

# SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL FAMILY & STUDENT HANDBOOK



*Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow*

**Saint Mary Roman Catholic Church  
Saint Mary Catholic School  
40 Spring Mount Road | Schwenksville, PA 19473**

**Rev. James M. Cox, Pastor** | [frcox@churchofsaintmary.org](mailto:frcox@churchofsaintmary.org)  
**Heather Sickinger, Principal** | [hsickinger@smsk-8.org](mailto:hsickinger@smsk-8.org)  
**Genèvieve Giampa, Director of Advancement** | [ggiampa@smsk-8.org](mailto:ggiampa@smsk-8.org)

**[www.smsk-8.org](http://www.smsk-8.org) | 610.287.7757**

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This handbook contains certain policies and procedures for Saint Mary Catholic School. The School reserves the right at anytime to amend or add to the policies, rules and regulations contained in this handbook, and to make such changes applicable to current and new students when the situation dictates. If you have a question about a particular policy or procedure, please contact the Principal.

**STUDENTS AND PARENTS MUST ACCEPT AND ABIDE BY THE SCHOOL'S POLICIES AND PROCEDURES IN ORDER FOR THE STUDENT TO ATTEND THE SCHOOL**



# SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

*A National Blue Ribbon and Middle States Accredited School*

*Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow*



OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL  
Heather Sickinger

September 2025

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Saint Mary Catholic School. Thank you for choosing and entrusting us with the spiritual and academic formation of your child(ren) at this time. From myself, our faculty and staff, we are excited to open our doors this year and are eager to welcome you and your child(ren) to the 2025-26 school year.

At this time, I would like to reaffirm your decision to entrust your child(ren) to Saint Mary Catholic School. Most parents choose Catholic education because they want specific things for their children, and I believe Saint Mary Catholic School offers what parents are looking for. Our dedicated teachers assist each student to achieve their potential and success. I am very excited to start off this new school year together. Working together we can achieve so much!

We offer a small community where close relationships are formed between students, parents, faculty and staff. Most importantly we nurture our student's spiritual formation through the Sacraments, Mass, liturgical events and service projects. Our vision is for every Saint Mary Catholic School graduate to be grounded in truth, sustained by faith, academically prepared, self-confident and an independent thinker who is well prepared to navigate the challenges of their life's journey in this world and beyond.

I can assure you, my commitment to Saint Mary Catholic School has never been stronger. Together with the faculty and staff, I am committed to making it a great year of growth for your child(ren) spiritually, academically, and socially; and to continue all our wonderful Saint Mary Catholic School traditions to the extent that is possible.

Although this year I am in a new role, I can assure you, my commitment to Saint Mary Catholic School has never been stronger. Together with the faculty and staff, I am committed to making it a great year of growth for your child(ren) spiritually, academically, and socially; and to continue all of our wonderful Saint Mary Catholic School traditions to the extent that is possible.

Again, I thank you for choosing Saint Mary Catholic School. We promise to work every day to validate your faith in us, as we work to enable our students to embrace our motto of, ***Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow.***

With great respect for all of you, God Bless.

Heather Sickinger

# SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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A Middle States Accredited School of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia



## MISSION STATEMENT

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Saint Mary Catholic School, guided by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, nurtures faith through the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. We empower students to become self-reliant, lifelong learners with Christ as their foundation. Through rigorous academic instruction that meets each student where they are, we partner with parents to provide spiritual, moral, social, and intellectual growth. Rooted in Catholic values of Faith, Knowledge, and Service, we help each child build an unshakable foundation for life.

## BELIEFS

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- Jesus is the reason we are here
- Christians practice kindness and courtesy to foster respect
- Effective education develops the whole person-spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically
- All students are to be provided a safe environment in which to learn

## PROFILE OF GRADUATES

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- Saint Mary Catholic School graduates are Christ centered citizens living Gospel values on their path to Heaven
- Graduates are Christians who are respectful of all Creation, living in a compassionate, thoughtful and mannerly way
- As students, graduates see themselves as life-long learners; they are organized, self-directed problem solvers who excel in all academic areas
- As citizens of the United States of America, they recognize their responsibility to contribute to society and make the world a better place by their words, thoughts, and deeds
- Saint Mary graduates will bring their faith to the world through their commitment to discover and follow their God-given path

## VISION STATEMENT

### SAINT MARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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#### Vision of the Universal Church

*"Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith.*

*Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents."*

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH (226)

#### OUR PARISH CREDO

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We, through our common Baptism are called to **One Faith**. This Faith is centered on the Person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It is through our common Baptism that we live and work in the name of Jesus, the Savior of the world. Mary, the patroness of our parish, stands as a model for us because of her fiat – her "yes" in responding to the call of God. May we all say "YES" to Him who calls us to serve in response to our living faith.

We, through Baptism belong to **One Family**. It is the family of God. In this family we realize that we are brothers and sisters of a loving God who cares, forgives and offers life – eternal life to all who believe in His only begotten Son. Mary, our patroness, provided a loving family for the child Jesus. May our family of faith here at Saint Mary Roman Catholic Church reflect the home of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

We, through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, are called to live in the **One Spirit**. It is through this Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead that we, members of His Mystical Body, are called to live, breathe and have our being. Mary, our patroness is the model and pattern of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ. She by her presence with the Twelve at the Pentecostal moment taught us to live in the Spirit by all we say and do.

## SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL VISION

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**We exist to enable our children to come to know, love and serve God, in this world and the next, and to love each other as themselves.**

Our first priority is our children! Each child is a special gift from God. The purpose of our school is to enable each and every child to discover their gifts, to develop those gifts, and work to share those gifts with all of God's creation.

Our classrooms must be centers of creativity. Children must be exposed to the wonder of discovery, and be free to experiment, fail, and learn from their failures.

Our children must understand that they are the center of their education. Children must come to understand and believe that they are an expression of their own creation.

Our children must make a connection with the work in the classroom and a clear understanding that the discovery and development of their gifts is an expression of their faith. That being **Christ-Centered** in their approach to discovering their place in God's creation is an act of bringing God's Kingdom to our world.

We focus our attention on:

- **Core Academic Learning** in all content areas that make up the curriculum
- **Stretch Learning** which is a demonstration of rigorous and relevant learning beyond the minimum requirements
- **Learner Engagement** which indicates the extent to which students are motivated to learn, have a sense of belonging and have supportive relationships
- **Personal Skill Development** which includes personal, social, service and leadership skills and results in positive behaviors and attitudes.

This is the foundation of what we seek to accomplish at Saint Mary Catholic School. We will work with the Holy Spirit to bring about the Kingdom of God through the development of each special gift that enters the doors of this school.

**"Lord, we come to do your will!"**

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

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Saint Mary Catholic School believes that every student has a right to be treated as a child of God, with the love and respect that implies, regardless of family circumstances. In like manner, the believing community has the right to an education guided by Catholic teaching and identity, unimpeded by pressures contrary to Church teaching.

As parent/guardian of a student attending Saint Mary Catholic School, I understand, affirm, and support the following:

1. The primary purpose of a Catholic school education is two-fold: to strengthen the Catholic community in its faith, and to form students in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church.
2. Catholic schools are distinctive religious education institutions guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church. They are not simply private schools offering a positive moral code. Rather, they exist to advance the faith mission of the sponsoring Catholic parish(es), Archdiocese, or Catholic religious community.
3. While Catholic education places a high value on academic excellence and extracurricular achievement, its fundamental priority is fidelity to Catholic teaching and identity.
4. Attending a Catholic school is a privilege, not a right. The school and its administration have the responsibility to ensure that Catholic teaching and moral integrity permeate every facet of the school's life and activity and that the school is able to function as a community of faith.
5. In all questions that involve Catholic teaching, morals, and Church law, the final determination rests with the Archbishop.

As a parent/guardian desiring to enroll my child in Saint Mary Catholic School, I accept this memorandum of understanding. I pledge support for the Catholic identity and mission of this school and by enrolling my child I commit myself to uphold all principles and policies that govern the Catholic School.

## SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL FACULTY AND STAFF

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Reverend James M. Cox - Pastor  
Heather Sickinger - Principal

Geneviève Giampa - Director of Enrollment and Advancement

Patti Bluhm - Lunch Manager

Nadine Keller - Facilities Coordinator, Joe Bluhm - Custodian

Kathy Wasniewski - Business Manager / School Tuition

Phone Number 610.287.7757

## CATHOLIC EDUCATORS

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### **Agnus Dei Academy**

Krissy Kirk	3-Year-Old Classroom	Room 4
Jennifer Tisoskey	4-Year-Old Classroom	Room 3
Colleen Deschamp	4-Year-Old Classroom Aide	Room 3
Lisa SkLanny	3-Year-Old Classroom Aide	Room 4
Deana Taverna	5-Year-Old Classroom	Room 5

### **Elementary School Division**

Angela Wizimirski	Kindergarten A	Room 2
Susan Roberge	Kindergarten A Aide	Room 2
Rebecca Arobone	Kindergarten B	Room 1
Christine Brock	Kindergarten B Aide	Room 1
Julie Casa	Grade 1	Room 11
Tammy Erwin	Grade 2	Room 10
Linda Michaels	Grade 3	Room 19
Melissa Moffa	Grade 4	Room 20
Austin Wisser	Grade 5	Room 12
Jennifer Wentworth	Grade 6	Room 16
Kate Pummer	Grade 7	Room 14
Anita Fuhs	Grade 8	Room 15
Lori Fox	Technology + ELA 5, 6 & 7 Writing	Room 13
Jen Tomko	Learning Support	Room 19
Jane Weidemoyer	Music & Performing Arts	Room 6
Katherine Osbourne	Fine Arts/Media Arts	Room 9
Cindy Escudero	Spanish	Room 14
Corinne Dougherty	Physical Education/Wellness	Hedge Hall



# I. PARENT, GUARDIAN AND STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

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## Parental Involvement

Parents and guardians must weigh seriously their obligation to educate their children in an atmosphere of love and respect for God and others. The home is the first educator of the social virtues essential to any well-ordered society.

Active cooperation of parents and guardians is expected and required as follows:

- Teaching your child self-respect, respect for others, and respect for rightful authority
- Assist your child's spiritual, academic, and moral development
- Instilling a positive and enthusiastic attitude in your child in all areas of his/her education
- Insisting on prompt and regular attendance and sending a written explanation each time your child is absent from school
- Contacting or responding to the appropriate school personnel; Teacher, Principal, etc. when situations arise which affect your child's progress in school
- Encouraging your child to take pride in personal appearance
- Sending your child to school physically fit, clean, properly dressed, and fed
- Providing a space conducive for study and completion of homework assignments and being available for assistance and monitoring
- Recognizing that unrealistic pressures to achieve can be detrimental to your child's development
- Recognizing that faculty and staff are due the same consideration and respect that parents expect from their children
- Building a mutually supportive working relationship between yourself and your child, his/her teachers, and the school
- Participating in school activities, school and parish events and fundraisers

## Student Involvement

The responsibilities of students include:

- To give a consistent personal best effort in all things done at school
- Accepting responsibility for his/her actions through always telling the truth
- Attending school daily and being on time and prepared for classes and school functions
- Being aware of written rules and regulations for student behavior and knowing that student conduct must be in accord with those regulations
- Following the uniform dress code as outlined in the school handbook (page 30)
- Exercising proper care when using school facilities and other equipment
- Respecting the rights of others, including the right to receive an education in an orderly and disciplined atmosphere free from verbal, physical or sexual harassment (no bullying)
- Knowing that disrespectful and indecent language written or spoken will not be tolerated
- Making positive contributions that will generate an atmosphere of respect, trust, responsibility, and reverence

## II. ADMISSION

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Saint Mary Catholic School accepts students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin. All students are entitled to all of the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students in Saint Mary Catholic School. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, its admission policy, or in any school-administered program.

Saint Mary Catholic School endeavors to accommodate students with special needs, as the school's resources and capabilities reasonably permit. The School reserves the right to decline admission or impose reasonable conditions of attendance when indicated under the circumstances.

Saint Mary Catholic School follows the local public-school district's age requirements for admission. In the case of children coming from different public-school districts, the School administration determines the admission date. To enter Saint Mary Catholic School kindergarten, **a child must be 5 by September 1. To enter first grade, a child must be 6 by September 1.**

The following forms are required for registration:

- Baptismal Certificate
- Birth Certificate
- Medical records - Immunization is required as a condition of attendance at any public or parochial school. The required immunizations are:
  - 4 doses DPT\* - (1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
  - 4 doses POLIO - (4th dose on or after the 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose is given)\*\*
  - 3 doses HEP B
  - 2 doses MMR (or 2 MEASLES, 2 MUMPS and 1 RUBELLA)
  - 2 doses VARICELLA (chicken pox)

\*Usually given as DTP or DTaP or if medically advisable, DT or Td

\*\*A 4th dose is not necessary if the 3rd dose was administered at age 4 years or older and at least 6 months after the previous dose

ON THE FIRST DAY OF 7TH GRADE, unless the child has a medical exemption, the child must have the following vaccines or risk exclusion.

- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) on the first day of 7th grade
- 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) on the first day of 7th grade

Saint Mary Catholic School follows the policy of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia (#S 304) with regard to immunization exemptions: *"The policy of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia with respect to vaccinations requires all children to be vaccinated against a wide variety of diseases."*



# **ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA**

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## **SECRETARIAT FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

**222 North Seventeenth Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299**

### **IMMUNIZATION POLICY RATIONALE (2013)**

The policy of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia with respect to vaccinations, requires all children to be vaccinated against a wide variety of diseases. Exceptions are not granted, except for medical reasons. Rationale for this policy follows.

Opposition to vaccines arises from two prominent concerns. First, some oppose vaccines due to the manner in which the vaccine is developed. These people object to the fact that some vaccines are produced from cells derived from aborted human fetuses. The second major objection is that vaccines are harmful to the health of the child.

#### **Objection: Vaccines Produced from Cells Derived from Aborted Human Fetuses**

Some object on the level of conscience because the vaccines come from aborted fetal cell lines and to receive them would be cooperating with evil. The moral argument in favor of using vaccines made from aborted fetal cell lines is based on the notion of the Catholic principle of cooperation with evil. The use of the vaccines in question would not constitute a formal (i.e., on the level of intention) cooperation with the act of abortion. There is no formal cooperation (either explicit or implicit) in such an action, because the user's intention is not to procure an abortion, but to benefit from something derived from the aborted fetuses. Their use would be morally permissible on a provisional basis. At the same time, Catholics would have a responsibility to press for the creation of more morally acceptable alternatives.

The Vatican Pontifical Academy for Life's, *Moral Reflection on Vaccines Produced from Cells Derived from Aborted Human Foetuses*, permits such vaccines "on a temporary basis," while recognizing the duty Catholic have to work for a better solution.

It is clear that parents have no obligation to refuse immunizations derived from cultures taken from aborted fetus cell lines when no suitable substitute immunizations are available. Their cooperation with evil is clearly "remote material cooperation" and therefore morally permissible. Enforcing the current policy of the Archdiocese involves no formal or "immediate material" cooperation in evil, but only remote cooperation.

Objection: Vaccines may prove harmful to the health of the child.

To date there has been no authoritative study that conclusively links vaccines with harmful side effects.

The Church respects the rights of conscience and encourages the faithful to follow their rightly formed consciences. To do so, it is important for parents to examine magisterial teaching themselves and to weigh the opinion of experts in such a matter. The document produced by the Vatican Pontifical Academy for Life's (mentioned above) is one such opinion. The memorandum from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Doctrine which disallows conscientious objection to the use of the vaccine for rubella is another.

In the matter at hand, the Church is not trying to force parents to change their well-formed consciences on vaccinations (even if they be against the conclusion of the above-mentioned document). However, they must accept the consequences. One such consequence is that their child cannot be enrolled in a Catholic school.

Parental right to object to these vaccines can come in conflict with the rights of others to preserve their health and be educated in a safe, disease-free environment. Not vaccinating a child for school may jeopardize the health of the entire student body and affect the larger population. When such conflicts arise between individual rights and the rights of the community, the decision should be taken in favor of the common good. This is the best way to serve the needs of human person, the needs of justice, the needs of society, and the needs of public authority. This judgment is especially important when it comes to issues of public health.

It is uncertain as to what degree abstaining from vaccinations can be done without causing significant risk to children, and the population as a whole. Without a clear determination from the scientific community of the safety of granting exemptions from vaccinations, prudence counsels to err on the side of the common good. We have a moral obligation to ensure the safety of the common good.

Consciences of those who object to immunizations for moral reasons should be respected. They have the right to follow their conscience on the matter and choose not to immunize their child. A Catholic school has the obligation to make a moral choice about what is most prudent and just for its populace and has the right to implement it. Should the determination be made that the common good and justice are best served by making immunizations compulsory in order to enroll children, then the right to do so exists. In such a conflict, it is best to err in favor of the common good. In other words, concern for the common good legitimately can override parental calls for a Catholic religious or moral exemption from these vaccinations.

Students who attend Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia are required to receive all vaccines that are identified in the immunization policy (§S 305).

### **Legal Requirements**

No child in grades K – 12 may be admitted to or permitted to attend a non-public school unless the child has received the immunizations as required by the Pennsylvania law Article XIV Section 1303A-Immunization-PA Public School 1949. A religious basis for a child not to be immunized is not recognized as an exemption.

