

St. Mary School Student Handbook

2021-2022



“Teach As Jesus Would Teach”

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SCHOOL SONG: "THE BELLS OF ST. MARY"

The bells of Saint Mary
I hear they are calling
The children, the young ones
To guide on their way.
With Jesus and Mary
To love and protect us,
The bells will ring
They'll always ring
For you and me.

The bells of Saint Mary
A century they've called us
Through tears and with laughter,
We thank God today.
And so we'll continue,
In grace and with growing,
The bells will ring.
They'll always ring
For you and me.

Oh, bells of Saint Mary
We always will love you.
With your inspiration,
We never will fail.
Your chimes will forever
Bring sweet memories of you,
So proudly ring out
While we sing out
Hail, hail, hail!

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INTRODUCTION TO ST. MARY SCHOOL

This handbook's purpose is to help make St. Mary Catholic School a place of academic excellence, with an atmosphere of Christian compassion and respect. One of the ways we can achieve this is by having a clear understanding of what is expected, why it is expected, and what the results are when these expectations are not met. This handbook will serve as the standard for expectations of the students and their families. These policies are a collaboration of federal and state laws as governed by the State of Texas, policies as mandated by the Fort Worth Catholic Diocese, and rules as approved by the St. Mary Catholic School Advisory Council.

This handbook is not intended to cover all diocesan and school policies and procedures. The purpose is to provide information about the most common areas that affect students and parents at St. Mary Catholic School.

For more information, clarification, or to address topics not covered, please contact the school principal. The principal reserves the right to amend the handbook at any time. In all cases, the definitive interpretation of the handbook remains solely with the principal and/or pastor.

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

As members of St. Mary Parish in Gainesville, Texas, our primary mission is to live within the Church community in a manner faithful and pleasing to God, our Father, and to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ the Savior of all people. As Catholics, the opportunity to attend Mass and receive the Holy Eucharist in a spirit of shared celebration is prerequisite to fulfillment of our mission.

We are Christians who serve as witnesses to Christ's presence on earth and His ongoing ministry in society. United in this belief, we are called to work together in this ministry by serving those in need, worshipping, and forming a Catholic community bonded by love, humility, and compassion.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit and the gifts and talents of our members and the community at large, we are committed to continued stewardship of existing programs including RCIA and the religious education of all members. The maintenance and growth of St. Mary School is an essential element of our stewardship mission.

SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mary Catholic School exists to serve Jesus Christ by providing excellence in education and spiritual development of the whole person within the framework of the Gospel and traditions of the Catholic Church. Our mission is to foster a faith filled community of lifelong learners and compassionate leaders committed to living out Catholic values and following Jesus' example through prayer, service and love.

HISTORY

St. Mary School was established in 1891 by the Benedictine Sisters. In 1902 four School Sisters of Notre Dame took charge of the school which was then a six-room frame building. Thirty-two pupils were enrolled that August which increased to seventy-five by the end of the year. The next school term 120 students enrolled. In 1905 high school subjects were offered for the first time. An official high school building opened in 1938. The present St. Mary Elementary School was erected in 1948. It was the first major structure built in Gainesville after World War II. The high school was disbanded in 1952. The School Sisters of Notre Dame phased out of direct administration and classroom instruction in 1984. The building was completely remodeled and air conditioning installed in 1979. A junior high section was added in 1985. A gymnasium was erected in 1991 in celebration of St. Mary Parish Centennial. In 2004 a new Early Learning Childhood Center with four classrooms was built onto the current school building. The staff continues a tradition of working with parents to stress the infinite worth of each individual student.

ACADEMICS

ACADEMIC RESPONSIBILITY

Parents often ask how they can help their child in school. What can they do to ensure success? While some of the responsibilities may seem simplistic, they are all essential. As you can see, it takes more than teacher input. It also takes a firm commitment from students and parents equally. What happens in school is only a small part of the educational process. The follow-up at home, by both student and parents, is vital for success.

As parents and educators, we are dedicated to helping children become responsible citizens. Students must learn not only responsible conduct behavior but also responsible academic behavior. To this end, students are ultimately responsible for completing their own assignments and homework and for remembering to bring their own books, homework, assignments, and materials to class. Students are discouraged from calling home for forgotten books, homework, or materials.

Teachers try their best to notify parents if a student has lost a book, material or have received zeroes for missing assignments; however, it is the ultimate responsibility of the student to keep track of school assignments, grades, and materials and to relay this information to his or her parent. Students should make arrangements with teachers or outside tutors for extra help if further academic assistance is needed. At the beginning of the year, teachers will send home the times they are available to give students extra help.

The Teacher Will:

- Present material
- Explain the subject
- Model material
- Answer questions
- Provide practice
- Reteach and clarify
- Assess and grade
- Encourage students
- Create a safe environment
- Acknowledge **QUALITY**

The Student Should:

- Listen to presentation
- Question if uncertain
- Follow examples
- Record assignments
- Review daily lessons
- Do homework and turn it in on time
- Honor due dates
- Have required supplies
- Keep track of materials
- Be prepared for class
- Strive for **QUALITY**

The Parent is encouraged to:

- Make school a priority
- Provide quiet work area
- Provide student supplies
- Monitor homework and due dates
- Ensure daily review in all subjects
- Reward good work and provide consequences for poor work
- Ask to see graded work
- Encourage reasonable bedtime
- Ensure students have breakfast
- Encourage **QUALITY**

Examples of QUALITY work:

**EXCELLENT
CREATIVE
MECHANICALLY CORRECT
METICULOUS AND TIDY**

**ON TIME
ERROR FREE
PRECISE
DESERVING OF RECOGNITION**

ADMISSION

In accordance with the Texas Catholic Conference accreditation standards, St. Mary Catholic School complies with all age and immunization requirements of the State of Texas and the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth. As a Catholic, non-public school dedicated to academic excellence within a disciplined, value-centered environment, the school actively seeks students and families who have a positive attitude toward the value of a traditional Catholic education.

St. Mary Catholic School requires that a student entering the PK3 program be 3 years of age by September 1st. Students entering the PK4 program must be 4 years of age by September 1st. Students must be potty trained. According to Texas State Law, a child must be 5 years of age by/on September 1st to enter Kindergarten. A child must be 6 years of age by/on September 1st to enter first grade.

The administration will assess the prospective student and consult with his/her family to determine if the student meets requirements for admission. The student's past academic and conduct records will also be considered. If a child has been diagnosed with a learning disability, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the administration and submit documentation to the principal (preferably before assessment). All new students are conditionally admitted for the first nine weeks.

