design and more!
- **Academic Teams:** Our upper elementary St. Mary’s Quiz Bowl, St. Joe’s Math and other teams compete annually in academics, logic skills and more!
- **Social and Drug-Free Programs:**
 - a. Grade 4-5 Erie County Council for Prevention of Alcohol & Substance Abuse
 - b. Grade 5 DARE – Drug Awareness Resistance Education
 - c. Grade 7 – 8 Life Skills Program

It is hoped that these programs will enhance the students’ self respect and teach them techniques and strategies for solving problems in life.
- **Library -** Our library is open every day from 8:00am – 2:15pm. Small groups may work in the library when supervision is available. However, an entire class must be accompanied by a teacher. A quiet atmosphere is to be maintained in the library. Upon special request and with adult supervision, students may use the library after school. Research may be done in the library during school time.

Participation in after-school programs and activities requires that students maintain appropriate behavior and academic standards by assuring work completion and diligence in studies. Students whose academic achievement is compromised by incomplete work or who are not making steady progress may be exempt from participation in after school activities and electives. A first-level warning will restrict activities for a period of three weeks. Activities may be resumed when teachers indicate that effort and completion of work is at the expected level. If after three weeks, effort and completion of work have not met expectations, the student will be exempted from the activity.

SAFEGUARD THE CHILDREN

Our commitment to protect the children of St. Mary School is manifest in every aspect of our work with the students. Teachers, administrators, staff and volunteers are screened and trained to remain vigilant in assuring that every child is safe in every school setting. Our doors are locked during school hours; visitors must sign in when there is a need to be in the school; children are never left alone or unattended; safety training and awareness are incorporated into every aspect of our curriculum, empowering the children to say “no” to uncomfortable circumstances, to identify unsafe behaviors, and to feel secure in expressing their feelings. *Virtus* training is required for all teachers, coaches and individuals who interact with our school children on a regular basis, or as trip or event chaperones. Sessions are offered throughout the diocese. Scheduled workshops may be found by accessing the www.buffalodiocese.org website and selecting **Protecting God’s Children** in the lower left portion of the screen, then being directed to **Workshop Registration**. Thank you for helping us to protect the children!

THE ST. MARY SCHOOL BOARD OF LIMITED JURISDICTION

The St. Mary School Board meets at the behest of the Pastor and Principal throughout the year to provide advice and counsel specifically in the review of the vision and mission of the school, strategic planning, policy formulation in areas determined by the Board, the Pastor and Principal, financial planning/management in collaboration with the Parish Finance Council, institutional advancement, fundraising and development, and communication. The Board consists of parent and non-parent community volunteers selected by the Pastor and Principal, working collaboratively to lend their unique expertise and advice. Members serve three-year terms and are governed by the *Constitution and By-Laws for a School Board of Trustees for St. Mary School, a Catholic Community School*. The Board has authority for formulating policies collaboratively with the Pastor and Principal. The board does not have responsibility for determining the amount of parish funds designated for the support of the school and has no responsibility with regard to school curriculum, staff, personnel or students.

ST. MARY'S HOME SCHOOL ASSOCIATION (HSA)

Every parent of St. Mary's is a member of this essential association! HSA is dedicated to facilitating many of the fundraising and spirit-filled events that sustain and define St. Mary School! **Room Parents** help to coordinate the volunteer and service activities at the classroom level. **Lunch Monitors** help the children in our lunchroom every day and monitor recess.

Parent Participation

Parental involvement is essential to the mission and the success of the school. Our Home School Association (HSA) coordinates many fundraising and social activities associated with the school. Volunteers are needed. There are innumerable opportunities to share your time and talents, so don't wait to be asked! Without your special gifts we cannot flourish. God bless you!

Please Save!

The following items are redeemed throughout the year to earn supplies for our school: General Mills Box Tops for Education, and receipts from Dash's grocery store. We also collect pop can tabs in support of the Ronald McDonald House.

Shop for St. Mary's

There are several convenient ways for you to help our school earn money by shopping at some of your favorite stores.

TECHNOLOGY4KIDS.com

Office Depot: School Account #70075640

Donations and Gifts

Because St. Mary School is a non-profit organization, your gifts of money and materials are tax deductible and greatly appreciated! We are a United Way participant: simply choose "St. Mary's Scholarship Program" through your employer, or make your donation directly to the Sister Sheila Anne Burke Scholarship Fund. An appropriate receipt for charitable contributions will be provided for tax purposes. Consult your tax advisor for details about donations to nonprofit organizations.

GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

Admission Standards and Requirements

St. Mary School is a nondiscriminatory school open to all children aged 3 through 14. Although our school is neither equipped nor staffed to offer certain special education services, we have access to the special needs programs available through the Williamsville Central School District. Special testing for learning or behavioral problems is also available through WCSD. Where special needs are identified and programs/procedures are prescribed, the faculty and administration will evaluate our ability to provide an optimal learning environment **for all children in the classroom.**

Admission Interview

All applicants will be interviewed by an administrator and/or classroom teacher prior to admission.

Final admission is based upon the following submissions to St. Mary School:

- Completed application for admission
- Interview and academic evaluation of grade-level readiness
- Approval for release of prior academic records
- Completed medical report
- Registration fee (non-refundable)

The Administration reserves the right to withhold admission or grade placement to any child pending the results of placement tests, visits with counselors, or the consideration of further information that may aid the Administration in considering the best interests of the child and the classroom.

School Hours

No student may arrive before 7:30 a.m., when adult supervision becomes available. Therefore, if you are bringing your child to school to drop off at the back door, please **DO NOT** arrive before that time. If you bring them earlier, they are unsupervised. At 7:55 a.m. we begin with prayer and announcements. Dismissal time begins at 2:15 p.m. Children being picked up must have a signed note from a parent and will go to the cafeteria to meet their driver. For early release, the parent or person designated to pick up the student must come to the office and sign the child out of school. Upon return, the parent must accompany the child to the office for sign-in. **This is for your child's safety.**

How We Measure Success

At St. Mary School, we measure success in ways that go well beyond test scores, because “success” for each and every student is more than a grade-point-average. By modeling, encouraging, and assessing the development and mastery of **learning behaviors** -- including self-motivation, neatness and order, responsibility, respect for the property and space of others, work for enjoyment, attentiveness in group lessons, completion of a work cycle, purposeful movement, the ability to work independently and to follow directions, sensitivity to the feelings of others, choice of challenging work, positive response to requests, and more – we help to establish those habits that will enable each child to fulfill his/her unique potential, and develop a life-long love of learning. By caring for self, caring for others, and caring for the environment, we underscore the fact that our gifts are diverse, unique, valuable, and worthy of recognition and honor. Report cards and interim progress reports reflect both numeric measures of academic performance and commentary related to each student's mastery level, thus providing a fuller picture of the student's effort and success.

Testing

Testing and student assessment of projects, presentations and other work are an integral part of the teaching and learning process. The passing score in grades 3 – 8 is 70%.

In addition to a variety of classroom assessments, the following standardized tests are administered in the grades noted:

- Kindergarten: Brigance Screening, consisting of:
 - a. Colors, shapes, pictures
 - b. Visual discrimination
 - c. Counting
 - d. Letter recognitionParents will receive a report and suggestions for the summer.
- Grade 3: NYS English Language Arts (ELA) and Math tests / Diocesan Religion Test
- Grade 4: NYS ELA, Math and Science tests
- Grade 5: NYS ELA and Math tests
- Grade 6: NYS ELA and Math tests
- Grade 7: NYS ELA and Math tests / Diocesan Religion Test
- Grade 8: NYS ELA, Math and Science tests
NYS Integrated Regents Exam (Advanced Math students)
NYS Regents Exam in Earth Science

Conferences and Progress Reports

Classroom performance is assessed daily by teachers with respect to behavior (appropriate/inappropriate) and work effort (complete/incomplete) and may be noted in each student's agenda, on e-School Parent Portal or by way of a weekly summary. The academic year is divided into three reporting units, or trimesters, with interim reports of performance in grades 3 – 8 also provided. The six performance updates throughout the year (three interim reports and three trimester reports) provide an opportunity for parents, students and teachers to work together to maximize the classroom experience for each student of at St. Mary School. Our school-wide parent/teacher conferences are scheduled as noted on the school calendar. Additional conferences and updates to meet specific concerns may be scheduled at mutually convenient times. Parents are invited to contact our teachers at any time throughout the year to schedule meetings as required.