The certificate must be updated and readily available for auditing or for checking for exemptions in the event of a disease outbreak.

The Certificate of Immunization shall follow the student when he/she transfers, graduates, or leaves. It may not be withheld for non-payment of tuition.

### **Admission Procedures**

#### **Registration**

At registration, the child's immunization record and family demographic data are to be copied and forwarded to the school nurse to be verified and entered directly on the student's health record and the Pennsylvania Department of Health Certificate School Immunization Card.

- Written proof of immunization signed by a physician or other health professional is to be requested of the parent.
- Students who are exempted from immunization due to medical contraindications must present to the school written confirmation from their private physician or treating agency. Written confirmation is then sent to the Office of Catholic Education. No student may be accepted until the Archbishop gives approval.
- If the parent does not have written confirmation from their private physician, a Certificate of Immunization should be taken to the physician for the physician's signature.
- Students being admitted to second through twelfth grade may be admitted provisionally if evidence of at least one dose of each antigen (i.e., measles, mumps, rubella, polio, diphtheria, and tetanus) is given.

### **Health Records Maintenance**

- The Certificate of Immunization must (Pennsylvania regulations) be filed separately from all other information kept on file regarding students.
- The certificates are to be filed alphabetically.
- The certificates are to be filed in or in close proximity to the school office. They may be filed in the health room only if the latter location is adjacent to the school office.
- For children who are admitted either provisionally or with exemptions, the card should be inserted in the file with the side having a blue-bordered top facing forward.

### **Medical Exemptions**

- A school may request that the medical exemption document provided to the school for the medical exemption be validated every three years.
- The medical exemption documentation should be provided by a MD in the greater Philadelphia area.

**Registration Guidelines** - Saint Mary Catholic School accepts students into the School in the following preferential order:

- 1) Parish families with currently enrolled students in our school
- 2) Other families (non-parishioner) with students currently registered in our school
- 3) Families new to our school
  - a) Students transferring from other Catholic schools
  - b) Students new to our school residing in our parish
- 4) Families residing out of our parish
  - a) Students coming from a parish without a school
  - b) Students coming from a parish that has closed its school enrollment
  - c) Students coming from another parish school for other reasons
- 5) Students from other private or public schools

**Registration** - Registration is ongoing. Registration fees are published annually with tuition costs. This information is communicated through the school through FACTS, the Advancement Office, and the weekly digital communication envelope in February. It is also published in the parish bulletin and the school website. The annual registration fee is non-refundable.

### III. CUSTODY OF CHILDREN

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It is the responsibility of both biological parents to provide Saint Mary Catholic School with the latest, most up to date Custodial Order or Custody Agreement. These documents must be provided at the beginning of the school year. If either the Custody Order or Custody Agreement changes during the course of the school year, it remains the responsibility of both biological parents to provide that document to the school immediately.

Our school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, our program will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the records and other school related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school principal with an official and latest copy of the court order.

If a court order prohibits our releasing a child into the custody of a non-custodial parent, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school principal with an official copy of the court order or the custody section of the divorce decree. All information supplied is kept confidential.

### IV. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

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**Saint Mary Catholic School Financial Information** - Saint Mary Catholic School finances are handled in our Parish Business Office. It costs approximately \$1.4M to operate Saint Mary Catholic School. This amount is met mainly through tuition, Saint Mary Parish subsidy, donations, and fund raising. Each year an annual school budget is prepared by our Business Manager, the School Principal, the Saint Mary Parish Finance Council.

**Tuition** - Saint Mary Catholic School partners with FACTS Tuition Management Company for billing and collection of tuition, registration and other fees relating to the education of each student. All families must register with FACTS. FACTS offers our school families the convenience of automatic payments for their financial obligations to the school while giving the school greater financial stability.

**All financial obligations must be met by June of the academic year. Saint Mary Catholic School reserves the right to exclude students whose family financial obligations have not been met from year end events and commencement ceremonies.**

Tuition rates are posted on our school website. In consideration for keeping our tuition affordable for all families, tuition rates are discounted based on the number of children per family that are attending Saint Mary Catholic School.

**Parish Subsidy** - Saint Mary Roman Catholic Church is pleased to have a parish school and offers financial support for its operation by contributing a parish subsidy to supplement the school's income. The parish subsidy amount is a set percentage of the annual Sunday collection as recommended by the Saint Mary Parish Finance Council.

**Annual Fund** - The Saint Mary Ave Maria Annual Fund is a vital initiative to support the growth and excellence of our beloved school community. This fund honors the Blessed Mother, reflecting her spirit of compassion, devotion, and generosity, which guides our mission to provide a top-tier Catholic education. Your contributions will directly impact our students and enhance our programs, facilities, and opportunities for every student, ensuring we continue to provide a nurturing, faith-filled environment.

We invite you to join us in this meaningful effort by donating throughout the year via our school website, [www.smsk-8.org](http://www.smsk-8.org). Every gift, no matter the size, makes a difference. Together, we can achieve great things.

Additional ways to give are the Annual Race for Education, the Annual Adult Social, and The Prism Color Run.

To keep our school families well informed, the school's annual budget, quarterly financial reports, and year-to-date results are available for review on our school's website.

**Registration Process** - New families and families with children enrolling in Agnus Dei Academy or those entering Kindergarten from Agnus Dei Academy, must complete the online registration process each year through the FACTS Family Portal to enroll for the upcoming school year.

The Enrollment Packet, along with registration and tuition information, is available online via the FACTS Family Portal. Families should complete and submit the Enrollment Packet by mid-February. The registration fee is paid through the FACTS Family Portal upon submission of the Enrollment Packet. Please note that the registration fee is non-refundable, and all financial obligations must be current before the registration can be processed.

If your student is not returning to Saint Mary Catholic School for the next school year, please inform the Parish Business Office by **March 15th**.

**Continuous Enrollment** - Saint Mary Catholic School employs the "Continuous Enrollment" concept for enrolled students, presuming they will continue until eighth- grade graduation. As most families stay year after year, this simplifies re-enrollment and aids in budget planning. Currently enrolled Kindergarteners



through 7th-grade students in good academic, disciplinary, and financial standing, intending to attend the 2026-2027 school year will be automatically re-enrolled. A registration fee will be billed to your FACTS tuition account on February 28, 2026 payable on March 15, 2026 to secure your seat.

**Tuition Refund Policy** - If your child withdraws or leaves Saint Mary Catholic School during the school year, tuition payments will be refunded according to the following calculation:

The cost of the program divided by the number of scheduled weeks for the program, multiplied by the number of weeks the child attended the program, less tuition payments made.

In the case of withdrawals associated with disciplinary issues, families will forfeit tuition.

**Financial Assistance** - Saint Mary Catholic School understands that affording a Catholic education can put a strain on a family's budget. Therefore, we offer financial assistance opportunities to assist families to achieve their goal of affording a Catholic Education.

Saint Mary Catholic School understands the importance of offering financial assistance to families in need each year. However, please be aware that the financial assistance award amounts are dependent on the funds available and the number of families in need. A consistent dollar amount of financial assistance for each academic year is not guaranteed.

All families who would like to be considered for tuition assistance must complete the application process found in FACTS Grant & Aid at <https://online.factsmgt.com/aid>. If you currently have a FACTS account, you will use your username and password to log in. If you are new to FACTS, you will first have to create an account. Applications that are received by **May 1st** will be considered on the first round of award distribution.

For an application to be considered complete, FACTS must receive the application form, all requested financial documents and application fee. The application process opens October 1st for the following school year and all families are encouraged to submit their application as soon as all required information is available. Families will be notified by July 1 if they qualified and the amount of assistance awarded.

## **BLOCS (Business Leadership Organized for Catholic Schools) Foundation**

Saint Mary Catholic School is blessed with financial assistance funds each year through the Pennsylvania EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) program. To be eligible to receive these funds a family first must qualify through the FACTS application process as described above.

The PA Earned Income Tax Credit is funded by businesses and individuals. If you would like to learn how to contribute to this program, please contact the Business Manager.

## **Saint Mary Parish Tuition Angel Fund**

Saint Mary Catholic School is blessed with parishioners who believe in Catholic Education and in helping families achieve the goal of a Catholic education for their child/children. A family must complete the FACTS application process in order to be eligible for these funds.



Saint Mary Catholic School realizes that a family's financial situation could change during the academic year. If such a situation arises, please contact the Business Manager. Be assured that this personal information is held in confidence.

Saint Mary Catholic School understands the importance of offering financial assistance to families in need each year. However, please be aware that the financial assistance award amounts are dependent on the funds available and the number of families in need. A consistent dollar amount of financial assistance for each academic year is not guaranteed.

## V. SACRAMENTS

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The Sacrament of Confirmation is received in the 7th grade level. Our sacramental program includes Confirmation catechesis of both parents and candidates. The classes for the Sacrament of Confirmation are integrated into the daily Religion class starting in the 6th grade level and concludes with the reception of Confirmation.