According to Diocesan Policy #5000 — *No student has a right to attend a diocesan school. The schools and the Diocese retain the right not to allow a student to continue attending or to re-enroll in a school. No teacher, principal, or pastor has the right to agree to consent to any individual having a right to continue as a student. Advanced enrollment, pre-enrollment, or continuing enrollment of a student is a conditional enrollment subject to review and termination by the school at any time. The conduct of the student or the student's parents may be grounds for the school revoking the enrollment of a student. Prior to the first day of school, the school does not have to state the reasons or have grounds for the revoking of a conditional enrollment of a student.*

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

St. Mary Catholic School is in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal statutes of non-discrimination in its employment and admission practices. It admits qualified students of any race, color, sex, national or ethnic origins to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school.

ENTRANCE ASSESMENT

Entrance assessments may be administered to all new students entering K through 8th grade. New families will be interviewed by the Principal and/or the pastor.

REGISTRATION

Each returning family will submit an application for registration beginning in February. The following admission order and criteria will be considered in accepting the application.

Order:

1. Currently enrolled students
2. Siblings of currently enrolled students
3. St. Mary Catholic Church parishioners
4. Catholics from other parishes
5. Students of other faiths

Criteria:

1. All tuition and fees at the time of application must be current.
2. Students must have shown appropriate growth in academic and behavioral standards (Summer school may be a requirement for registration for the next school year.)
3. All students and parents jointly agree to abide by the following:
 - Advisory Council Policies
 - Administrative Policies and Regulations
 - School Rules and Classroom Procedures

ADMISSION DOCUMENTATION POLICY

For all new students, the following documents must be provided to the administration before enrollment is complete:

1. Admission Application
2. Copy of official state birth certificate
3. Copy of official Baptismal certificate (for Catholics)
4. Sacramental record of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, where applicable for Catholics
5. Final report card copies from previous school(s)
6. Results of any standardized testing
7. Signed Transcript Request (release for previous school records for grades 1-8)
8. Completed Diocese of Fort Worth Health Report (including school physical)
9. Immunization records signed by a physician (no religious exclusions)
10. Information about special health needs
11. Documentation regarding psychological, medical or educational evaluations.
12. Registration fee paid in full

For all re-enrolling students the following is required prior to admission:

1. Completed Admission Application
2. Current on financial obligations to the school
3. Registration fee paid in full

AWARDS AND HONORS

St. Mary School is proud of the many accomplishments of its students and strives to give recognition in academics, sports, and special achievements. The following is used for recognizing the academic achievements in the core subjects of the students: Principal's Honor Roll-an average of 95 or above; A Honor Roll-an average between 90 and 94; B Honor Roll-an average between 80 and 89. The different honor rolls are sent to the local newspaper each reporting period.

St. Mary School honors its top graduates by determining the Valedictorian and Salutatorian at the end of their eighth grade year. To qualify for these honors, the student must have attended St. Mary School during their 6th, 7th and 8th grade years. Valedictorian and Salutatorian are determined by their cumulative grade point average through the end of the 3rd quarter of their 8th grade year. Eighth grade students are voted on by the school staff at the end of the school year for the Faith Award and the All Around Student Award. These awards are presented at the graduation Mass.

CURRICULUM

St. Mary School offers a strong academic program in a Christian environment. In addition, the faculty provides religious instruction in the Catholic faith. Students in grades K-8 are required to attend Mass each week. Students in K3 and K4 will attend on designated days.

The Early Learning Center uses a program that is committed to developing and preparing the young child for elementary school.

Students in grades 1-8 receive instruction in religion, language arts, math, social studies, science, computer literacy, music, art, and physical education. Students in 8th grade have the opportunity to earn high school credits in Algebra and Spanish. They may also participate in extra-curricular academic competitions throughout the year such as NTIL (North Texas Independent League) and/or PSIA (Private Schools Interscholastic Association).

St. Mary School offers the Accelerated Reader Program to promote reading to students in grades K-8. Teachers in grades 3-8 will require students to earn AR points. For other students, it is an extra-curricular program. Any student who earns AR points will be allowed to redeem them for special rewards.

The curriculum of St. Mary Catholic School includes Religion and all subjects required by the State of Texas and Texas Catholic Conference. Teachers' lessons are planned around the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) which are the state standards adopted by the State Board of Education.

St. Mary School is accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference under the Texas Education Agency. Accreditation occurs every seven years with annual renewals. The last official accreditation visit was in 2015.

GRADES

Numerical and letter grades will be used on papers and tests. Report card grades for the students in grades 1-8 will be numerical and letter grades. The lowest passing grade is a 70. Special needs students may have grade modifications put into place.

Students in all grades will receive academic report cards each nine weeks. Report cards issued after the first and third grading periods will be given to parents at a scheduled parent-teacher conference. These conferences give both the parents and the teacher the opportunity to discuss the child's academic and social progress. If a parent is unable to come on the conference day, other arrangements must be made with the teacher. Grades are posted weekly on FACTS so that parents have access to current information at all times. It is the parents' responsibility to use this information to keep track of their child's/children's progress.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

Homework is an extension of classroom instruction. It helps to develop concepts presented in the classroom, provides additional practice with skills, and helps a student master the goals and objectives presented by the classroom teacher. In addition, having homework assignments to do on a regular basis helps to foster systematic study habits. A student will realize that homework is a vital part of the educational process if both the teacher and the parents hold the child accountable for the quality of the work.

Individual teachers are responsible for the amount and type of homework assignment. Students in all grades will have homework. The teachers will review the assignments and provide feedback to the students.

The approximate time spent on homework may be: K3& K4—10-15 minutes; K—20 minutes; Grades 1 & 2—30 minutes; Grades 3, 4, & 5—45 minutes; Grades 6, 7, & 8—1 to 1-1/2 hours.

Students are expected to take home all materials needed to complete homework assignments. Students are also responsible for returning assignments on the date they are due.

Failure to Complete Homework in Grades 4—8: Students will stay in detention that day until 4:30 p.m. At the end of each class, each teacher will send a homework form to the office for every child who will be in detention that day. The student will call the parent from the office to let them know he or she will need to be picked up at 4:30, and the form will be sent to the principal. If a child is unable to finish the work in one day, he/she will be allowed to complete the work at home that evening. Detention will be assigned the following day only if the work has not been completed and submitted to the teacher. Students who are assigned to detention will attend after school athletic practices after 4:30. FEES WILL BE CHARGED FOR DETENTION AT THE EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM RATE.