Homework

For the average child, the consensus of educators suggests the following scale of time allotments for homework.

- Grade K: We suggest 15 minutes minimum reading time
- Grade 1-2: 30 minutes
- Grade 3-4: 30-45 minutes
- Grade 5: 60 minutes
- Grade 6 - 8: 90 minutes

Reading is always encouraged, and classroom teachers may assign reasonable reading goals for completion at home. **Please be sure to provide a quiet study space, free from distractions. If your child is experiencing difficulty understanding or completing homework within a reasonable time period, please contact his/her classroom teacher as soon as possible for review, remediation or modification.**

Honors and Awards

Each trimester, recognition for behavior, effort and performance is awarded by our classroom teachers. Based upon trimester averages, students receive academic honors as follows:

- First honors: 94% and above
- Second honors: 89.9% and above
- Merit honors: 85% and above

Field Trips

Field trips to supplement themes and classroom experiences are integral to the curriculum. Our staff will organize and guide educational trips throughout the school year.

Community Service

Community service is a key aspect of our Christian ministry at St. Mary's. Throughout the year, each classroom will participate in events that support local and global community needs. Guidelines will be established and communicated by the homeroom teacher and through the school newsletter.

School Lunch Program

Students may pack a nutritious lunch, or select in advance from our catered options for under \$2.50. St. Mary School participates in the National School Lunch Program. Free and reduced-price lunches are available for students whose family income falls within the eligible criteria established through federal guidelines. Applications for free and reduced lunches are distributed to all students during the first week of school.

When packing a lunch, please remember that red (staining) juices, soda pop, fast food lunches and glass containers are not permitted.

St. Mary's is a "Peanut, Tree-Nut Safe and Cheese Dust Safe School" Please see Appendix C for details.

Recess and Lunch Supervision

Only designated lunch and recess supervisors may be in the cafeteria or on the school yard during lunch and recess times. We welcome new lunch monitors who are up to date with the Protecting God's Children program.

Family Newsletter, Website and Facebook

Important home/school correspondence and our newsletter are included on the school website: www.stmaryschoolswormville.org. Other updates and activities are included on our school Facebook page: www.Facebook.com/StMarySchoolSwormville

School Calendar

Our school calendar is compiled each summer and distributed/updated throughout the year on the school website.

Attendance

New York law requires regular attendance at school for children aged 5 through 16. In order that your child receives the best education possible, we require the cooperation of parents/guardians in assuring that children attend St. Mary School with regularity and timeliness, thus enabling our students to progress consistently. We are mandated by law to report unexcused extended and/or frequent absences to Child Protective Services. Please see our Comprehensive Attendance Policy (CAP) in Appendix E.

Tardiness and Absences

Please remember that tardiness is disruptive to the learning process for all the children. Tardiness and absenteeism are noted on all school records.

When a student is tardy, which means the student is not in his/her designated place by the commencement of morning prayers, we require that ***parents/guardians accompany the child into school and check in through the office*** to assure that we note his/her arrival for our records. All tardiness must be documented.

In the event of an absence the parent/guardian must ***contact the school office as soon as possible*** to report the child's name, class and the approximate or anticipated duration of the absence. We are required to maintain documentation in the form of a ***written excuse*** whenever a child returns to the classroom. Written excuses will be collected and maintained by the homeroom teacher. Parents will be contacted if an excuse is not provided upon a child's return to school.

A student returning after having a contagious disease or an illness of one week or more must have a doctor's release form stating that the student may return to school.

Students who are absent from school during any part of a day due to illness or who are illegally absent during any part of a day are not allowed to participate in school-sponsored activities held that same day.

Student Release During School Hours

So that we may account for all children during the regular school day, we require that early dismissals be authorized in writing by the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians who wish to pick up their child(ren) early are required to check in at the school office. ***Because mornings are concentrated core curriculum times, we urge parents to make doctors' and other appointments after school or in the late afternoon.***

Vacations

Continuity in the school year affects each child's educational success. It is expected that students will be in class during all regular sessions. Please plan your vacations to coincide with our school calendar. Completion of curricula and assignments missed as a result of voluntary absences is the sole responsibility of the student. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance of a vacation while school is in session.

Visits

Parents/guardians are always welcome to visit and observe our classrooms. We encourage you to visit or view not only your child's current classroom, but also the classrooms to which he/she will advance over the coming years. Please contact the office to schedule a time that will not conflict with planned activities. On the day of your visit, please check in at the office prior to visiting the classroom. At all levels, we ask that you become a silent observer in the room so as not to interrupt the flow of the classroom.

Visiting Friends After School

A student going to a friend's home after school must have permission from his/her parent as well as the parent of the friend. Parents must write a simple note that the child has permission to visit a friend or have a guest. Transportation laws do not permit students to be transported anywhere but home. Therefore, students must be picked up by a parent.

MEDICAL

The Department of Health requires exclusion from school for the following communicable conditions:

- ◆ Chicken Pox
- ◆ Head Lice
- ◆ Pinkeye/Conjunctivitis
- ◆ Polio
- ◆ Diphtheria
- ◆ Scarlet Fever
- ◆ Measles
- ◆ Other Strep Infections
- ◆ Mumps
- ◆ Whooping Cough (pertussis)
- ◆ German Measles

Please report these conditions to the school immediately. Because they are communicable, notification to all other potentially exposed students and their families is required by law for the purpose of containment and prevention.

Medical Report

A medical examination report signed by a physician is required for all students entering St. Mary School for the first time. Medical examination report forms are included in the registration packet and are available at the school. Physical examinations are required for all new students immediately prior to entrance to school and within 12 months of entry into Kindergarten and grades 2, 4, and 7.

Immunization Requirements

All required immunizations must be up-to-date per NYS Health Department requirements and documented by your family doctor. Complete immunization records or waivers* will be required before entering school.

New York State Screening Requirements

The school nurse, who visits two half days each week, is responsible for the state screening requirements.

1. Vision and hearing testing in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7.
2. Scoliosis screening, grades 5-8.
3. New York Department of Education requires a physical examination be given to all students entering grades K, 2, 4 and 7.
4. All students participating in sports must have a current physical form on file in the Health Office prior to practicing or competing.

Fever / Illness

Fever is a warning that the body is fighting illness. If your child is running a fever, he/she should be kept at home and at rest until he/she has been fever-free for 24 hours. Likewise, vomiting or diarrhea require a 24-hour absence from school after cessation. In the event that a student experiences diarrhea, vomiting, or runs a fever while at school, we will contact his/her parent/guardian for pick-up as soon as possible. Children who are ill or running a fever **will not be allowed to participate in school events or after-school activities**.

Medication

When prescription or over-the-counter medicine must be administered during school hours the following procedures must be followed:

- ◆ A copy of the doctor's orders or prescription information must be provided to the school administration and to the nurse's office. The type and purpose of the medication must be clearly stated on the original container or box.
- ◆ Directions for administration (time/frequency/dose) are to be clearly stated and understood.
- ◆ All medications are to be kept in a designated area. Rescue medications (inhalers/epi-pens/etc.) may be held by the student with proper authorization from the physician..
- ◆ The teacher, nurse or administrator must dispense and record the appropriate administration of the medication.
- ◆ All medication must be brought to school and picked up at the end of the year by the parent/guardian.