Catholics with disabilities have a right to participate in the sacraments as full functioning members of the local ecclesial community (Cf. canon 213). Ministers are not to refuse the sacraments to those who ask for them at appropriate times, who are properly disposed, and who are not prohibited by law from receiving them (Cf. canon 843, sect. 1). (2)

### **Sacramental Preparation Program**

"Parents have a right and duty to be intimately involved in preparing their children for First Communion." (National Catechetical Directory)

Therefore, our sacramental program includes catechesis of both parents and candidate.

### **First Penance and Eucharist**

"The suitable age for the first reception of these sacraments is deemed to be that which in documents of the Church is called the age of reason or discretion. This age, both for Confession and for Communion, is that at which the child begins to reason, that is, about the seventh year, more or less." (National Catechetical Directory)

"Catechesis for the Sacrament of Reconciliation is to precede First Communion and must be kept distinct by a clear and unhurried separation." (National Catechetical Directory)

The Sacrament of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist are received in the second-grade level and are integrated into the daily Religion lessons.

The Celebration of First Penance always occurs at Saint Mary Roman Catholic Church on the first Saturday after Ash Wednesday.

## Requirements of Candidate

- ❖ Must be baptized
- ❖ Must attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation
- ❖ Must be in the second religious education level or higher
- ❖ Must have successfully completed at least two years of prior preparation
- ❖ Must have satisfactory attendance record
- ❖ Must have attended a spiritual directed sacramental retreat
- ❖ Must have attended the Mini-Retreat (40 Hours Eucharistic Devotion)
- ❖ Must attend the First Eucharist Candidates Presentation Mass

## Requirements of Parent/Guardian

- ❖ Must be registered in the parish
- ❖ Must support the teachings of the Catholic Church
- ❖ Must attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation
- ❖ Must be personally involved in the preparation of their children
- ❖ Must attend the three virtual Adult Faith Formation Sessions
- ❖ Must attend the Mini-Retreat (40 Hours Eucharistic Devotion)
- ❖ Must work with their child daily on the Prayer of Sorrow, Hail Mary, Our Father, Glory Be to the Father, Sign of the Cross, and the procedures for going to Confession
- ❖ Must attend the First Eucharist Candidates Presentation Mass

## Confirmation

"As Primary educators of their children, parents, along with sponsors, are to be intimately involved in Catechesis for Confirmation." (National Catechetical Directory)

The Sacrament of Confirmation is integrated into daily Religion lessons beginning in the sixth-grade level and concludes with the reception of the Sacrament in the seventh-grade level.

## Requirements of Candidate

- ❖ Must be baptized
- ❖ Must attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation
- ❖ Must be in the 7th religious education level or higher
- ❖ Must have successfully completed at least two years of prior preparation in addition to the current Confirmation preparation classes
- ❖ Must have satisfactory attendance record
- ❖ Must have a sufficient knowledge of the faith and successfully completed the mission of service
- ❖ Must have attended a spiritual directed sacramental retreat
- ❖ Must have attended the Mini-Retreat (40 Hours Eucharistic Devotion)
- ❖ Must request to receive the Sacrament
- ❖ Must have a sufficient understanding of what Confirmation means to the best of their ability
- ❖ Must attend practice days for the Sacrament of Confirmation

## Requirements of Parent/Guardian

- ❖ Must be registered in the parish
- ❖ Must support the teachings of the Catholic Church

- ❖ Must attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation
- ❖ Must be personally involved in the preparation of their children
- ❖ Must attend the three virtual Adult Faith Formation Sessions
- ❖ Must attend the Mini-Retreat (40 Hours Eucharistic Devotion)

### Requirements of Sponsor

- ❖ Must be registered in a Catholic Parish
- ❖ Must be a Catholic in good standing who has received all the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist
- ❖ If married, marriage took place in the Catholic Church unless a Dispensation of Canonical Form was granted by the Diocese/ Archdiocese
- ❖ Must provide a certificate of eligibility with a church seal from their current parish, dated no more than six months prior to the date of Confirmation, stating that they are recommended as a fit sponsor by their pastor
- ❖ Must be 16 years of age or older
- ❖ Desirable that this person be the same as the godparent for Baptism (but not required)
- ❖ May **NOT** be a parent of the candidate
- ❖ If a proxy is necessary, they must fulfill ALL the same requirements as a sponsor, including obtaining a letter of eligibility from their parish, and proxy may not be a parent
- ❖ Must attend the Confirmation Retreat with the Confirmation Candidate

Readiness for the reception of a sacrament is more than the age/class level of the child. Parents, catechist, staff and the child share discernment of readiness. The pastor will be consulted if postponement of a child's reception of a Sacrament is deemed advisable.

Confirmation is a Sacrament of Initiation and is therefore a beginning, and not an end, to religious education. It is expected that parents continue to enroll their children in religious education classes after they have been confirmed. This will help them as they mature in their teen years and into young adulthood to continue to be guided in the understanding and practice of their faith.

## VI. ACADEMIC POLICIES

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**General Curriculum** - Saint Mary Catholic School is fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. We follow the curriculum set by the Office of Catholic Education for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Every student enrolled at Saint Mary Catholic School will participate in the religious education program designed by the school. We exist to teach the Catholic faith. Christian values are incorporated into all that we do while teaching of the curriculum.

**Books and Materials** - Every student must carry his/her books to and from school in a suitable book bag. All textbooks must be covered. All covers must be neat, clean, and free from inappropriate material.

Books, copybooks, and materials are to be properly identified with a child's name, school, address, and room number. The student and parents/guardians must pay for all lost or damaged books. A charge will be made at the rate at which the school purchased the books.

The student is responsible for completing all class assignments and homework on time. Failure to do so indicates a lack of serious preparation for class. Incomplete homework assignments will result in a consequence appropriate to the grade level.

The teacher assesses daily performance of students. Examination of copybooks and worksheets for neatness and completeness of work, as well as class participation, are part of the overall report card grade.

**Class Participation** - The skills that we promote as part of our curriculum require full participation. We must all work together to promote full participation in the classroom so that students will learn how to think critically, problem solve, create, innovate, communicate and collaborate. Students are expected to:

- Give attention and respect to the teacher at all times
- Show respect and concern for other students by a willingness to share and to take turns
- Actively participate in class by responding orally or in writing as circumstances dictate

**Homework** - Homework refers to an assignment made by a teacher that will positively reinforce a concept presented in class. In addition, some homework assignments prompt students to discovery, often of relationships between knowledge bases and skills. Homework includes both written and study assignments and should be done by the student independently. While this does not preclude parental help or interest, the assignments should not require undue parental assistance or supervision. Ample time should be allowed for the completion of out-of-class research assignments or projects.

The School realizes that teachers, students, and subjects vary. In the event of absence or suspension, all homework and missed assignments are to be made up. If a student is absent, parents may call the main office for homework before Noon. Student work may also be picked up outside the main office at 3:30pm.

***Please note that primary level teachers may make adjustments to this policy.***

**Promotion or Retention** - A student is promoted if he/she has achieved a proper balance of academic, social, physical and emotional development. Retention occurs only with the consultation of parents, teachers, and the principal. Such recommendations are made only when a student is unprepared to manage the challenges of the next grade level. Though parents may request retention, it is still a joint decision. The school reserves the right to make the final decision. Documentation of parent contact will be kept on file. Students may be required to receive additional summer instruction as a condition of readmission for the next school term.

**Report Cards** - Report cards are issued three times a year to students in Grades 1 through 8. Each student is responsible for his/her own report card grade by satisfactorily fulfilling the following requirements:

- Major testing
- Quizzes
- Oral and written reports
- Independent classroom work
- Active participation in classroom lessons and activities
- Class/individual projects

**Standardized Testing** - The Terra Nova Test is administered each year to students in Grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. The results are communicated to parents and are utilized by the school for curriculum planning.

**Kindergarten and Eighth Grade Commencement** - All Kindergarten and Eighth grade students who have completed the prescribed course of study and maintained a suitable discipline record are eligible to

participate in their commencement ceremony. All financial obligations must have been met. The administration, Kindergarten and the Eighth-grade teachers determine procedures for commencement.

**Closing Exercises** - Participation in closing exercises is a privilege, not a right. The School has the right to deny any student from participating in closing exercises if, in the view of the School, the student's conduct, academic or disciplinary record indicates that the privilege should not be extended.

**FACTS** - The School Information System is provided for families to constantly monitor a student's progress and maintain communication between Home and School.