The exception will be late homework due to an excused absence. One day will be given to complete the work for each day the student has been absent. Therefore, if a child has a three-day excused absence, he/she will be given three days to complete all of the missed work.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM

The instructional support program offers both enrichment activities and remediation for students in grades K4-8. The program is staffed with a certified teacher. Classroom teachers must recommend students for the program. There is constant communication between the instructional support teacher and each classroom teacher to ensure that the needs of each individual student are met.

NO PASS-NO PARTICIPATION RULE

Since educating the students is the main focus at St. Mary School, it is very important to maintain a balance between education and extra-curricular activities. Because of this fact, St. Mary School has adopted a no pass-no participation policy for its students. Grades will be checked according to the following guidelines.

First three weeks of school: All students are eligible to participate. Grades will not be checked until after the students have been in school for three weeks. After the three weeks are over, the principal will check the grades of each participant the day before the activity.

At the end of each grading period: If a student is ineligible at the end of a grading period, that child will remain ineligible for three weeks. After the three weeks are over, the principal will check the grades of each participant the day before the activity. If the activity takes place over a weekend, eligibility will be determined by Friday morning. Students who have a failing grade will be ineligible for that activity. If a student has grade modifications in place, the principal will decide on his/her eligibility.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The TCCED (Texas Catholic Conference Education Department) requires all children to participate in physical education class unless an excuse from a doctor is on file in the school office. If a child is too ill to participate on a particular day, the parent should send a note to the classroom teacher. The teacher will see that the physical education teacher receives this note.

SUMMER SCHOOL

St. Mary School requires a summer program for students who need remediation in one or more academic areas. Students must be recommended by a teacher in order to attend summer school. These recommendations are discussed with parents at the parent/teacher conference after the third grading period. Summer school may be a requirement for students who have not shown appropriate growth in academics. Summer school can also be required for students who have violated the attendance policy. A fee will be charged for summer school.

TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks are reviewed annually. The Diocese of Fort Worth updates the list of acceptable textbooks periodically. Textbooks are each student's responsibility and may be covered to minimize damage. Students will be responsible for replacing lost, damaged, or destroyed books.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL POLICIES

ARRIVING AT SCHOOL

School hours are from 7:50 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. for the students in the Early Learning Center and from 7:50 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. for those in grades 1-8. All students must report to the parish hall each morning. For safety reasons, students should be dropped off in the car line. Parents who choose to park must walk their child to the staff member at the parish hall doors. The parish hall door is unlocked at 7:25 a.m. All students are required to be in their assigned places by 7:50 a.m. as the morning assembly is an important part of the school day. At this time an opening prayer, the pledge to the flag, and morning announcements will be made. Then, the classes will be dismissed with the teachers to walk to the classrooms. If students arrive after the parish hall doors are closed, parents must check them in at the front office. To provide for the safety of the children, all doors to the school will remain locked during the day with the exception of the main entrance. Visitors to the school must check in at the main office so they can be admitted to the building through the security door.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL

Students should be picked up promptly at the end of the school day. At 3:15 p.m. all Early Learning Center students will be dismissed. They must be picked up on the north side of the ELC building. Students will not be dismissed through the main office. The traffic will go east on Mustang Alley which is a one-way street. Each student will be placed into the appropriate vehicle by a staff person. Adults should not park in the line and get out of their vehicles for any reason. Traffic must continue to flow. On the first day of school, each child will receive a placard with his/her name printed on it. This is to be hung from the rearview mirror to expedite the dismissal process.

At 3:25 p.m. all students in grades 1-8 will assemble in the Parish Hall and be dismissed after prayer. Students will not be dismissed through the main office. Driving through the car line is the safest way to pick up students.

Adults who drive through the car line will enter from the east on Foreline Street and assemble in a line on the gym black-top. A staff person will load each car with the appropriate student(s) as it pulls through the covered area in front of the Parish Hall. Cars will go north on Weaver Street or west on Hall Street to exit. It is imperative that the line of cars move as quickly as possible. Therefore, any person who needs extra time for any reason should park and walk to the building to handle the situation.

Any child who has not been picked up by 3:45 will go to the after school program. The parent will be billed at a rate of \$6.00 per hour/per child or \$8.00 per hour/per family. No child will be allowed to be unsupervised after school. Each student will only be allowed to leave with people authorized to pick up that child. Therefore, parents must notify the school office if anyone other than a parent is to pick up a student.

When Jr. High students are dismissed from athletic practices, parents should pick them up at the gym doors. If a student is not picked up within 15 minutes of practice ending, the student will be sent to the after school program and will be charged the appropriate fees.

EARLY DISMISSAL

School will dismiss at 12:00 p.m. on days designated as early dismissal days. Parents need to pick up students promptly on these days using the same afternoon dismissal guidelines. The after-school program will not be offered on Early Release Days. The dates will be printed on the school calendar that is sent home each month. Any changes will be emailed through FACTS immediately. Lunch will not be served.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Non-scheduled changes to the school day will be reported to KGAF, KXII TV (Channel 12), and Channel 5. Since there are other schools named St. Mary School in the area, parents need to be sure to look for the inclusion of the word Gainesville in the announcement. St. Mary School will post information on their website (www.smsmustangs.com) and Facebook page. A school email will also be sent through RenWeb and Remind.

EMERGENCY SCHOOLWIDE LOCKDOWN

Should an emergency arise that requires St. Mary School to be locked-down for security purposes, students will not be permitted to leave the building until the situation is resolved. In addition, visitors will not be allowed to enter the building. The principal will make decisions based on all of the information available at the time and do what is necessary to keep the students and staff as safe as possible.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

ABSENCE

A student's attendance is extremely important for learning. Anyone present less than two hours in the morning or two hours in the afternoon is marked absent for that part of the day. Excused absences include any that are preapproved by the office. In addition, absences due to illnesses, family emergencies, or medical appointments are considered excused. The parent should call or email the office before 10:00 a.m. on the day of an absence to let the school know the reason for the child's absence or may send a note explaining the reason when the child returns to school. Students who are absent for three days or more due to a medical condition must bring a doctor's note to be readmitted to class. Failure to do this could result in the child receiving an unexcused absence. All students must attend school 90% of the days in each semester so that advancement eligibility is not jeopardized. These decisions will be made by the principal. A Parent/Teacher Conference may be held to discuss excessive absences. Students may not participate in extra-curricular activities on any day that they have been absent from school. Any exceptions to this rule will need to be approved by the principal.