Dismissal

At dismissal time children are expected to leave the building by the parking lot doors and go directly home either by school bus or family pick-up. Any unsupervised students who remain at school after 2:30 p.m. will be sent to the ***Just For Kids*** after school program and charged accordingly.

Bus Transportation

Bus transportation to and from school is provided by most public school districts within a fifteen mile radius of the school. Students who are eligible for bus transportation are not allowed to walk to/from school due to safety and liability. Bus requests must be made by April 1st to the respective school districts by parents.

The district Transportation Departments notifies you of the time your child will be picked up by the bus. Any questions regarding transportation should be directed to the appropriate school district at these numbers:

Akron	542-5026	Lancaster	686-3290
Amherst	362-3035	Lockport	625-9211
Clarence	407-9500	Starpoint	625-9211
Sweet Home	250-1435	Cheektowaga-Maryvale	631-7437
Williamsville	626-8390	West Seneca	677-3820

Bicycles and Walkers

Bicycles are not permitted as transportation to/from school. Walkers need a permission note from a parent or guardian which will be kept on file with the homeroom teacher.

Leaving the School Yard

No child is to leave the schoolyard for any reason during or after school hours unless given permission and accompanied by an authorized adult.

After School Pick-Up

Whenever a child is to be picked up from ***Just For Kids*** or after-school activities, parents must park and enter the school to receive their children.

Emergency and School Closing Procedures

When weather conditions prevent a regular school session, please listen to the radio or watch local television stations for school closing updates. **St. Mary School will close whenever the Williamsville Public Schools close for inclement weather.** All after school and evening activities will also be cancelled when a weather emergency closes the school.

For weather-related (or other) early closings, please prepare your child with a plan for going home early. Students who use the bus may need house keys. ***Just For Kids*** students' parents will be contacted.

Fire Drills and Emergency Drills

Twelve fire drills will be held during the year to instruct our students in the proper evacuation of the building in the event of an emergency. Other drills involving use of the AED, lockdown procedure and weather emergencies may also take place.

Lost and Found

All personal items including clothing and lunch boxes should be labeled with the student's name. If an article is left at school it will be put in the lost and found bins located on the coat racks on either side of the gym.

Telephone Use/ Cell Phones/Electronics/Personal Items

Toys, games and other personal belongings such as money (in excess of \$5) do not belong at school. It is understood that cell phones are an important communication link between children and their families, especially in times of emergency. Students' cell phones **must** be turned off during the school day, and stowed in the student's back pack. They are not to be used without permission from the office or a teacher. Failure to comply will result in confiscation and a call home. iPods and other electronic games should be left at home, unless specifically approved by the classroom teacher. If unauthorized devices are found in use during the school day, they will be confiscated. St. Mary's will not assume responsibility for any lost or stolen electronic devices.

Care of Personal Property

Students are responsible for the care of school and personal property. Teachers may require certain books to be covered at all times. Folders and notebooks should be cared for, with name and class designation. If damage should occur to school property because of student negligence, the student and his/her family will be held financially responsible. The choice of repair or replacement will be at the school's discretion.

Publicity Release Form

Throughout the school year there will be numerous occasions when we will be contacting local media outlets (newspapers, television stations, radio stations) in the hope of getting coverage for a school event. We also hope to use some of the pictures that we take during the year on our Website or the diocesan Catholic schools Website. Please be sure to complete a Publicity Release Form annually.

Change of Household Information

Please inform the office if you change your marital status, mailing/email address or phone number. It is also essential that our records be current on whom to contact in an emergency situation or when a parent cannot be reached.

Student Insurance

The student insurance program is provided for all full time students in Diocesan schools. This program assists only with medical expenses incurred because of accidental bodily injury sustained by students while attending school, while traveling to or from school or while participating in a school sponsored and supervised activity, including school sponsored sport and extended day programs. School insurance covers only those costs, up to a designated limit, not covered by personal health insurance. We are grateful for our Home School's Association's generous contribution for this coverage.

Dress Code

At school, being “in uniform” means more than simply wearing the designated St. Mary’s clothing and shoes. Emphasis is placed upon neatness, cleanliness, appropriateness and comfort for work at school. Clothing should be sized right to fit, without holes, neither faded, graying, frayed, nor worn inside out.

St. Mary School students are expected to adhere to the uniform and grooming code at all times. Notes must be submitted to explain exceptions. Fads and other current philosophical statements made through clothing, jewelry, hair styles etc. are not allowed.

The school uniform is required on all regular school days. It includes the uniform clothing provided by *Flynn & O’Hara*. Special non-uniform dress days will be designated every month for charitable collections.

Hair, Nails and Jewelry

All hair must be clean, neatly styled and secured in such a manner that it will not fall in the eyes and face. Make-up and colored nail polish may not be worn. Jewelry, if worn, must be simple and not excessive in amount.

All boys must have a boy’s regular haircut, and present a clean-cut and neat appearance. Hair must be above the collar in the back and above the top of the ear. Hair must be out of the eyes and clean. Boys are not to wear earrings or body piercing ornamentation at any time. The administration of St. Mary School reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, hair cut, hair style and jewelry, and to restrict anything that is deemed to be distracting or inappropriate.

Girls may only wear stud earrings, one in each ear lobe. All jewelry must blend with the uniform and be appropriate for school. Body piercing ornamentation other than studs in single-pierced ear lobes is not allowed. Skirt length may not be shorter than two inches above the knee. The administration of St. Mary School reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, hair cut, hair style and jewelry, and to restrict anything that is deemed to be distracting or inappropriate.

Uniforms

ALL UNIFORM INFORMATION MAY BE ACCESSED THROUGH OUR SCHOOL WEBSITE:
www.stmaryschoolswormville.org .

- **Boys Grades 6-8:** May wear navy blue pants and belt with a white or light blue oxford shirt, or a white or navy blue logoed polo. An optional tie may be worn with an oxford shirt. To help describe dress pants: denims, chinos, Bugle Boys, and elastic waist pants are not dress pants. Boys’ pants are to have belt loops and must be worn with a belt.
- **Boys Grades K-5:** May wear navy blue pants and belt with a white or light blue oxford shirt, or a white or navy blue logoed polo.
- **Girls Grades K-4:** May wear their plaid uniform jumper with a white Peter Pan collared cotton shirt, or a white or navy blue logoed polo underneath. White or navy blue knee socks, ankle socks, or tights may be worn. No sneaker socks may be worn. Uniform slacks may also be worn. Only navy blue “dickey” type dress slacks are permitted and must be worn with a belt. Full elastic waist pants are not acceptable.
- **Girls 5-8:** May wear their plaid uniform skirt with a white oxford shirt, or a white or navy blue logoed polo. Plain white or dark navy blue knee socks, tights, or ankle socks may be worn. No sneaker socks may be worn. Uniform slacks may also be worn. Only navy blue “dickey” type dress slacks are permitted and must be worn with a belt. Full elastic waist pants are not acceptable.

In 2017-2018: We will phase out the light blue oxford option so that all students are in navy or white colored tops.

SWEATERS: Both boys and girls may wear tailored dark navy blue, or white sweaters. This includes cardigans, v-necks, crewnecks, ¼ zip or button sweaters and vests. NO other styles may be worn (i.e. no hooded, coat length, fleece, sweatshirt, etc. styles)

SHOES: Solid colored black sneakers (no high-tops; no apparent logo, black laces, only) such as New Balance 624v2. Go to <http://www.newbalance.com/search?q=624v2+black> for examples of acceptable sneakers; solid-colored black, brown, navy or grey Sperry-type shoes; or brown, black or navy dress shoes may be worn by both boys and girls. Dress shoes must be flat – no wedges, skid-free and have both a closed toe and heel. Clog and ballerina style shoes may not be worn. Shoe heel must not exceed 1½ inches. Sneakers are required on PE days. Plain white or dark navy blue knee socks or ankle socks may be worn. No sneaker socks may be worn.