**Field Trips** - The purpose of every field trip is to broaden the intellectual, cultural, and social experiences of each child. Each student must provide written permission for each trip in order to participate. The parent/guardian must sign a Field Trip Parent Consent Form. A class trip is a privilege, which can be taken away if a teacher deems it appropriate. If a parent/guardian does not wish a child to attend the trip for any reason, the school must be notified. The child must attend school on the day of the trip or it is marked as an unexcused absence.

**Lunch** - Students are expected to clean their places after eating. Respect and courtesy are to be shown to the adults who supervise and assist during this time.

**Class Placement** - In the event that there are two classrooms per grade, and if students in that grade need to be split into separate classes, the teachers currently teaching the students will work to create classes that will enable the best learning environment. Teachers will consider gender, ability, and student interaction in creating these class lists. If parents know of circumstances that could affect the class, they should make these circumstances known to the teachers or the principal. Once class lists have been published in August they will not be changed.

## VII. THE CURRICULUM

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The curriculum of Saint Mary Catholic School follows the guidelines established by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the Common Core Standards. Textbooks are approved by the Archdiocese and reviewed and updated as needed. Under the guidance of the Office of Catholic Education, faculty and administration exert constant efforts to provide a balanced, well-organized, and continuous curriculum. Periodic evaluations and standardized testing, as well as faculty in-service, help to ensure the strength of educational programs. The Archdiocese of Philadelphia curriculum can be found at <https://aopccatholicsschools.org/elementary-schools/curriculum/>.

Saint Mary Catholic School's program provides students with a rich growth experience in a warm and caring environment. The curriculum includes Religion, Math, Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, Spanish, Computer Education/Media Arts, Music/Performing Arts, Fine Art, and Physical Education.

**Religion** - The knowledge and practice of the Catholic Faith is the purpose and primary focus of the education given to the children at Saint Mary Catholic School. This religious development, begun in your home, is continued at our school by following the Diocesan guidelines for religious instruction by enabling

the children to participate in liturgical functions. The liturgical experiences provided for our students are a vital part of the religious education of the child. They are:

- **Mass** – The entire student body will attend Mass together once each month. In addition, grades K-4 will attend Mass as a group each month. Likewise, grades 5-8 will also attend one Mass per month as a group.
- **Penance Services** - The school provides opportunities for the children to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation several times during the year. More frequent reception of the sacrament is the responsibility of the parents.
- **Stations of the Cross** - Children attend Stations on Friday afternoons during Lent
- **Para-Liturgical Services** - These services are held throughout the school year. They are seasonal in nature but may also be a response to current needs.

**Honors/Accelerated Mathematics Program** - Students capable of completing the prescribed curriculum in seven years are enrolled in the Elementary Accelerated Mathematics Program. The students in this program are identified in their fourth year and begin an acceleration of levels 5 through 8 in their fifth year. Having completed level eight in their seventh year, these students complete a course of Algebra 1 in their eighth year. The program is carefully monitored by the school administrator and the mathematics coordinator with the use of management guidelines prepared by the Joint Elementary / Secondary Mathematics Committee. Students who complete this program and satisfactorily master the Algebra 1 curriculum according to criteria established by the Joint Committee are able to begin their second level of secondary mathematics in the freshman year of high school.

**Physical Education** - Diocesan Guidelines are followed. Children MUST bring a note to be excused from gym class. Children may wear their gym uniform to and from school on their assigned day. If they are not in uniform, they may not participate in gym class. Gym classes are held weekly. Every student is expected to show good sportsmanship in gym. Any student displaying conduct that could bring about harm to themselves or others, or which reflects poor sportsmanship, will be dealt with in a manner considered appropriate by the instructor and/or the Principal.

**Technology/Media Arts** - Students receive computer education according to the Diocesan Guidelines. The computer is a tool that needs to be mastered through practical application. Students will use technology as an extension of classroom instruction, in addition to computer instruction.

**Music/Performing Arts** - The Music Curriculum as prescribed by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is taught in Grades K-8. The Music Program enhances the education of the whole child and gives him/her an appreciation for a variety of music and a diversity of cultures as well. It also provides a way of praising God through song.

Opportunities for students to participate in a form of Performing Arts is integrated into the curriculum appropriate for the grade level.

**Library** - The school library is staffed by volunteer librarians and is available to the students during the school day. Books may be taken out once a week. A fine will be levied on overdue books. Damage or loss of books will result in the parent/guardian being responsible for the replacement cost of the book. Appropriate conduct is expected at all times in the library.

**Fine Arts** - The Fine Arts Program is designed to offer our students exposure to all aspects of art. They have the opportunity to develop an awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the order and beauty of God's creation through the development of artistic skills.

**World Language** - An appreciation of world language is presented in Spanish class in Grades K-8. Classes are once a week and taught, in person, by a dedicated Spanish Teacher.

**Learning Support** - Saint Mary Catholic School Learning Support teacher enable our school to address students who need special attention, especially in English/Language Arts. The learning support teacher will primarily work with students who are struggling academically and who may qualify for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) which enables them to remain in a mainstream classroom. The Learning Support teacher will work with students on an individual basis or in small groups, either in a special classroom setting or within the student's classroom. The Learning Support teacher will also work with students who need additional attention that will enable them to become motivated lifelong learners. The Learning Support teacher will work with the classroom teacher to address these needs and additional challenges that might arise, in order to help students always work to or beyond their potential.

## VIII. ATTENDANCE

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Regular school attendance impacts positively on the child's academic development. The total number of days that school is in session is prescribed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**Absences** - The policies regarding this area are as follows:

1. A student who has been absent from school, even for one day, is required to present a written note from their parent/guardian to his/her homeroom teacher upon return to school. The note should include date and reason for absence.
2. A doctor's certificate may be required for absence of an extended nature (3 days).
3. If your child is going to be absent or arrive late at school, you are required to call the school at 610.287.7757 (press 3 after greeting) and leave a message by 8:45am. If your child's name appears on an attendance report from the homeroom teacher and you have not phoned in to let us know, please expect a call from the school to verify the absence. Please help us in this endeavor by calling. Your child's safety and welfare are of great importance to us.
4. In the case of an in-school illness, a school official will contact the parent(s) or adult whose name has been submitted to the office with an emergency phone number.
5. Any child who stays home without his/her parent's knowledge is a candidate for suspension.
6. Any child who leaves school without permission is also liable for suspension.
7. In order to arrange for assignments of children who are absent due to illness, kindly call the school office by noon. This work may be picked up by the parent at the school office. It is the responsibility of the student to complete work and tests that have been missed due to absence. Please note individual teacher policies.

**General Supervision of School Grounds** - School grounds are supervised during school hours. There will be general supervision in connection with school-sponsored extra-curricular activities. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that they and their children are not on the premises during other times. The School has



no responsibility for students or parents/guardians on the premises during unsupervised times. Parents/guardians are responsible for the supervision of their children during Parish sponsored events.

**Arrivals** - A child must report directly to their classroom between 8:10am and 8:25am. **Parents/guardians are asked not to leave a child at school before 8:10am.**

#### **DAILY SCHEDULE**

8:10am - 8:25am - Breakfast  
8:30am - School day begins  
8:35am - Lift-Off Time begins (Intervention)  
9:05am - Classes Begin  
11:45am - Half Day Kindergarten Dismissed  
12:25pm - Lunch, K-4 / Recess 5-8  
12:55pm - Lunch, 5-8 / Recess K-4  
1:15pm - Recess ends  
1:20pm - Classes resume  
3:05pm - Closing prayers  
3:15pm - Dismissal

**Dismissal** - Children are dismissed from their classroom by their teachers beginning at 3:15pm. No child may leave the building prior to dismissal without the Principal's permission.

**Early Dismissal for Individual Students** - We respectfully request that you make an effort to limit early dismissals, late arrivals, and missed days for non-medical reasons. Early dismissals and late arrivals are very disruptive to the flow in the classroom. We appreciate your support and cooperation. To request an early dismissal, please send a note to the homeroom teacher who will forward it to the office. The student will be dismissed from the school office. The parent/guardian must report to the school office and sign the "Early Dismissal Book," to have your child released from school.

**Emergency Closings and Delays** - On designated days of the year students are dismissed at 12:00pm and at 11:00am on the last day of school. Parents/guardians are asked to provide transportation whenever bus transportation is not provided. Below is the information you need to remember in case of any emergency school closing:

- Transportation follows your school district's decision
- In case of closing during school hours, you will be notified by a FACTS automated message from school. No student will be dismissed from school until we have contacted the parents or designated emergency call person.
- ***Do not call the school for updates. Your call prevents the transportation services from updating the School.***
- Please observe the specifics of an announced delayed opening. Please do not drop your children off earlier than an announced delay. ***Do not drop off children without confirmation that adult supervision is in place.***
- If the school has a delayed opening, Half-Day Kindergarten will stay the entire day and return home the same way they arrived unless we are contacted otherwise by the parent/guardian. Students will need a lunch on these days.
- School closings will be announced via FACTS email, voicemail, and/or text service



**Lateness** - A student who arrives late for school must:

- ✓ Report to school office for an admission slip
- ✓ Present a note from his/her parent explaining the reason for the lateness
- ✓ Present the admission slip to the classroom teacher

Consistent unexcused lateness will be considered parental neglect, which will be reported to the School District of residence for further investigation. Lateness and Early Dismissal, of course, negates perfect attendance record.