HEALTH PROGRAM AND PROCEDURES

For the safety of each student, parents or guardians must complete and return their Emergency Information Card to the administration during school orientation or before the first day of school. If information changes at any time during the school year, please promptly notify the school office.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Students must be current on immunizations to enroll. Religious objections to immunizations are not accepted. Students with medical exemptions must have a doctor's note.

MEDICATION

So that all safeguards may be taken to protect the health of the child, the school office must be notified before the first day of school, concerning prescribed medications and/or any special physical conditions of the child. Diocesan policy states that necessary medications such as those needed for epileptics, asthmatics, diabetics and hyperkinetic may be given at school. Acetaminophen and ibuprofen may be dispensed if necessary with written permission of a doctor. **ONLY DOCTOR PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER WILL BE ADMINISTERED TO THE STUDENT.** Medication must be accompanied by the appropriate form with instructions for administering, including specific dosage and times. Medication should be directly handed from the parent/guardian to the school nurse or office personnel. Medication may not be carried or kept by students in backpacks, lunch boxes, etc. This includes throat lozenges and cough drops.

ILLNESS / INJURY DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Should a child become ill or injured during the school day, and the matter cannot be handled at school, the parent will be called to make further arrangements. A child whose temperature is 100 degrees or above must be picked up from school as soon as possible. Please list an emergency contact that can arrive within 30 minutes of notification.

A parent must keep a child **home** if he/she is unable to follow the classroom routine or symptoms would prevent learning in the classroom. The following guidelines will be enforced but may not be all inclusive. Final decision will be made by the principal and or staff.

COVID 19 EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL

In order to prevent the spread of disease, we ask that you do not send your child to school if he/she is exhibiting any symptoms of illness or runner a fever. If he/she has been ill, it is required that he/she be free of fever without fever reducing medication for 24 hours prior to returning to school. With respect to the current Covid-19 pandemic, it is imperative that parents/guardians follow this protocol at all times. Should a child become ill on campus and require a parent/guardian to take them home, this parent/guardian must arrive to retrieve the student within 30 minutes of the initial phone call.

Infectious and Contagious Disease

Guidelines for Excluding Students from School

Keep Child at Home Guidelines

Oral temperature of 100 or above /vomiting
Nausea or severe stomach pains
Marked drowsiness or malaise
Sore throat, acute cold or persistent cough
Red, inflamed or discharging eyes
Acute skin rashes or eruptions
Swollen glands around the jaws, ears or neck
Suspected scabies or impetigo
Any skin lesion in the weeping stage

Earache
Pediculosis (head lice)

Other symptoms suggestive of infectious illness
Diarrhea

Return to school Guidelines

Symptom free for 24 hours
Symptom free
Symptom free upon arrival to school
Symptom free upon arrival to school
Written physician release
Written physician release
Written physician release
Written physician release
Covered and diagnosed as non-infectious
Symptom free
Nit free-must be cleared by school Nurse before readmitted to school
Written physician release
Symptom free

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Doctor and dental appointments should be scheduled after school hours. If a student must be taken for an appointment during the regular school day, a note must be given to the child's teacher in the morning. Even though students will be picked up through the office, the teacher needs to know prior to the child's departure so the child will be ready to leave. Students must be signed out of school by a parent/guardian. The sign-out book is located in the school office.

TARDINESS

Parents are responsible for getting their children to school by 7:50 a.m. The morning announcements, prayer time, and the pledge to the flag are an important part of the school day; and all students are required to attend. For safety and security reasons, parents need to accompany tardy students into the building. Children who enter the classroom after the start of the day disrupt the teacher and the other students. Excessive tardiness may require a Teacher/Principal and Parent Conference.

DISCIPLINE

Promoting a safe, Christian environment is the primary goal of St. Mary School. Every student must realize that he/she is responsible for his/her actions. St. Mary School views discipline as a subject that needs to be constantly addressed. When a student chooses to break a rule, he/she also chooses to accept whatever consequences are appropriate. Students are expected to learn that discipline is necessary for spiritual, physical, and intellectual growth to occur. Each teacher has a classroom discipline plan which is sent home to the parents on the first day of school. This plan will list classroom guidelines and consequences.

BULLYING, FIGHTING, OR HARASSMENT

St. Mary Catholic School recognizes that each person has great dignity because each is made in the image and likeness of God; therefore, each person deserves respect. Respect and dignity are based on the Ten Commandments; we do not steal, lie, cheat, hurt a person in spirit or body, or do anything that would hurt the dignity of another. Such inappropriate behavior will be handled by the teacher and or principal.

In union with our fellow schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth, the staff and teachers of St. Mary Catholic School will not tolerate fighting, harassment or bullying on or off campus while students are under their supervision. Fighting, intimidation, bullying and harassment of any kind are inappropriate and unacceptable. St. Mary School faculty has been trained to recognize and address inappropriate behavior. Depending upon the type and severity of the offense, a student may be given a disciplinary referral or a detention. A student may also be suspended or expelled.

** Note: Parents, please communicate with your child's teacher should you have a concern in this area.*

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

1. Attend and be on time for all classes.
2. Be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
3. Be properly attired as explained in the dress code.
4. Demonstrate respect for the rights of staff members and fellow students.
5. Demonstrate respect for school property and the property of others.
6. Stand when an adult enters a classroom. Use an appropriate greeting such as, "Good Morning/Afternoon."
7. Do not eat in the classrooms, library, or computer room. (Supervised activities are an exception to this rule.)
8. Do not chew gum on school property.
9. Keep desks and lockers neat and orderly. Periodic inspections will be held.
10. Do not sit on bookshelves, desks, or tables.
11. Do not run in the halls.
12. Respect the privacy of any staff member. Never tamper with an adult's desk, computer, purse, etc.
13. Never show disrespect to anyone.
14. Comply with all classroom rules.
15. St. Mary School is not responsible for lost items. Students in the junior high school may put locks on the lockers. If a student has a lock on his/her locker, an extra key must be given to the homeroom teacher.

CONDUCT OUT OF TOWN

The same rules apply when students are off the campus as when they are on the campus. Students must remember that their behavior on a school trip can reflect on the reputation of the school and the community. Students need to keep this in mind and act accordingly.