SHORTS: Dress shorts may be worn May 1st through October 31st for those who wish. **They must conform to the style sold by the Flynn & O'Hara uniform company.**

NAME TAGS or LABELING of clothing is a necessity. We have given many unlabeled items to the poor this past year.

If you need a uniform, call *Flynn & O'Hara* at 716-632-6581. They are located at 5225 Sheridan Drive, Williamsville, NY. They are also online at www.flynnohara.com. Boys' pants are guaranteed to be replaced if they rip within one year.

PE & SPIRIT CLOTHES

A PE uniform is required for all K-8 students. The PE uniform consists of uniform shorts and a SMS spirit T-shirt available through *AdPro Sports*, and accessible through the school website. Ankle or knee socks with sneakers are an absolute necessity.

MONTESSORI UNIFORM: The Montessori uniform is available for boys and girls through our *FRENCH TOAST* link found on the school website. Boys are required to wear navy blue pull-up pants and a long- or short-sleeved polo shirt with logo. Shorts and a polo are permissible during the months of September, October, May and June for both boys and girls. Girls are required to wear the logoed navy blue ruffled pique polo dress and may also wear leggings during the colder months. Navy or white sweaters and shoes are allowed as per the restrictions noted above.

Dress Up/ Dress Down

At various times throughout the school year we designate a “dress-up” or “dress-down” day. Additionally, St. Mary's provides “Free Dress” days to celebrate or promote special events. Once again, emphasis is placed upon neatness, cleanliness, appropriateness and comfort for work at school. As a general guide, non-uniform attire should provide the same body coverage as that provided by uniforms! ***If it doesn't show on a uniform day, it shouldn't show on a dress up/dress down day!*** Clothing should be sized right to fit, without holes, neither faded nor frayed, nor worn inside out. Inappropriate logos/graphics/sayings are not allowed. Please be sure that socks come above the ankle and closed-toe shoes are worn. Shoes worn on free dress days must be appropriate for play yard activities. Socks or tights must be worn. As always, the administration of St. Mary School reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, and will contact parents if a student's dress does not meet these guidelines.

<p>St. Mary School reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, hair cut, hair style and jewelry, and to restrict any manifestation thereof deemed to be distracting or inappropriate both inside and outside the school building.</p>
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Our Code of Conduct is based upon *respect for self, respect for others and respect for the environment*. See [Appendix D](#) for details. By establishing high expectations for appropriate behavior, we help our students develop a positive self-image that assures a healthy sense of self-esteem and self-worth; the courage to make mistakes and the dedication to persevere in the process of developing personal strengths and talents; the ability to know and form healthy relationships; the ability to discern right from wrong, and the confidence to make choices that enhance dignity

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Each St. Mary's parent/guardian is expected to:

- ◆ support and maintain the Christian and educational standards of St. Mary School.
- ◆ communicate and work in cooperation with the faculty, staff and administration of the school.
- ◆ participate actively in achieving the mission and promoting the ongoing vision of the school.
- ◆ attend St. Mary's all-school meetings and parent-teacher conferences.
- ◆ support and promote the rules of the classroom and the rules of the school.
- ◆ support classroom programs, trips, activities and assignments.
- ◆ communicate with teachers when questions arise concerning classroom activities.

Parent-Teacher Communications

Clear and frequent communication between teachers and parents/guardians is the best formula for educational success, and we strongly encourage our parents/guardians to communicate with your child's teacher often. When addressing specific concerns the following steps should be taken in this order:

- 1) **Contact the teacher.** Schedule a time when you and your child's teacher can sit down and give the issue your undivided attention. Working in a spirit of cooperation will enable all parties to more fully support the student. Define the circumstances that will constitute a satisfactory resolution. Please schedule follow-up meetings, periodic written feedback or phone contact through the school. Each teacher has a St. Mary School e-mail address for use by parents. **See Appendix A for details.**
- 2) **Access the Parent Portal.** To stay up to date with your child's progress, be sure to access the e-School Parent Portal.
- 3) **Contact the Principal.** If necessary, contact the principal to discuss the history of a problem, or extraordinary needs that require the principal's attention.

Student Responsibilities

Each student of St. Mary School is expected to:

- ◆ support and maintain the standards of the school outlined in this handbook
- ◆ work to his/her best ability
- ◆ follow classroom expectations and rules
- ◆ respect others
- ◆ respect our school including its classrooms and grounds
- ◆ respect the environment and our natural resources

The administration reserves the right to deny continued access to a classroom based upon ongoing disruption or disturbance.

Conduct on School Buses

When riding on the school bus, the student is responsible to comply with all of the rules and regulations established by the public school district providing the transportation. In addition, the school may impose a penalty on a student after receiving a report of misbehavior from a representative of the public school district's transportation department.

When riding in vehicles owned or rented by the school, all students must follow Saint Mary's School's discipline policies and Code of Conduct.

Conduct on Class Trips, Field Trips and School-Related Events Off School Property

While participating in class trips, field trips and school-related events off school property, all students must follow St. Mary School's discipline policies and Code of Conduct. Students may be disciplined for misconduct that is not committed on school property or at a school function if, in the professional opinion of the school administration, such a misconduct 1) is a violation of civil or criminal law, 2) reflects poorly upon or discredits the reputation of St. Mary School, 3) threatens the health, safety or welfare of a student, teacher or any other member of the school, 4) is contrary to the moral, religious or orthodox principles of the Roman Catholic Church or the philosophy, policies, goals and commitments of St. Mary School, 5) is likely to interfere with a positive educational environment, or 6) constitutes sexual or other forms of harassment.

DISCIPLINE

Each student is a unique individual with unique personal, social and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation becomes unique in nature. Our school staff dedicates itself to following a set of core beliefs that provide a guide for dealing with student discipline. These core beliefs guide our efforts to individualize disciplinary procedures and to help students see reasonable connections between their behaviors and the resulting consequences. These core beliefs drive our disciplinary policy:

- Every attempt will be made to maintain the dignity and self-respect of both the student and the teacher.
- Students will be guided and expected to solve their problems, or the ones they create, without creating problems for anyone else.
- Students will be given opportunities to make decisions and live with the consequences, be they good or bad.

Discipline is an aspect of moral guidance and not a form of punishment. The purpose of discipline is to provide a school climate conducive to learning and one that promotes character development.

Discipline is maintained in a classroom or school when students work cooperatively with the principal, the teachers, and their classmates towards the attainment of the class and school objectives. However, it should be noted that the legitimate interest of the school extends beyond the school day and beyond the school hours.

Disciplinary Policy

St. Mary School follows a principle-based approach to discipline. Behavioral expectations are made clear to students and their parents through verbal and written communication. In some instances specific rules exist, as in the case of our dress code. Where a detailed rule in support of a recognized code or principle of acceptable conduct does not exist, St. Mary School and its representatives reserve the right to determine the appropriateness of a student's behavior and consequences thereof. Any circumstance disruptive to the educational process or which presents a hazard to the health or safety of staff or students will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary actions may include suspension and/or expulsion. St. Mary School fully supports the rules set forth in the State of New York licensing rules for school and childcare centers.

Classroom Disciplinary Procedures: Conflict Resolution

St. Mary School believes in a positive approach to discipline in the classrooms, emphasizing the reinforcement of good behavior and the redirection of unacceptable behavior. When students disagree, conflict resolution techniques are used. All conflict resolution begins in prayer.