**Vacation Policy** - The planning of family vacations is strongly discouraged during the school year. Please contact the Principal directly if there is a need for your child to be away on vacation during the academic year. Repeatedly taking vacations during school time may be grounds for dismissal. When a child does go away, all work must be made up when the child returns to school. No schoolwork will be issued before the vacation. Classroom teachers will collect and hold all home and class work to give to student on return. Students will have ten days to complete all work.

## IX. TRANSPORTATION

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In the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians are asked how their child/children will arrive to and leave from school. Any change in transportation arrangements must be made in writing, even if it is a change for only one day. Transportation changes made over the phone must be made through the main office by calling 610.287.7757.

**Bus** - Local public-school districts provide bus transportation for students living within their school district. Children must ride the same bus both morning and afternoon as assigned to them by the school district. Bus riders are not permitted to walk home unless the parents/guardians send a note to the homeroom teacher, and the Principal approves the request.

Only students residing in their respective school districts may ride school district buses. Please do not request permission, written or verbal, from the Principal for a student who is a non-rider to take the bus to any location on a given day. The school *does not have the authority to grant such a request.*

If you wish to pursue such a change, you may call the transportation office of the local public-school district. You may call the transportation office of the local public-school district for any questions or concerns. The telephone numbers for the various transportation offices are:

- Boyertown -----610.369.7429
- Methacton -----610.489.5036
- North Penn-----215.853.1139
- Pottstown -----610.970.6627
- Pottsgrove -----610.323.5020
- Perkiomen Valley -----610.489.9110
- Souderton -----215.723.4613
- Springford -----610.705.6226

## Bus and Car Arrival Procedures

### At the Bus Stop:

- Be on time, but no earlier than 5 minutes
- Respect the rights of property owners
- Parents are responsible for the behavior of their children before the bus arrives

### On the bus:

Bus safety and proper behavior while riding the bus is the joint responsibility of students, parents, and the school administrator. Parents shall instruct their children that they must obey the Bus Code of Conduct. Saint Mary students are to observe the following guides for riding the bus:

All students being transported by bus shall not:

- Eat or drink on the bus
- Engage in scuffling, fighting, or other acts of misbehavior
- Possess any illegal drug or drug paraphernalia
- Possess weapons of any kind
- Use profane or indecent language
- Regulate windows unless permitted by the driver
- Extend any part of their bodies out the window
- Stand or walk while the bus is in motion
- Place books, gym bags, or other articles in the aisle
- Vandalize the bus or personal property of others
- Behave in any manner, which would endanger the health, safety, or welfare of other students or the driver
- Saint Mary Catholic School reserves the right to suspend or terminate a student's busing privileges. At a minimum, a first offense will result in a letter of warning being mailed to the student's parents. A second offense may result in a partial or full suspension of busing privileges. A third offense could result in a suspension of busing privileges.

## Bus and Car Arrival Procedures

- The school building opens at 8:10am, no students should be dropped off before this time
- Speed Limit on Parish Grounds is 5 MPH
- There is no passing in the Bus Circle unless directed by school staff
- Cars and buses are to pull to the bottom of the drop off circle to utilize as much space as possible
- Drivers are not to leave the car and children are to exit on the right side
- If drivers must exit the car, or students must exit the left side of the car, then they must park in the parking lot

## Car Rider Dismissal Procedures

- Cars line up in two lines in parking lot in front of the Parish Annex Rooms. We load only 6 cars at a time, 3 in each line. Cars will be directed to move out once all 6 cars are loaded.
- Teachers will monitor students in the parking lot to maintain safety. Procedures will be adjusted as necessary by the school staff.

**Release of a child** - A child will not be released to a parent/guardian that does not have physical custody, without the written consent of the custodial parent/guardian. To determine the custodial parent/guardian, all separated or divorced parents of children enrolled in the parish school must provide the school with a copy of the court order or custodial agreement adjudicating that determination of custody. This Court Order/Custodial Agreement is placed in a confidential file.

## X. TELEPHONE CALLS AND CELL PHONES

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The school asks each child to check his/her needs each morning before leaving for school. This strengthens student responsibility. **Cell phones and electronic devices are not permitted to be turned on in school unless under the direction of a teacher. Smartwatches are not permitted.**

Students whose phones are active during the school day will be asked to turn them over to the office for the day. In the instance of a repeat offense with misuse of a cell phone, a parent will be asked to retrieve the phone.

## XI. AUXILIARY SERVICES

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**State and Federally Funded Programs** - The Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU) provides us with the following services: Remediation in Reading and Math, Speech Therapy, Guidance, Psycho-Educational Testing and Evaluation, and Staff Development. Act 195 provides funding for the purchase of textbooks, and Act 90 provides funding for various instructional materials. Act 372 allows busing of non-public school children by the school district in which the child resides.

**Guidance Services** - Students may receive the services of a school psychologist or guidance counselor upon a teacher's request or recommendation. Parents, too, may wish to request these services through the school. Parents must request a formal SMART Team meeting to determine need.

**Speech Therapist** - The services of a speech therapist and other specialists are available through Title 1 funds administered by the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU). Parent's inquiry should be placed through their child's teacher. The teacher may also request referral or screening.

**Remedial Services** - Children may receive the services of a remedial reading and math teacher upon teacher referral and parental approval. These services come through Montgomery County Intermediate Unit.

**Learning Support Teacher** - Saint Mary Catholic School employs a learning support teacher to provide students with appropriate academic support, especially in the area of English Language Arts. The learning

support teacher will primarily work with students who are struggling academically who might qualify for an individualized Learning Plan (IEP) which enables them to remain in a mainstreamed classroom. The learning support teacher will work with students on an individual basis or in small groups and in a special classroom setting or within the student's classroom. The learning support teacher will also work with students who need additional attention that will enable them to become motivated lifelong learners. The learning support teacher will work with the classroom teacher to address these needs and additional challenges that might arise to help students always work to or beyond their potential.

## XII. CODE OF CONDUCT

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**Discipline Code** - Saint Mary Catholic School believes that discipline is fundamental to life. Discipline is a necessary reflection of the Philosophy of a Catholic School, which attempts to develop a fully committed Christian – a Christian committed to the observance of rules and regulations, which will assist the individual in responding to his/her responsibilities and obligations to himself/herself and others.

Correct training in discipline means that a child learns to accept rules and regulations presented by lawful authority. Students are expected to act in a fashion so that their behavior will reflect favorably on themselves and the school. They are expected to show consideration and respect for their fellow students and teachers, thus creating a harmonious atmosphere within the school. All students must recognize their individual responsibilities and obligations and discharge them in accordance with school regulations. Children who fail to comply with school policies and regulations must accept the consequences.

The discipline code applies to both **students and parents/guardians**, in school and at school-sponsored events, as well as in the school/parish community and outside the school/parish community where the behavior is contrary to Catholic teachings or could bring disrepute or embarrassment to the School.

The classroom teacher usually will handle Disciplinary Procedures for the Kindergarten and Grades 1 to 3 individually.

**Procedure for Demerits** - When a student receives demerit points, the parent/guardian will be notified through FACTS. Permission from parents/guardians to issue demerit points is not needed as this decision is solely at the discretion of the teacher who is issuing the points and the principal.

**Discipline Demerit System** - Points are used for a major infraction or to correct a consistently practiced bad habit. Points are given according to each infraction (see below).

The following chart is only a guideline for the classroom teacher in the issuance of points. It is not an all-inclusive list of conduct that violates the Discipline Code. The teacher and/or the principal may adjust the number of points accordingly. The consequences for infractions are as follows:

- 10 points – Parent notification and an after-school detention and a teacher/parent/student conference
- 5 additional points (15 Total for trimester) – In School Community service hours supervised by an administrator

- 5 additional points – (20 Total for trimester) In-School Suspension or possible dismissal Serious Infractions may result in an immediate suspension or dismissal and apply when students are on campus, on a bus, or at school-sponsored functions.

**Suspensions** - Just and appropriate disciplinary policies are essential to the educational process. These procedures, which are more remedial than punitive, include necessary provisions to protect the common good of the school community.

Suspension may lead to dismissal. The Principal will inform the parents/guardians of the seriousness of suspension and seek their immediate cooperation in a corrective program designed to resolve the student's problem, if possible.