CONDUCT WITH VISITORS

All visitors are to be treated with courtesy and respect. The goal is for a visitor to leave with a positive feeling concerning St. Mary School.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES AND CELLPHONES

***PARENTS: State Law prohibits cell phone usage in school zones.**

St. Mary School Students Cell Phone/Electronic Devices Use

Students are expected to demonstrate good digital citizenship. The following rules apply to students who have cell phones or other electronic devices at school:

*Students who have cell phones or other devices at school must have them silenced (not vibrate) and stored out of sight while they are under school supervision, not on their person. This includes during Before School arrival and After School dismissal. In certain circumstances, teachers/coaches may allow students to call/text their parents after extracurricular practices and events. The teacher/coach will supervise the use of the phone.

*Cell phones and other electronic devices may not be used for taking pictures, taking video, or voice recording or social media involvement. Devices that can take pictures are not allowed in restrooms or locker rooms.

*Devices that may be worn, including smart watches, that are capable of receiving text messages, phone calls, and/or taking pictures may not be worn at school.

First violation: Confiscation of the device by the teacher and returned at the end of the school day with a warning not to repeat the violation.

Second violation: Confiscation of the device by the teacher. Parent must retrieve the device from the teacher.

Third violation: Confiscation of the device by the teacher, who will give the device to the principal. Parent must retrieve the device from the principal.

Electronic devices are brought to school at the student's own risk. The school cannot guarantee that they will not be damaged or lost. Possession of a cell phone or other electronic device at school is a privilege that may be revoked if the student does not use the device within the established rules.

No harassment or threatening of persons via cell phone or other electronic device is permitted. The use of a cell phone or other electronic device to violate any school or diocesan policy, including the Acceptable Use Policy, may result in loss of the privilege to possess a cell phone or other electronic device at school. Any cell phone or electronic device that is brought onto the school campus is subject to inspection and/or search.

NOTE: The principal is the final recourse in disciplinary situations and reserves the right to interpret and/or waive any and all regulations for just cause in his or her discretion.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

There are three levels of disciplinary consequences. Most level one discipline will be handled by the teacher by assigning a written reflection, silent lunch or by losing recess privileges. Level two infractions can be assigned to a student at the discretion of the teacher or principal or if a student repeatedly displays behaviors from level one. Students who receive an infraction may be assigned a combination of level one consequences or an after school detention. Consequences will be noted in Renweb and an email will be sent home. Level three offenses are grounds for in school suspension (ISS), suspension or expulsion. The principal will decide on the particular consequence imposed depending upon the severity of the situation and the individual circumstances. A child who serves ISS is excluded from all after school, extracurricular activities that day.

Level One

- Chewing gum or eating in class
- Missing class materials
- Excessive tardiness
- Items left in the hallway overnight
- Talking without permission
- Discourteous or inappropriate behavior
- Misuse of equipment / materials
- Disrespectful language / cursing
- Disrespect of peers / adults
- Dress code violations

Level Two- Infraction

- Repeated behaviors of level one misconduct

Level Three- Offense

- Any illegal behavior (vaping, vandalism, stealing, weapons, etc.)
- Overt insubordination
- Repeated refusal to follow directions
- Fighting
- Threatening harm to students, staff, or property
- Cheating
- Skipping or leaving school without permission
- Hazing
- Vulgarity
- Racial slurs
- Use of a cell phone or other electronic devices
- Inappropriate displays of affection
- Inappropriate use of the internet (playing games, checking social media, online chat, etc.)
- Harassment/Bullying*
- Sexual Harassment**

* Harassment is defined as one person making repeated verbal or physical contacts with another person who does not want these contacts. Bullying usually involves some type of force. This can be done verbally, physically, or socially.

**Examples of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment include (but are not limited to) sexual propositions, inappropriate physical contact, sexual innuendoes, jokes, offers, looks and gestures.

DRESS CODE

Students of St. Mary School represent the school and are expected to be modestly dressed and well-groomed at all times. All students are required to wear school uniforms. Free dress days may be specified by the principal. Uniform clothing (except for the plaid skirt and jumper) may be purchased at any clothing store. Visible logos or emblems such as Polo, Dockers, Dickey's, etc., are not permitted and must be removed from clothing before being worn to school. The French Toast Uniform Company (www.frenchtoast.com) is the only carrier of the St. Mary School green plaid jumper and skirt. All students must keep shirts tucked in when on school property or on a school-sponsored trip.

Regular School Day Uniform

Boys

Shorts/Pants - navy blue or khaki. Shorts may not be more than two inches above or two inches below the knee. Shirts - Solid white or navy shirt with a collar.

Girls

Bottoms - St. Mary plaid jumper or skirt; navy blue or khaki skirt, jumper, skorts, slacks, or shorts. Skirts, jumpers, and skorts may not be more than four inches above the knee cap when kneeling. Modesty Shorts - all girls must wear shorts under skirts and jumpers. Shirts - solid white or navy blue shirt with a collar.

Shoes

Sport shoes must be solid white with white shoelaces or solid black with black shoelaces. Socks must be black or white, and shoelaces must be tied.

Belts

Students in grades 3-8 are required to wear a black or brown belt at all times if the uniform bottom being worn has belt loops.

Examples of sport shoes that do meet the dress code!



Examples of sport shoes that do not meet the dress code!



Dress Uniform

This is the required uniform for grades K3-5 on Mass day and other special days.

Girls - St. Mary School green plaid skirt, scooter or jumper, a white polo or blouse and solid black or white sport shoes.



Boys - navy pants, a white polo or button down shirt and solid black or white sport shoes.



This is the required uniform for Junior High Students on Mass day and other special days.

Junior High Girls - St. Mary approved plaid skirt, a white button-up blouse with a collar, white knee high socks, and solid black Mary Jane style shoe with no embellishments.



Junior High Boys: Navy pants, a white button down shirt, black dress belt, black dress socks and solid black dress shoes.



Athletic Apparel: In grades 6-8 black shorts and a white Mustang Athletic shirt must be worn for P.E. classes and athletic practices. The shorts must be long enough to reach the mid-thigh. Jr. High athletes who are issued a sports uniform must return that uniform in a timely manner following the completion of that sports season. Failure to do so will result in the parents being charged a minimum of \$25.00 for each piece not returned.

Makeup: Conservative makeup may be worn by girls in the junior high school.

Hairstyles: Hairstyles must be reasonable and neat in appearance. In addition, hair should be combed, clean, and worn so that it is kept out of a student's eyes and off of the face. No outlandish or faddish hairstyles are permitted, including lines etched into the hair or any type of unnatural color highlights. The hair length for boys is shorter than the collar and above the ears and eyes. Facial Hair is not permitted.