Correcting Student Behavior

It is our goal as educators to guide our students in self-control, responsibility and accountability. In most instances, a visual reminder or word is sufficient to redirect a student to appropriate behavior and choices with no further follow-up. When teachers perceive lack of self-governance, a note in the daily student planner may designate behavior as “inappropriate”. If reminders are insufficient, physical relocation of the student may be warranted to prevent disruption of the learning process. A “think slip” requiring student introspection, amends and parental notification may also be required at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Multiple “think slips” will precipitate a meeting with parents to discuss the nature of the problem and how best to address it. In the case of an egregious infraction, as determined by faculty members in consultation with administration, the student may receive a “pink slip” and be removed from the classroom with an immediate call to parents. In all instances, faculty and administration endeavor to deal and accommodate the uniqueness of individual student’s circumstances.

Our policy for dealing with discipline problems not readily handled at the classroom level is as follows:

- ◆ Communicate with parents/guardians to enlist their involvement, obtain relevant information, or update them on specific issues.
- ◆ Commit to follow through in establishing and assuring achievement of goals for improvement,
- ◆ When needed, recommend or refer the student/family to an appropriate professional organization for continuing evaluation.
- ◆ Review and evaluate the progress of the student and determine the most appropriate placement for the student.

The administration reserves the right to deny continued access to a classroom based upon ongoing disruption or disturbance.

Conditions of Suspension

Any of the reasons listed for expulsion where mitigating circumstances exist may be adequate cause for suspension of a student.

- No student shall be suspended from an elementary school for more than two consecutive weeks.
- Notice of suspension must be given to the parents/guardians by telephone or in a conference.
- The principal shall schedule a conference with the suspended student’s parents/guardians to discuss matters pertinent to the suspension especially the means by which the parents/guardians and the school can cooperatively encourage the student to improve behavior. The suspended student may be present at the conference.

- In no case will a teacher on his/her own authority suspend a student.

Expulsion

Reasons for expulsion are, but are not limited to, the following offenses committed by students:

- Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students.
- Habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Assault, battery or any threat of force or violence directed toward any school personnel or student.
- Bullying or harassing school personnel or other students.
- Open, persistent defiance of the authority of the teacher.
- Continued willful disobedience.
- Use, sale or possession of alcohol, narcotics, drugs or any other controlled substance.
- Use, sale, distribution, or possession of any alcoholic beverages on or near school premises.
- Smoking or having tobacco.
- Stealing
- Forging signatures
- Cheating or plagiarism (see Appendix B)
- Willful cutting, defacing or otherwise injuring in any way property, real or personal belonging to the school.
- Habitual truancy
- Possession of harmful weapons (e.g., knives, guns, etc.) or materials that can be used as weapons.
- Membership in, active involvement in, or affiliation with a gang or group responsible for coercive or violent activity.
- Actions in or out of school which are detrimental to the school's reputation.
- Violation of the Electronic Communications Policy policies and guidelines.
- Inappropriate conduct or behavior unbecoming a student in a Catholic school.

Procedure for Expulsion

When the reasons for expulsion are purely disciplinary, i.e., when serious moral reasons are not involved, the following steps must be taken:

- A conference must be held with the parents/guardians, student, teacher, and principal present to advise the family that serious action is contemplated unless there is immediate improvement in behavior. The pastor will be notified of the conference, given an opportunity to attend and provided a report of the discussion.
- If there is no improvement in behavior, the final decision will be announced at a second conference attended by the principal, teacher, pastor and parents/guardians. If the parents fail, without cause, to attend the conference, the pastor, principal, and teacher will reach a final decision. The final decision rests with the pastor in consultation with the principal.
- In no case will a teacher on his/her own authority expel a student.
- Full credit will be given for all work accomplished by the student up to the moment of expulsion.

Cases Involving Grave Offenses

- In cases involving grave offenses, which may include a violation of criminal law or actions so outrageous as to shock the conscience or behavior of the community, the student is immediately suspended and the initial parent-principal conference is dispensed with.
- The procedure involving cases of grave offenses should be followed when the continued presence of the student at school (even for a short period of time) will, in the reasonable judgment of the principal, pose a serious threat to the health and welfare of another student or students, or faculty members.
- When immediate suspension is imposed, with probable expulsion, while the case is being investigated, the rules and the consequences of the violation should be clearly explained to the student and parents/guardians.

Time of Expulsion

- An expulsion may be made immediately if the reasons are urgent.
- Only in exceptional cases shall expulsion of an eighth grade student who has been in the school one or more years be allowed.
- If an expulsion is to take place during the last quarter of the school year or during the last semester in the case of an eighth grade student, prior approval of the Department of Catholic Schools is required before the expulsion can take effect.
- If such action is contemplated, approval shall be obtained before the announcement of the final decision to the parents at the meeting described below.

Reporting of Expulsions

- All expulsions even if they occur at the end of the year, are to be reported by telephone to the superintendent at the Department of Catholic Schools within twenty-four hours.
- The attendance office of the local public school district shall be notified immediately of expulsions. A copy of the *Cumulative Student Record* should be held until requested.

Right to Make Exceptions

The principal, in consultation with the pastor, retains the right to make exceptions in cases where mitigating circumstances call for a different response than policy suggests.

HARASSMENT, BULLYING AND HAZING POLICY

St. Mary School is committed to provide a safe and comfortable learning environment that respects Christian values and is free from harassment, bullying or hazing in any form. Harassment, bullying or hazing of any student by any other student, lay employee, religious, clergy, or school volunteer is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of any such conduct seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner. This policy shall be communicated clearly to faculty, staff, volunteers, parents, guardians, and students.

Substantiated acts of harassment, bullying or hazing by a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal of the student. Students found to have filed false or frivolous charges will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. For students in grades K-3, this disciplinary action shall depend on the maturity of the students and the circumstances involved. For students in grades 4 through 8, the disciplinary action may include suspension or dismissal.

Harassment occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment in a school environment that is hostile or intimidating based upon a legally protected class, such as race, sex, ethnic origin or religion. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

- Verbal harassment: Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another person.
- Physical harassment: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.
- Visual harassment: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, and gestures.
- Sexual harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Bullying is the habitual harassing, intimidating, tormenting, browbeating, humiliating, terrorizing, oppressing and/or threatening of another person. Bullying typically consists of direct behaviors, such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, shoving, and stealing that are initiated by one or more students against a victim or victims. In addition to direct attacks, bullying may also be indirect, such as spreading rumors that cause victims to be socially isolated through intentional exclusion. Whether the bullying is direct or indirect, the key component of bullying is physical or psychological intimidation that occurs repeatedly over time to create an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse.

Cyber Bullying occurs when students bully each other using the Internet, mobile phones or other cyber technology. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Sending inappropriate text, e-mail, or instant messages.
- Posting inappropriate pictures or messages about others in blogs or on Web sites.
- Using someone else's user name to spread rumors or lies about someone.

Hazing is any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or student body or any pastime or amusement engaged in with respect to these organizations which causes, or is likely to cause, bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm, to any student or other person.

It is the responsibility of the school to:

- Establish practices and provide staff development training and age-appropriate information for students, designed to create a school environment free from discrimination, intimidation or harassment.
- Make all faculty, staff, students, parents/guardians, and volunteers aware of this policy and the commitment of the school toward its strict enforcement
- Remain watchful for conditions that create or may lead to a hostile offensive school environment.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- Conduct himself or herself in a manner that contributes to a positive school environment.
- Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating, harassing, bullying or hazing.
- If possible, inform the other person(s) that the behavior is offensive and unwelcome.
- Report all incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying or hazing to the principal or teacher.
- As deemed appropriate, complete a formal, written complaint which will be investigated thoroughly and will involve only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible.

Student Threats

All threats by students to inflict serious harm to self or others, or to destroy property, will be taken seriously. Whoever hears or becomes aware of any threat made by a student should immediately report it to the pastor, principal, or a teacher. The principal will notify the police and the Department of Catholic Schools immediately.