### **Procedures for student suspensions**

- Infractions of a serious nature, as determined by the School
- Parents/Guardians of the student will be informed in writing of the suspension as soon as practicable
- Suspensions will be implemented [in-School or out of School], at the discretion of the Principal
- Following suspension, parents/guardians will be interviewed by the appropriate school official. Students removed from the school community will not be readmitted before a parental interview has been conducted and all other conditions for re-admittance have been satisfied.
- Parents and student are to sign a formal agreement in which they signify their understanding and agree to assume responsibility for future behavior
- Where possible, a student will be referred to a counselor or a teacher for counseling
- Signed agreement of parents and a written report of the suspension will be filed in the student's record

### **Procedures for student dismissal**

- After two (2) formal suspensions, a student may be dismissed
- Students who are dismissed may apply for readmission after one full year. The School will determine whether re-admittance is appropriate.
- In certain instances, the infraction may warrant immediate dismissal. The School reserves the right to dismiss any student at any time where the School considers the conduct of the student or parent/guardian to be inconsistent with School policy, the good of the School community or Catholic teachings.
- Parents/Guardians of the student will be informed in writing of the dismissal as soon as possible

**Harassment** - The School follows the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Policy prohibiting harassment, including sexual harassment. Sexual Harassment refers to any unwelcome sexual attention, sexual advances, and requests for sexual favors or other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Sexual Harassment** - Sexual harassment is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated. Any student or parent/guardian who is determined to have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal of the student. A complete copy of the policy is maintained by the Principal and is available upon request.

**Violent/Threatening/Harassing and Inappropriate Conduct** - It is the intent of the school to provide an educational environment free from all forms of improper threats, intimidation, hostility and offensive and inappropriate behavior. Such improper conduct may take the form of unwanted verbal or physical conduct,

verbal or written derogatory or discriminatory statements, and behavior not otherwise conducive to the educational and religious mission of the school. Unacceptable conduct – either by a student or a parent/guardian - includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Disrespectful behavior of any kind toward or about any staff, student, volunteer or parent
- Insubordination
- Fighting
- Bomb scares or triggering other false alarms
- Cheating or plagiarism
- Use or possession of drugs or alcohol
- Smoking
- Stealing
- Intimidation, harassment or threats of any kind
- Possession of any weapon

These categories do not cover every possible situation. The school will determine which behavior is inappropriate. This policy applies both in and out of the classroom, in the school community generally and outside the school community, where the behavior is contrary to Catholic teachings or could bring disrepute or embarrassment to the School. Conduct by students, parents/guardians, or anyone acting on their behalf, which is incompatible with the educational and religious mission of the school, is grounds for disciplinary action. This includes, but not limited to, the immediate dismissal of the student, as well as reporting the incident to the appropriate legal authorities where appropriate. Additionally, in the case of threats of violence or harassment in any form (including oral, written or electronic) by a student against any member of the school community, the offending student, if suspended but not dismissed, may be required to have psychological or psychiatric clearance before returning to school.

**Bullying Policy** - Saint Mary Catholic School strives for a safe, Catholic learning environment for all students. Bullying of students has a negative effect on our learning environment. Students who are fearful for any reason will not be able to learn at their full potential.

**Bullying is defined as follows:** A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending him or herself. Expressed in more everyday language one might say bullying is when someone repeatedly and purposefully says or does mean or hurtful things to another person who has a hard time defending himself. (Examples – See Bullying Behavior Chart on Website)

Saint Mary Catholic School will not tolerate any acts of bullying occurring on school property, at school-sponsored activities scheduled on or off school grounds, or during the time students necessarily spend traveling to and from school.

School Staff who observes acts of bullying shall take reasonable steps to intervene and stop such conduct. Intervention will vary depending upon the age of the student (both the victim and aggressor), the severity of the bullying and the student's involvement in prior acts of bullying. The purpose of intervention is to ensure observed acts of bullying stop and to teach students that bullying is not an acceptable behavior. If teachers and/or other staff cannot reasonably remediate acts of bullying through their own intervention, they should report the bullying to the Principal.

Saint Mary Catholic School encourages all students and parents/guardians who become aware of any act of bullying to **immediately** report that conduct. Anyone reporting such action should fill out a Student Conflict Report (found on the school website under forms). Students may report acts of bullying to their teachers, Principal, or other school employees supervising at school. Parents/guardians may contact teachers or the Principal to report acts of bullying.

The Principal or designee is authorized to complete an investigation of the bullying brought to their attention. Any investigation of a report may include meetings with students, parents/guardians or employees; a review of student records; and other reasonable efforts to better understand the facts surrounding a reported incident.

Consequences for students who are found to have bullied others may include counseling, a parent conference, detention, suspension, a loss of school privileges and/or exclusion from school-sponsored activities, and finally expulsion. Depending upon the severity of a particular situation, the Principal may also take appropriate steps for student safety.

### **XIII. COMMUNICATION**

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**Conferences** - Parent-teacher Conferences are scheduled in November and March for Grades K to 8. Arrangements for parent-teacher conferences at other times can be made in writing to suit the convenience of both parties whenever deemed necessary for the benefit of the child. When requesting a conference, please state the nature of the concern so the teacher can be better prepared to address it. Should a problem arise concerning any child, parents/guardians should feel free to discuss it with the proper school authority - the teacher, Principal, or Pastor.

**Teacher Interruptions** - Teachers should not be interrupted in their classrooms during the school day. Lunches, messages, forgotten books, etc. should be left at the office with the child's name and room number and it will be delivered to the appropriate classroom.

**Communication from School** - Effective communication is the single most important factor that assures a positive relationship between the home and school. Several modes of communication exist at our school to help keep parents informed of policies, activities, upcoming events, and student progress. Regular forms of communications include this handbook, a monthly calendar of events, digital envelopes e-mailed weekly, regular emails through FACTS, parent-teacher conferences, and Home and School meetings. Report Cards are published on-line through FACTS. Parents are asked to check book bags and folders daily for communications from school.

**Communication from Home** - Any return communications, completed forms, money, etc. that are brought to school are forwarded from the homeroom teacher to the school office. Parents/guardians should not instruct students to deliver items directly to the office.

**Student Records** - Unless a court or custody agreement specifies otherwise, each parent/guardian with legal custody is entitled to access all school records of the child. Absent a subpoena or court order, school records of the child/children may be disclosed only upon written consent of the parent/ guardian with legal custody.



## XIV. SCHOOL SAFETY

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**Crisis Management** - Saint Mary Catholic School continues to develop Crisis Management Plans which addresses various emergency situations including: Lockout, Lockdown, Evacuation, Reverse Evacuation, and Severe Weather. These plans are always available for review in the school or parish office. Suggestions and concerns are always welcome and reviewed by the Safety and Security Committee.

**Drills** - Fire, Evacuation, Reverse Evacuation, Lockout, and Lockdowns drills are conducted at regular intervals throughout the school year. Lockdown drills are done with the assistance of the Lower Frederick Police Department. Drills help to ensure that every student will be familiar with the emergency signals and respond appropriately without confusion or delay.

**Regulations** - The following regulations have been established to ensure the safety of our students and must be adhered to by each student:

- All School entrances are to be locked at all times during school hours
- During school hours students are not to open doors for visitors to the school, including their own parents
- Running is not permitted at any time within the school building or in moving from one place to another on the school premises
- Entry is not permitted into the school building before school in the morning, at recess or lunch, or after dismissal at any time unless a member of the school staff gives explicit permission to do so
- No student may leave the school premises at any time without permission. A violation of this regulation will result in automatic suspension. Every student must stay within the established boundaries when outdoors for morning and lunch recess.
- An atmosphere of quiet respect for the learning rights of others should prevail throughout the school building

**Visitors** - Visitors are most welcome and are encouraged to call ahead or schedule an appointment whenever possible. The following procedures have been established to ensure the safety of our students and our faculty/staff:

- All visitors should report to the main school entrance only for entry into the school.
- All visitors, including volunteers helping with various school activities, must report directly to the school office and sign the Visitor's Log upon entering the building.
- Parents coming to school to bring forgotten articles or to relay messages should report directly to the school office and not enter individual classrooms. Classes may not be disturbed at any time.
- Parents may not confer with a teacher or visit a classroom between the hours of 8:15 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. unless the Principal gives permission, or a prior appointment is set up by a teacher.
- To arrange for a visit, visitors should contact the school office at 610.287.7757.

**Smoking** - The school premises are a smoke-free environment. No smoking is allowed on campus at any time by anyone. A student violation will result in suspension from school and school-related activities until a conference can be arranged between the parents/guardians and the Principal.



## XV. SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

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The Safe Environment Program is a comprehensive child safety and child sexual abuse prevention program which creates a network of prevention and protection for the children entrusted into the care of Saint Mary Catholic School.