Jewelry: Jewelry must be modest and conservative and should not distract from the school uniform.

Sweaters, hoodies, sweatshirts, hair ribbons, and auxiliary clothing that will be worn all day should be solid navy, black, or white with no visible logos. Caps and hats are for outdoor wear only.

Nails need to be kept neat and clean so that they are not a distraction.

No visible tattoos or body piercings. This includes temporary tattoos and piercings.

SPIRIT WEAR GUIDELINES

The following dress code will be allowed only on designated days to promote school spirit. This privilege can be revoked at the principal's discretion.

1. All girls through the fifth grade may wear blue and white cheerleading suits with modesty shorts or bloomers.
2. All students may wear a St. Mary School spirit shirt. Navy or khaki uniform bottoms must be worn. Other T-shirts and jeans are not allowed.
3. The coaches and sponsors of the cheerleaders and players will tell these students how to dress on game days.
4. Parents need to check the calendar carefully so that children do not come to school dressed in spirit wear on regular uniform days. Children will be asked to change if this occurs. They will be given the option to call for someone to bring them clothes, or they can find a change of clothes in the uniform closet.

****NOTE: Each item of clothing worn by a student must have the name of the owner clearly printed on the label. This will enable lost things to be returned after they are found in the locker rooms, gym, cafeteria, library, classrooms, hallways, restrooms, on the playground, school bus, etc.**

FREE DRESS DAY GUIDELINES

The following dress code will be allowed only on free dress days. This privilege can be revoked at the principal's discretion.

1. Shoes: The students will be required to wear their regular school shoes unless a note or email sent home specifically states otherwise. On a designated free shoe day, roller shoes and flip flops are not allowed.
2. Conservative clothing may be worn on free dress days. Clothing that is not allowed may include: gym shorts, yoga pants, athletic warm-ups, jogging suits, wind suits, revealing shirts or blouses, clothing with holes, short-shorts, short skirts, spaghetti straps, excessively baggy pants, excessively large clothing, etc.

DRILLS

FIRE

Fire drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys promptly and clears the building by the prescribed route (signs are posted in every room) as quickly as possible. Students are not permitted to talk during a fire drill in case directions need to be changed. Students should remain outside the building until a signal is given to return inside.

TORNADO

In the event of a tornado warning, students should follow directions carefully. Areas of the building have been designated for shelter. Tornado drills are held in order to acquaint the students with the procedures and to minimize anxiety in the event of an actual tornado. If a tornado should occur at dismissal time, the staff will do what is necessary to keep the children as safe as possible.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

St. Mary School offers an after school program to its students. The program is designed for parents who can't pick their child/children up at the end of the school day. Staff members supervise the students, and the cost is \$6.00/hour for one child or \$8.00/hour for a family with two or more students. The fee is billed to the parents monthly, and parents are expected to pay monthly. A child will not be allowed to attend the extended day program if his/her bill goes unpaid for two months.

The hours are 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. The after school program ends promptly at 5:30 p.m. Children must be picked up by this time each day. Students who are habitually picked up after 5:30 p.m. will be dismissed from the program. This will be the principal's decision.

Discipline issues will be handled by the after school director. The following guidelines will be followed:

1. Warning sent home to the parent.
2. Meeting with the parent.
3. Meeting with the director/principal/parent.
4. Possible dismissal from after-school program.

FIELD TRIPS

School-sponsored field trips are educational in nature and must be approved by the principal. The Diocesan policies and guidelines for field trips must be followed along with the following rules and regulations. A written official permission slip, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend. Verbal permission cannot be accepted.

Rules & Regulations for Parents and Students to Observe While on a School-Sponsored Field Trip

1. All parent drivers must have a Volunteer Driver Information Sheet on file in the school office and meet Diocesan insurance requirements before being allowed to drive on a field trip. Parents may be subject to a driving record, background check and/or criminal check. Parents are required to have the Protecting God's Children course. They must have a copy of current insurance and driver's license on file with the school. Parents should check in with the school office two (2) days prior to the trip to ensure they meet diocesan requirements for driving.
2. Each parent volunteer will be assigned children to guide and supervise during the field trip.
3. Each child will be assigned to a vehicle, and he/she will ride in that vehicle going to the destination and returning to school.
4. All children must have a seatbelt fastened properly while the vehicle is in motion and should keep his/her seatbelt fastened until instructed to remove it by the driver of the vehicle.
5. Children are expected to be well-behaved, and the parent assigned to them should accept nothing less. Any disruptive behavior should be reported to the teacher immediately.

6. Once the students have arrived at the destination, all groups are to remain at that location until the designated time of departure. Parents are not to leave the location and must follow the teacher's decisions regarding meeting times, meeting locations, departure times, etc.
7. Each field trip is unique and teachers have the right to add any rules that may be necessary to ensure a safe and enjoyable field trip.
8. Adult supervisors are not to smoke while on a field trip.
9. Drivers are not to engage in cell phone usage when participating in field trips.
10. Drivers must comply with the school-approved itinerary and may not deviate from the approved destination and stops in-between.
11. All music and material in the vehicle must be of age appropriate content.

Diocesan policy prohibits St. Mary School personnel from taking students on overnight field trips. Field trips of this nature are not authorized by St. Mary School. If these field trips are planned by other individuals for students who attend St. Mary School, the individuals who participate do so at their own risk. St. Mary School is not liable under these circumstances. Fund raisers organized to pay for such trips are not under the jurisdiction of St. Mary School, and no individual is authorized to use the school's name to raise such funds.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CUSTODY

Parental rights extend to either parent unless the school has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, statute, or legally binding document relating to matters such as divorce, separation, or custody that specifically revokes these rights. A copy of such document must be in the school file. In case of joint custody both parents should be equally informed of their child's progress. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school if special accommodations need to be made.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Our goal at St. Mary Catholic School is to make every effort to ensure effective communication between families and staff, but from time-to-time a misunderstanding may occur. If a parent/guardian has a grievance, please refer to the following guidelines and procedures.