The student who has made the threat will be kept in the school office under supervision until the police arrive. The parents/guardians of the student who has made the threat will be notified. Any adult or student who has been identified as the potential victim, or mentioned in writing as a potential victim, will be notified immediately.

The student who has made the threat will be suspended until the investigation by the police and school has been completed.

The decision to re-admit a student who has made a threat will be made by the principal and pastor on a case-by-case basis.

Practical jokes or offhand comments of a threatening nature will be taken seriously and will be investigated. The police may be notified and these actions may result in suspension or removal of a student from school.

School Searches

Students' legitimate expectations of privacy in their person and in the personal effects they bring to school must be balanced against the obligation of the school to maintain discipline and to provide a safe environment for the school community. Accordingly, school officials may conduct a search of the student's person and personal effects based on a **reasonable suspicion** that the search will disclose evidence that the student is violating or has violated the law or a school rule.

School officials do not need a warrant or a parent's permission to conduct a search of the student and/or the school's or a student's personal property, as long as they have a reasonable suspicion that a law or school rule is being or has been violated. Whenever a school principal conducts a search of a student's person or personal effects, an adult witness shall be present.

Students do not own their lockers or other school property. Lockers are made available to the student by the school. The student does have some expectation of privacy in his/her locker from other students. However, a student may not exclude school officials if the school official has a reasonable suspicion that a law or school rule has been violated.

A student has a greater expectation of privacy concerning his/her backpack, purse, clothing and other personal effects. A school official who finds it necessary to conduct a search of a student's backpack, purse, clothing or personal effects, must have a reasonable suspicion that the student is violating or has violated a law or school rule. The student's parents shall be notified of any such search.

An alert from a trained and certified detector dog is sufficient to allow the school official to have a reasonable suspicion and to conduct a warrantless search of the student's locker, car or his/her personal property and effects. In addition to this policy on searches by the school, every student is subject to the diocesan and school use and privacy policies concerning cell phones and other electronic devices, whether the devices belong to the school or to the student.

If a student refuses to cooperate in a reasonable search of the school or student property (including electronic devices), the student's parents and/or the police may be called for assistance or referral.

In the event that any items belonging to a student are confiscated, the principal shall document that fact and, when possible, take a photograph of the place where the confiscated object was found and of the object itself. It is also recommended that the school obtain a signature from the student acknowledging that the item was in his or her possession at the time it was found.

Abuse of Teacher or Administrator

The school philosophy supports the school and home as a unit working together for the good of every child.

- Any parent, guardian, or other person who upbraids, insults, or abuses any teacher/administrator of the school, in the presence or hearing of a pupil, is guilty of a misdemeanor.
- Any parent, guardian, or other person who insults or abuses any teacher/administrator in the presence of other school personnel or pupils and at a place which is on school premises or public sidewalks, streets, or other public ways adjacent to school premises or at some other place if the teacher is required to be at such place in connection with assigned school activities is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Recommended Transfer of Child

Under normal circumstances, a pupil is not to be deprived of a Catholic education on grounds relating to the attitude or actions of parents/guardians. It is recognized, however, that a situation could arise in which the uncooperative or disruptive attitude of a parent/guardian might so diminish the effectiveness of the educational process that continued matriculation in the school may be impossible. Where parental/guardian interactions with the faculty, staff, students or administration are deemed inappropriate or detrimental to the work of the school, St. Mary School reserves the right to deny continued matriculation.

PARENT/STUDENT COMPLAINT REVIEW PROCESS

Concern for the dignity and rights of each person are intrinsic to the Church's mission as a true witness to the spirit of the Gospel. Circumstances may give rise to conflicts among students, parents and school staff. All parties are encouraged to use every available means to resolve these conflicts when they occur. However, if the involved parties are unable to resolve their conflicts, families may use the Parent/Student Complaint Review Process for additional assistance. All those participating in the Complaint Review Process are responsible to strive toward reconciliation and act in good faith. Legal representation is not permitted during the Complaint Review Process. Any person filing a complaint is to be free from restraint, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal in any form.

School Level

The person bringing the complaint is encouraged to try to resolve the complaint by discussing it with the persons directly involved. If resolution is not achieved, the complaint should be discussed with the principal (or the pastor, if the principal is the subject of the complaint). For elementary schools, if the principal is unable to resolve the conflict, the principal will bring the pastor into the process as appropriate. After reviewing the facts and facilitating discussion of the problem the principal will respond to the person bringing the complaint.

Department of Catholic Schools Level

If the complaint is not resolved at the school or parish level, the complaint may be submitted in writing to the supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools, outlining the concerns and reviewing the local process.

The supervisor will review the complaint (with such consultation as may be appropriate) in a timely fashion and will endeavor to mediate and resolve the matter. However, if no agreement can be reached, the supervisor will make a final determination concerning the resolution of the complaint, based on the application of diocesan and school policies and/or regulations, and communicate that determination, which will be final and binding, in writing to all parties.

FINANCIAL

Tuition and Fees

Our tuition and fee schedule is updated annually and available with each application/re-registration packet. Sibling discounts are also included at the elementary level. Tuition payments are made annually, semi-annually, quarterly or monthly through the ***FACTS*** payment program. All SMS families participate in this program, and may register by accessing the St. Mary School website, www.stmaryschoolswormville.org and clicking on the ***FACTS*** logo at the bottom left of the screen to initiate the enrollment process.

You may choose a payment plan, selecting a due date and payment method that works best for your family:

- An automatic debit from a savings or checking account
- Payment via a credit card (with nominal convenience fee added), or
- An invoice option which can be paid by check or through ***FACTS***' real-time payment portal

Your cooperation in making prompt payments will help to assure financial stability for St. Mary School. In fairness to all, the following policies are in effect:

- Payment of all past-due balances is required at the time of re-registration.
- A \$25.00 late charge for overdue payment(s) will be levied. (\$30.00 fee for NSF checks.)
- Reports, diplomas, activities, awards, and access to Internet grade links may be withheld from students/parents whose accounts are 60 days in arrears.
- Students whose trimester tuition remains unpaid are subject to dismissal.
- Unpaid balances must be reconciled or subject to an approved payment plan prior to entry to a new school year.

Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is available to qualified applicants through the parish and also through the Bison Fund. To apply for tuition assistance, submit the applications in Spring.

Tuition Refunds

Families withdrawing students prior to the first day of school will be refunded the entire amount of tuition collected for the new school year. Thereafter, with 30 days' notice, the tuition refund will be prorated for each 1/10 of the school year in attendance.

NOTIFICATION REGARDING ASBESTOS

In accordance with Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) St. Mary School is notifying you that in accordance with State and Federal Law, we are in compliance with all asbestos regulations. A copy of our asbestos management plan is kept on file in the school office. If any parent or employee wishes to see this plan, a request can be made to the school office.

NOTIFICATION REGARDING WELLNESS PROGRAM

Our Wellness Program is reviewed three times annually and updated as needed. A hard copy is accessible to all through the school office, and available at our website: www.stmaryschoolswormville.org.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Student and Parent Pledge

Your completion of the St. Mary School Application for Admission or Re-Enrollment form is an acknowledgment of support for our mission, vision and methods. We thank you for your trust and continued support and cooperation.

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School/Principal's Right to Amend This Handbook

St. Mary School's Principal retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents will be given notification if changes are made.

APPENDIX - A
TEACHER EMAIL ADDRESSES

<u>GRADE/SUBJECT</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>EMAIL ADDRESS</u>
St. Mary School	Mary Jo Aiken	principal@stmaryschoolswormville.org
St. Mary School	Stephanie States	office@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Kindergarten Teacher	Julie Vaccarella	kindergarten@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Grade 1 Teacher	Elizabeth Sanderson	grade1@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Grade 2 Teacher	Abby Budzinski-Lake	grade2@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Grade 3 Teacher	Polly Lougen	grade3@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Grade 4 Teacher	Katie Bishop	grade4@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Grade 5 Teacher	Mary McPherson	grade5@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Grade 6 Teacher	Sheila Kahrmanian	grade6@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Grade 7 Teacher, Adv. Science	James Riester	grade7@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Grade 8 Teacher, Ass't. Principal	Joe Roaldi	grade8@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Technology Teacher	Shannon Federowicz	technology@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Montessori Head Teacher	Teresa Rice	@mch1stmaryschoolswormville.org
Advanced Math Teacher	Emily Horan	advancedmath@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Spanish Teacher	Susan Izquierdo	spanish@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Art Teacher	Julia Kester	art@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Music Teacher	Sean Polen	music@stmaryschoolswormville.org
PE / Health Teacher/ Athletic Director	Kristina LaRussa	pehealth@stmaryschoolswormville.org
Librarian	Sister Suzanne Hitzges	library@stmaryschoolswormville.org
ELA Specialist (Gr. 6-8)	Kari Webster	ela@ stmaryschoolswormville.org
Reading Specialist (Gr. K-5)	Krista Bushorr	reading@ stmaryschoolswormville.org

TEACHER WEBSITES

Several grades/subjects have websites that the teacher maintains. These will be listed on the school website: www.stmaryschoolswormville.org. and will be updated as needed.

APPENDIX – B

ST. MARY SCHOOL PLAGIARISM POLICY

As defined by Webster's Dictionary:

Plagiarize v. **1.** To steal and use (the ideas or writings of another) as one's own. **2.** To take passages or ideas from and use them as one's own. **Syns.** Plagiarize, crib, pirate

At St. Mary School, we believe copying work from another person or source (ex. Book, internet, magazine, etc.) is plagiarism.

When researching a topic, students should reword phrases from the article into their own words. Any phrase copied directly, word-for-word, must be put in quotation marks and cited as a resource.

Using an author's words as your own is cheating.

Copying someone else's homework is cheating too. Some students believe that working together on homework is acceptable. However, written assignments are given to help each student learn the information and practice writing skills. Reading the textbook or completing an assignment helps students by reinforcing the concepts learned in class. Doing math problems helps students learn how to apply a math strategy.

Unless specifically directed by a teacher, students are to complete homework assignments independently (with assistance from parents, if necessary.)

In class, collaborating is hard work. When directed by the teacher, students may work in cooperative groups. For each group, guidelines are set for student work that is to be turned in and working together can be a positive, strong learning experience. Collaborating does not mean, "You do the first answer, I'll do the second, and then we will exchange answers." Collaboration and cooperation mean that students need to discuss ideas and come up with mutually agreed upon responses.

Simply taking another student's answers to present as your own is cheating.

At St. Mary's, plagiarism could result in detention, suspension, and/or academic consequences. **ALL** students have been informed of these consequences. Parents, please discuss this policy with your children at home and remind them of what plagiarism involves and why it does not help them learn.

Thank you for your help. By being partners, the school and the home can continue to educate the minds of our children and help them be responsible, good people, too.

APPENDIX – C

St. Mary School is a **PEANUT, TREE-NUT AND CHEESE DUST SAFE SCHOOL**

What Does this Mean?

Some students at our school have life-threatening allergies to peanuts, tree nuts and cheese dust (found in Cheetos, Doritos, Goldfish, Cheesy Popcorn, etc.). Their homerooms are thus designated “PEANUT AND TREE-NUT FREE” or “CHEESE DUST FREE” and no peanut or tree-nut or cheese dust bearing snacks are allowed in these rooms at any time. Teachers, parents, and students are instructed in snack restrictions, and in many cases, teachers will take responsibility for distributing nut-free and cheese dust free snacks prepared for the entire classroom.

Outside the homeroom, those with allergies will be assigned seats and keyboards that are sanitized before they commence work.

In the Lunch Room, a table designated “PEANUT AND TREE-NUT FREE” will be provided and table top and seats wiped down prior to/and after use. Unless excused with a written statement from the student’s doctor, this is the assigned table for all students with peanut/tree-nut allergies. Students may bring a guest to the table if their lunch has been checked and found to be nut-free by the classroom teacher. For our cheese dust allergies, designated tables are not required.

Color-coded lunch trays for those with food allergies are used and washed/stacked separately from other lunch trays, and peanut/nut snacks have been eliminated.

After lunch/recess, students will wash hands to reduce the possibility of contamination back in the classroom.

Students may opt to keep epi-pens in the nurse’s office, or wear them on their person at all times (or both).

Parent Responsibilities

If your child has a food or contact allergy, please be sure that our nurse on staff is notified and that all appropriate prescriptions are made available to her and where necessary, to your child.

Are Peanut/Nut/Cheese Dust Products Allowed in School?

Yes. Peanut and nut products, and Cheese Dust products **are** allowed in school in contained lunch boxes and may be purchased through the school lunch program, but are not allowed as snacks in those homerooms designated PEANUT FREE /TREE NUT FREE/CHEESE DUST FREE. Students may still enjoy their nut-containing sandwiches, Cheetos, Doritos, Goldfish, etc. and desserts at their tables in the lunchroom. Parents are always welcome to review the ingredients used, along with the methods of preparation, for our school lunch program. We encourage all parents and students to become aware of the need for hand washing after eating to minimize the risk of residual exposure to those who are allergic to nuts.

Working together, we can assure the safety of all, while providing choice in food selections.

APPENDIX – D



St. Mary School

S W O R M V I L L E

SPORTS CODE OF ETHICS

Parents	Players
<p>I hereby pledge to provide support, care and encouragement for all children participating in youth sports by following the Parent's Code of Ethics.</p> <p><i>I will remember my behavior, and that of my child, represents my school and reflect its philosophy.</i></p> <p><i>I will practice and encourage good sportsmanship, effort and teamwork from players, coaches, officials, and other parents at every game and practice.</i></p> <p><i>I will not place a burden on my child to win games. The purpose of youth sports is to develop physical, mental, and social skills.</i></p> <p><i>I will do my best to make youth sports fun for my child. I will never argue with or complain about a referee's call or decision.</i></p> <p><i>I will support efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse from youth sports activities.</i></p> <p><i>I will refrain from being a sideline coach or referee. I will attend games to provide positive support for all players on all teams.</i></p> <p><i>I will support efforts to provide an environment for my child that is free from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. I will personally refrain from their use at all youth sports events.</i></p> <p><i>I will remember the game is for the players and not for the parents.</i></p> <p><i>I will ask my child to treat ALL players, coaches, fans, and officials with respect regardless of race, gender, creed, or ability.</i></p>	<p>I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care, and encouragement for all children participating in youth sports by following this Players' Code of Ethics.</p> <p><i>I will remember to start each game with a prayer and model Christian values throughout any game or practice.</i></p> <p><i>I will remember my behavior, and that of my players, represent my school and reflect its philosophy.</i></p> <p><i>I will practice and encourage sportsmanship from fellow players, coaches, officials, and parents at every game and practice.</i></p> <p><i>I will remember that sports participation is an opportunity to learn and have FUN, not just to please my parents or coach.</i></p> <p><i>I will be on time for every practice and game that I can, and will notify my coach in advance if I cannot.</i></p> <p><i>I will do my very best to listen and learn from my coaches.</i></p> <p><i>I will try to do my best at every practice and game, working hard to improve my skills and self-discipline, and to help my team.</i></p> <p><i>I will never argue with or complain about a referee's call or decision.</i></p> <p><i>I will control my temper and resist the temptation to retaliate if I feel I've been wronged.</i></p> <p><i>I will treat my coaches, other players, officials, and fans with respect regardless of race, gender, creed or abilities, and I will expect to be treated accordingly.</i></p> <p><i>I will do my very best in school.</i></p>

APPENDIX – E

COMPREHENSIVE STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Statement of Overall Objectives

Saint Mary's School is committed to providing students the opportunity to attend a safe and orderly school environment where they will receive a quality educational program. School attendance is both a right and a responsibility. The school is an active partner with students and parents in the task of ensuring that all students meet or exceed New York State Common Core Learning Standards. Because the school recognizes that consistent school attendance, academic success, and school completion have a positive correlation, the school has developed, reviewed, and if necessary, will revise the Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy to meet the following objectives. The school has made the commitment to:

- Maintain adequate attendance records, in accordance with New York State Education Department guidelines of its school-age pupils, K-8, in order to ensure that each student maximizes achievement of academic standards;
- Identify general attendance patterns in order to design attendance improvement efforts;
- Ensure students' whereabouts throughout the school day;
- Identify patterns of student behavior that may require student and/or parental attention;
- Determine the school's average daily attendance for aid purposes.