1. Grievances are handled most satisfactorily at the level at which they occur. Therefore, if a parent has a staff-related grievance, an attempt must be made to settle the matter first with the staff member.
2. If a satisfactory solution is not reached, the family should contact the Principal.
3. If the issue is still not resolved, the pastor and then the superintendent of schools may be consulted.
4. Allow yourself time to consider all options. Please respect a 24-hour cooling off period and do not confront teachers, coaches, or administration while emotions are high. Under no circumstance is a parent to disrupt a teacher during class time. Please respect everyone's privacy and do not call teachers at home.
5. If you have a concern that involves a child other than your own, please talk to the teacher about this concern.
***Do NOT talk to the child with whom you are concerned.**

Diocesan guidelines state that the proper procedure must be followed. Grievances will not be heard by the people on the higher levels if the people on the lower levels have not been consulted. Hopefully, we can resolve any concern informally in an open, cooperative, Christian atmosphere. In this way, we may model peaceful conflict resolution.

HEALTH FORMS

All new students are required to submit a medical report completed and signed by a physician. The school office must be notified of any conditions that affect a child's general health. In addition, all students must have the required immunizations to attend St. Mary School. Failure to receive the state-mandated immunizations will result in a child being sent home until an updated immunization record is submitted to the school office.

LIBRARY

All students have access to the school library to check out books and use reference materials during regularly scheduled library periods. Students with overdue books will be assessed a fine of \$.10 per day for each book, but they will be allowed to check out materials for the next two regularly scheduled library periods. After that time, however, the overdue books must be returned before a student will be allowed to check out additional materials. Any student who loses or damages a library book will pay for its replacement.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Hot lunches are prepared according to USDA standards and served in the cafeteria each day. St. Mary School follows the Diocese of Ft. Worth Wellness Policy. A copy of the wellness program can be obtained in the school office. A menu will be sent home at the beginning of each month. Lunches are \$3.00 for all students. Lunch money should be submitted in a sealed envelope labeled with the student's name, grade, amount of money enclosed, and the date(s) the student will be eating or purchasing milk. Lunch fees may also be paid through FACTS. The money may be submitted daily, weekly, or monthly. The school office will notify a parent when a child's lunch bill reaches \$40.00. This bill will need to be paid before the student will be allowed to eat food from the cafeteria.

Tier I and Tier II lunches are available to qualifying families. Application forms are sent home on the first day of the school year but are accepted anytime during the year. Therefore, a family whose financial situation changes during the year can still receive assistance.

Students may bring lunches from home as long as they do not require heating. Milk is available for \$.50. Carbonated beverages are not allowed,

A copy of the St. Mary School and Diocese of Ft. Worth Wellness Policy is available on-line at www.smsmustangs.com.

PARTIES

Students are not permitted to receive gifts during school hours. This includes balloons, flowers, candy, baskets, stuffed animals, etc. Party invitations given out at school must be given to each student in the classroom.

Students may bring treats for their class to celebrate birthdays. The treats will be given to the students at the discretion of the teacher. No party favors are permitted. Throughout the year, each classroom teacher will decide what other holidays will be celebrated. Therefore, information concerning parties will be sent home from individual classroom teachers.

SCHOOL SECURITY

Students and staff members are not to open locked doors during the school day to admit people to the building. All visitors are to enter through the front doors, check in at the office, and be admitted through the security door. Any stranger seen in the building should be reported to the office immediately.

VIOLENCE AND WEAPONS

The school is concerned with providing students and employees with a safe and productive environment. As such, the school expressly prohibits any and all acts or threats of violence by or against any student, employee, family member of a student, vendor, or other visitor to the school facilities. This policy applies to all students and employees, whether or not they are engaged in business on behalf of the school, and whether or not they are on school premises.

In addition, the school strictly prohibits the possession of, exhibiting or threatening to exhibit or to use, or use of any and all weapons, including handguns, on school premises by any student or employee, family member of a student, vendor, or other visitor, whether licensed or unlicensed and whether concealed or visible. School premises includes not only the main facilities, but also the parking lots, entrances and exits, break areas, etc. Students and employees are further prohibited from the possession of, exhibiting or threatening to exhibit or to use, or the use of any and all weapons while conducting business on behalf of the school off of school premises.

The school is required to post signs containing the written statutory notice prohibiting bringing concealed weapons onto the school property. Contact the Diocese for the specific wording and statutory requirements for the written notice.

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS

No individual, who is required to register as a sex offender under Chapter 62, Code of Criminal Procedure, or any other statute, may be a student. Any student, who is required to register as a sex offender, shall be expelled from the school.

REQUIREMENTS FOR INDIVIDUALS WISHING TO COME ON SCHOOL PROPERTY OR ATTEND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Parents and other individuals are welcome to visit the schools of the Diocese and to attend school sponsored activities. During school hours, all parents and visitors entering the school property, other than to deliver or to pick up the child, must first go to the school office and sign in. Visitors are not allowed to disrupt a teacher during class time or visit the class room during class. In order to visit the classroom during class, written permission from the principal stating the reason for the visit must be obtained in advance. Generally, two (2) days' advance notice is required, but if circumstances permit and the reasons are warranted, principals may establish either a longer or shorter period. The principal will respond to the request either approving the request with possible restrictions or denying the request. Teachers are to refer any parent visiting the classroom without the approval of the Principal to the school office and the parent will be asked to leave the school immediately.

An individual who (1) has been convicted of sex related crimes or a crime involving a minor and (2) does not have a child or grandchild attending the school is not welcome on the school property or to attend school sponsored activities. A parent or grandparent of a child attending the school and who (1) has been previously convicted of a sex related crime or a crime involving a minor and (2) wants to visit the school or to attend a school sponsored activity must submit a written request to the principal prior to the anticipated visit. Generally, at least five (5) school-days' advance notice is required and the request must provide the school with written documentation concerning each such conviction, including but not limited to all details concerning probationary status or restrictions. The principal will respond to the request either approving the request with restrictions or denying the request. If the individual is allowed to come on to the school property or to attend a school sponsored activity, the school will provide the individual with the written conditions for the visit, which may include supervision by school personnel during the time of the visit. If the individual fails to comply with the written conditions established by the school, then the individual will be denied permission to be on school property and/or to attend school sponsored activities.

Companies who provide contracted services to the school are required to give letters of recommendation on behalf of each contracted employee as well as provide appropriate documentation that each employee has completed a criminal background check. Under no circumstances will a company send the school a contracted employee who has been previously convicted of a crime involving a minor. Failure by companies providing contracted services to comply with these procedures and the safe environment policy as established by the Diocese of Fort Worth may be considered breach of contract and result in termination of the contract. More detail regarding this issue can be obtained in the Diocese of Fort Worth Safe Environment Policy and Code of Conduct.

STUDENT INSURANCE

All students should be covered by emergency medical insurance.

TUITION

Payment Options:

1. Full Tuition payment due by August 15th of current school year.
2. Two semester payments due by August 15 and January 15 of current school year.
3. 10 monthly payments starting August 15, current year and ending May 15, current year. Payments are due by the 15th of each month.

Ways to make tuition payments:

- Auto-Draft Tuition Payments through FACTS (***Preferred Method**)
This is a convenient and easy way to make payments from your bank account. Payments will be automatically deducted from your bank account on the first of each month (or first business day after).
- Mail/Drop off Payment to School: You may drop off or mail your payment to the school office.

Tuition payments must be current to continue enrollment for the spring semester, and account balances must be paid in full to enroll for the next school year.

Tuition assistance is available. St. Mary School has Diocesan and local funds available for financial assistance. Interested parents must request this and submit the proper documentation at the time of the request.

Tuition information, fee schedules, and financial assistance information may be obtained in the school office. School records will not be released to another school if money is owed. Payments may be brought to the office or mailed.

COVID-19 PROTOCOL 2021-2022

While we plan to offer instruction face to face, due to Covid-19, some or all instruction for a part of Academic 2021-2022 may be delivered remotely. Tuition and mandatory fees have been set regardless of the method of instructions and will not be refunded in the event instruction occurs remotely for any part of the Academic year.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

St. Mary School believes that the liturgy is the center of Christian life. Students in grades K-8 are required to attend Mass on Fridays, Holy Days of Obligation, and other days as necessary. Students in K3 and K4 will attend Mass on designated days, on Holy Days of Obligation and special days during the liturgical year. These days will be noted on the ELC calendars that are sent home. Students must wear Mass day uniforms on Mass days. They are expected to actively participate in liturgical celebrations as great effort is made to make these meaningful to children. Parents are always welcome to attend.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

ADULT BEHAVIOR

St. Mary School believes that parents are the first and most important teacher their children have. Therefore, it is important for parents to remember that they are role models for all of the students with whom they come in contact. Behavior at extra-curricular activities is visible to both students and adults from this community as well as the visiting one. This behavior can have an adverse impact on the reputation of St. Mary School as well as give the wrong message to young people concerning appropriate adult behavior. Parents are asked to keep this in mind and exhibit acceptable behavior at all times.

In addition, adults are asked to remember basic rules of courtesy when interacting with staff members, other parents, etc. Discussing school employees and/or school issues with others often results in incorrect information being disseminated throughout the community. Please call the school office if there are questions concerning St. Mary School.

Diocesan Policy states: PARENT BEHAVIOR – SECTION (F) POLICY 5220:

“Actions of the parent of a student may be grounds for the student to lose the privilege of attending a school. The parents of a student are expected to conduct themselves so as not to be a disruptive influence on the school or a teacher. A parent of a student who becomes a disruptive influence shall be requested to withdraw the student from the school. The student’s records shall reflect that the student has either withdrawn or transferred. The student’s records shall not reflect expulsion, unless the parents refuse to remove the student from the school after having been notified that the child must withdraw or transfer to another school.” If, in the opinion of the administration, a student or his/her parent(s) do not support the philosophy and mission of the school, the student may be asked to withdraw. It is the school’s expectation that students and parents follow both the letter and spirit of the school’s mission.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Advisory Council is responsible for giving advice concerning school issues. The council is composed of elected members who are both Catholic and Protestant, a Home and School Association representative, the pastor, the principal, a representative of the staff, and the business manager. Parents who wish to bring a matter to the council’s attention should submit the item in writing to the council president at least ten days prior to the meeting so the issue can be added to the monthly agenda. Parents are welcome to attend the council meetings which are held quarterly during the school year. Only agenda items are eligible for discussion.

FALL FESTIVAL

The Fall Festival is St. Mary Catholic School’s main fundraiser for the year and is held on the last Sunday in September. Various committees which include parents, school staff, and volunteers organize and run the Fall Festival. Since each family is asked to serve ten volunteer hours per year, this is one way to reach this goal.

SCHOOL MEETINGS

The principal must be informed of all meetings that are scheduled. This includes parent meetings, athletic meetings, Home and School Association meetings, Fall Festival meetings, etc. An agenda should be submitted to the principal prior to the meeting if one is available.

FUND RAISERS

The Fall Festival is the main fund raiser that is approved by St. Mary School. All other fund raisers must have the prior approval of the principal. Under no circumstances can any individual benefit from a fund raiser held by any organization associated with St. Mary School.

Fund raisers organized to pay for unauthorized overnight field trips are not under the jurisdiction of St. Mary School, and no individual is authorized to use the school’s name to raise such funds.

HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

All teachers and parents of children who attend St. Mary School are members of the Home and School Association. Parish members are also invited to participate. This organization provides a vital link between parents, teachers, and the school. Meetings and activities sponsored by the Home and School Association are held throughout the school year.

PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN

Diocesan guidelines require all adults who come into contact with students to help create and maintain a “safe environment” for them. Therefore, the Diocese expects these adults to participate in the Protecting God’s Children program. This program requires the participating adults to submit to a background check and attend the training. The initial training is three hours in length and must be updated every two years. All sessions after the initial one are two hours long. Every volunteer must participate in this program, and each parent is encouraged to participate. For more information concerning these training sessions, contact the school office.

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Diocesan guidelines require all volunteers to help create and maintain a “safe environment” for children by submitting to a background check and attending the Protecting God’s Children training once every two years. For the next new volunteer training or volunteer update training, contact the school office.

Each family is asked to contribute ten volunteer hours per year to St. Mary School. There are many ways for families to get involved with activities at the school. Parents can help with classroom parties, field trips, sports events, the Fall Festival, Field Day, etc.

STAFF INFORMATION

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

All students will be supervised by the staff at school events on and off of the campus. Students are to obey school regulations at all times. All students on campus after school hours must be supervised by a staff member. Under no circumstances are any children to be left unsupervised in any room or facility on the campus.

TEACHER AVAILABILITY

A parent may call the office or contact the teacher to schedule a conference before or after school. Teachers are also available to have conferences during their conference times. These appointments can also be scheduled through the office or directly with the teachers.

Emailing a teacher is a convenient way of communication. It does not, however, take the place of a face-to-face conversation. Conferences are still the best way to communicate with a staff member.

Please respect the teachers’ and staffs’ privacy by not contacting them in the evenings or weekends during their personal time.