Attendance will be recorded:

- Daily at elementary level
- Period by period at secondary level or at an elementary level that is departmentalized
- At elementary level when the students attend special area classrooms

Description of strategies to meet objectives

Saint Mary's School will:

- Create and maintain a positive school building culture by fostering a positive physical and psychological environment where the presence of strong adult role models encourages, respectful, nurturing, and Christian interactions between adults and students. This positive school culture is aimed at encouraging a high level of student bonding to the school which in turn should lead to increased attendance.
- Develop a Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy based upon the recommendations of a multifaceted School Policy Development Team that includes representation from the Home School Association, administrators, teachers, students, and parents. The school will hold a public Home School Association meeting prior to the adoption of this collaboratively developed Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy.
- Maintain accurate recordkeeping through the use of a Register of Attendance to record attendance, absence, tardiness, or early departure of each student.
- Utilize data analysis systems for tracking individual student attendance and individual as well as group trends in student attendance problems.
- Maintain early intervention strategies to improve school attendance for all students
- Communicate to students and parents areas of concern as well as positive trends.

Determination of Excused and Unexcused Absences, Tardiness, and Early Departures

Based on our school's education and community needs, core values, and priorities, Saint Mary's has determined that absences, tardiness and early departures will be considered excused or unexcused according to the following standards.

- **Excused:** An absence, tardiness or early departure may be excused if due to :

Excused absences and their corresponding codes:

TYPE of ABSENCE	CODE
• Sickness	S
• Sickness or death in family	F
• Required to be in court	P
• Approved high school or college visits	P
• Quarantine	P
• Religious observance	P
• Attendance at health clinics	P
• Take your child to work days	P

Teachers will provide make – up work for excused absences only.

- **Unexcused:** An absence, tardiness, or early departure will be considered unexcused if the reason for the lack of attendance does not fall into the above categories.

Unexcused absences and their corresponding codes:

TYPE of ABSENCE	CODE
• Unlawful detention*	O
• Truancy **	T
• Suspension	Su
• Vacations	V

* *Unlawful detention occurs when a pupil is absent with the knowledge and consent, stated or implied, of his/her parent, for other than legal reasons. Such excuses as the following come under this heading:*

1. Vacation
2. Shopping
3. Overslept
4. Needed at home, etc.

** *Truancy is defined as an absence from school without parental permission.*

Incentives/sanctions to be used to encourage regular attendance:

- a. Perfect Attendance Award given according to school policy
- b. Regular attendance determines participation in special occasion days or events
 - If a student has excessive absences, tardiness, and/or early departures, they will not be able to take part in these special events.
- c. Regular attendance determines promotion
 - If a student has excessive absences, tardiness, and/or early departures, interventions will be put into place to try to remediate the problem. If this problem persists, the student(s) involved will be called in for a conference. If deemed appropriate, this will result in the failure and repetition of current grade level/class.
 - If a student reaches sixty (60) days of absence, the student will have missed school at or in excess of one third of the school year. At this point, the student(s) will be required to repeat their current grade level/class.
- d. Excessive irregular attendance warrants notification of proper authorities
 - Depending on the individual circumstances, this could be Child Protective Services or the Local Police.

General Absence

The New York State Register of Attendance for students states that "Absences for family reasons should be limited to no more than five (5) days during any one year." All work will be made up when child/children return to school. No work will be given out ahead of time.

- a. Parents must notify the school when their child is absent or tardy. If proper notification is not given, a designated staff member shall notify the parent/guardian of the student who is absent/tardy. The staff member will explain the School's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy, the School's intervention procedures, and if appropriate the relationship between attendance and academic success. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached by telephone, the designated staff member will provide such notification by mail.
- b. Students who are tardy must report to the office to sign in and obtain admittance back to the proper class.
- c. Children are required to bring a written excuse after each absence. Parents should notify the office after a pupil has been absent for three consecutive days. If an excuse is not received within the 3 days, the absence is recorded as unexcused. Unexcused absences/tardiness is recorded in school register of attendance.
- d. A child who is absent because of surgery or hospitalization should have written consent to return to school from his/her family physician.
- e. The school should be made aware of a student with serious health problems.
- f. A student guilty of frequent illegal absences will be reported to a social worker. We are mandated by law to report any such cases.

Intervention Strategy Process

In order to effectively intervene when an identified pattern of unexcused absences, tardiness, or early departures occur, the School Principal will work in conjunction with the School Attendance Clerk and other designated staff to pursue the following:

- Identify specific patterns (e.g., grade level, time frame, type of unexcused absence, tardiness, or early departure)
- Contact the parent/guardian in cases when an individual student is involved
- Discuss strategies to directly intervene with specific pattern/trend
- Recommend and implement changes to the Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy
- Utilize appropriate community resources to address and help remediate absences/tardiness.
- Monitor and report short and long term effects of intervention.

Student Illness

Children are the most vulnerable to contracting diseases while in school because of the close contact they maintain. While we cannot prevent this from occurring, with our help we can implement some simple guidelines to help promote a healthy environment.

1. A child should remain home if he/she has vomited or experienced diarrhea within a 24 hour period.
2. A child should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Temperature may indicate an onset of an illness.
3. If your child is coughing excessively, keep him/her home to prevent exposing other children.
4. Please teach your children the importance of correct hand washing as a means of preventing the spread of germs.
5. Please remind your child of the correct use and disposal of tissues and covering one's mouth when coughing to prevent germs from circulating.

Communication is a two way street. Please report any contagious diseases your child has been diagnosed to have (*e.g. strep throat, chicken pox, pink eye, etc.*) The more we know, the better prepared we are to keep your child on the road to good health. When necessary, notices containing information regarding communicable diseases will be coming home. Save these for future references. If you have any questions, contact the school nurse at 689-8424.

Excusing Your Child From School

Please keep your child home when he/she is ill. Write an excuse to your child's teacher upon his/her return to school. Please simply state the facts, for instance:

Date _____

Dear _____,

My child _____ was absent yesterday as he/she was ill.

Sincerely,
(Signature)

Sickness

When a child becomes ill in school, the same procedure for picking up him/her will be used as in EARLY DEPARTURE.

We need to annually update our emergency papers. In case of sickness, we must be able to reach you. If you have any changes in your phone number, please let us know.

Annual Review by the School Policy Development Team

The School Policy Development Team shall annually review the School attendance records and if such records show a decline in student attendance, the Team shall make any revisions to the Policy and plan deemed necessary to improve student attendance.

Community Awareness

Commencing with the 2013-2014 school year, Saint Mary's School shall promote necessary community awareness of the School's Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy by:

- Providing a plain language summary of the policy to the parents/guardians to students at the beginning of each school year and taking such other steps deemed necessary to promote the understanding of the policy by students and their parents/guardians;
- Providing each teacher with a copy of the policy and any amendments thereto as soon as practicable following the initial adoption or amendment of the policy, and providing new teachers with a copy of the policy upon their employment; and
- Making copies of the policy available to any other of the community upon request.