Saint Mary Catholic School is a Safe Environment. All Saint Mary Parish and School employees, including clergy, have received all the required background clearances, as well as child sexual abuse prevention training, according to the laws and mandates of both the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. We pledge that keeping your children safe is our top priority.

All volunteers at Saint Mary School, including those assisting during the school day, at after school activities, and event chaperones, must also obtain volunteer background clearances and take the safe environment training courses.

**Volunteer Clearances** - Three clearances are needed for all volunteers. These are the PA State Police Criminal Background Check, the PA Child Abuse Clearance, and either an FBI fingerprint clearance (for individuals who have resided in PA less than 10 years) or a Volunteer Disclosure Statement (for individuals who have resided in PA **continuously** for 10 years or more). The State Police Criminal Background Check and the Child Abuse Clearance are free of charge for volunteers. There is a small cost involved if an FBI fingerprint clearance is required.

Clearances must be renewed every **5 years**.

**Volunteer Trainings** - Two training classes are required for all volunteers. These are:

- **VIRTUS Protecting God's Children Part I:** This is an in-person 2½ hour class offered at locations across the Archdiocese, including at Saint Mary Parish.
- **Mandated Reporter Training Protecting God's Children Part II:** This is an online course through the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, which takes about an hour to complete.

Training classes are only taken once and do not expire.

There is no grace period for volunteers. This means that **all clearances and training certificates must be on file with the Safe Environment Coordinator in the Parish Office Center before you can begin physically volunteering on the school campus.**

A full description of clearances and trainings is on the Saint Mary Parish website at [www.churchofsaintmary.org](http://www.churchofsaintmary.org). There is a safe environment button on the main page and links to all applicable websites and documents are located on the safe environment page.

## XVI. PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN LESSON

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Saint Mary Catholic School is required to teach two personal safety lessons annually. These lessons, developed by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Office of Catholic Education, are entitled “Keeping God’s Children Safe” and are offered in the fall and the other in the spring. Parents/guardians can review these lessons at the Archdiocesan website at <https://aopcatholicschools.org/about/programs/>.

**Parent/Guardian Opt-Out** - After a review of the personal safety lesson, parents/guardians may opt out their child from attending the personal safety lessons. The Principal must obtain a written signed and dated “opt-out form” from the parent/guardian. These forms are to be submitted to the Office of Children and Youth Protection along with the annual school audit report. An Opt-Out Form will be provided to you by the school office. If a parent/guardian decides to opt out, it is strongly encouraged that they review this important lesson with their child at home.

## XVII. PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION & STUDENT PHOTO AND VIDEO POLICY

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By receipt of this Parent Handbook, you give Saint Mary Catholic School permission for the following:

**Parent Contact Information Policy** - Parent contact information will be kept confidential with the exception of release to school affiliated organizations such as Saint Mary Parish, Saint Mary Catholic School Board of Limited Jurisdiction, Home and School Association, etc. A Parent Contact Information Opt-Out Form is included on the last page of this handbook.

**Photo and Video Policy** - In the normal course of student life, your child may be photographed or filmed for the marketing and promotion of Saint Mary Catholic School. Photos or video may be distributed on social media sites, school website, newspaper articles or ads, television, live streaming or other types of media.

A separate **Student Photo and Media Release Opt-Out Form** is included in this handbook on page 50. Written notification must be received by the School Main Office in order to opt-out of these two policies.

## XVIII. RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY FOR TECHNOLOGY

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The Archdiocese of Philadelphia Office for Catholic Education has issued the following policies regarding the use of technology for grades K-8.

The heart of our curriculum is timeless ~ love, truth, beauty, mercy. We teach about creation as well as the Creator. We educate on being in solidarity with those who suffer and how to cultivate a prayerful life.

In his message for the 48th World Communications Day, Pope Francis said that technology is a “gift from God.” The Pope challenged the Church to use this tool to promote the faith, asking how communication can “be at the

service of an authentic culture of encounter?" Because of these things we are committed participating in society. And to be committed to such participation requires using technology in appropriate ways.

We are interested in technology because of our faith.

We expect our students to utilize technology to think more critically, to communicate effectively, to express their creativity, and to conduct research. Our teachers have access to updated technology in their classrooms to engage our students and challenge them to learn in ways not previously imaginable. We empower students with the technical skills necessary to participate in a culture that is increasingly dependent upon technology, while also challenging them to be digital ambassadors spreading the Good News.

But it is our faith that guides how we use technology.

We teach our students about the ethics of technology and train them to be savvy about things like Internet privacy and safety. We teach the unfortunate reality of technology addiction. We remind students and parents that technology is aggressively marketed and to be careful about getting caught up in the hype.

We also acknowledge that we sometimes need to "unplug" from technology as it can cause us to become isolated from one another. We encourage family meals without screen time and the importance of communicating face to face.

We greatly value technology in our schools. And what makes technology most powerful, is when it serves to make our students better people.

**Purpose** - Technology is a valuable and real-world educational tool. All Archdiocese of Philadelphia schools will educate all students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, cyber bullying awareness and response to ensure an appropriate use of technology, including video conferencing platforms. The policy outlined below applies to all technology use including but not limited to Internet use. The Responsible Use Policy for Technology (RUP) applies to all students, faculty, administrators, staff, volunteers, or community members allowed access to school technology resources. In some cases, outside or personal uses of technology may be applicable under this policy.

**Scope of Use** - We recognize that the digital world allows anytime, anywhere access. Uses mentioned in this policy apply to inside school use and may in certain instances apply to personal technology use and/or uses outside of school. Where personal and/or non-educational use of technology creates substantial disruption in school, including but not limited to harming or interfering with the rights of other students or teachers to participate fully in school or extracurricular activities, these activities may be viewed as a violation of the Responsible Use Policy and may be subject to the disciplinary measure found herein.

N.B. The types of electronic and digital communications referenced in this RUP include, but are not limited to, social networking sites, cell phones, mobile computers and devices, digital cameras, video conferencing platforms, text messaging, email, voice over IP, chat rooms, instant messaging, cloud, and web-based tools.

**Goal** - The school's goal is to prepare its members for a responsible life in a digital global community. To this end, the school will:

- integrate technology with curriculum to enhance teaching and learning

- encourage critical thinking, communication, collaboration and problem-solving skills
- facilitate evaluation and synthesis of information
- encourage ethical practices and provide education for Internet safety, digital citizenship and the creation of a positive digital identity
- provide a variety of technology-based tools and related technology skills

**Responsibility of User** - Our schools will make every effort to provide a safe environment for learning with technology including Internet filtering and safeguards. The students, faculty, administrators, staff, and school community are granted the privilege of using the computer hardware and software peripherals, and electronic communication tools including the Internet. With this privilege comes the responsibility for appropriate use.

In the Archdiocese of Philadelphia (AoP), we use information and technology in safe, legal, and responsible ways. We embrace the following conditions or facets of being a digital citizen.

- **Respect One's Self.** Responsible users will select online names that are appropriate and will consider the information and images that are posted online
- **Respect Others.** Responsible users will refrain from using technologies to bully, tease or harass other people
- **Protect One's Self and Others.** Responsible users will protect themselves and others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications. Users will protect their usernames and passwords by not sharing with others.
- **Respect Intellectual Property.** Responsible users will suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, images, media, or other sources relied upon or used in work created
- **Protect Intellectual Property.** Responsible users will request permission to use the software and media others produce and abide by license agreements for all software and resources

Under no circumstances is an AoP user authorized to engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state, federal or international law while utilizing AoP-owned resources, computers or networks.

## Technology Use Guidelines

**Educational Purpose/Responsible Use** - Technology is to be used to enhance student learning. Students can access social networking and gaming sites only under the guidance and supervision of the teacher for the educational outcomes identified within the lesson and given appropriate age.

**Copyright/Intellectual Property and Identity** - All sources obtained for teacher and student work should be properly cited. Users are to respect the rights and intellectual property of others in accordance with Federal Copyright Law. Transferring copyrighted material to or from a school without express permission of the owner is a violation of Federal Law and could result in copyright infringement claims.

**Responsible Use of School Hardware/Devices** - All AoP users are responsible for the general care of School issued hardware/devices. Users must report any damage to the school's hardware/device. Local school policy may further define faculty, staff, and students' responsibilities and expectations. Users may be held liable for any costs associated with device repair or replacement.

**Communications** - Electronic and/or Digital communications with students should be conducted for educationally appropriate purposes and employ only school-sanctioned means of communication.

The school-sanctioned communications methods include:

- Teacher school web page, school-issued email and/or phone number
- Teacher created, educationally focused networking sites
- Student Information System and Learning Management System
- Remind Communication app – or similar i.e. Class Dojo, Seesaw

Teachers, administrators or staff members in their normal responsibilities and duties may be required to contact parents outside of the school day. A teacher, administrator or staff member is free to contact parents or guardians using a home phone or a personal cell phone. However, they should not distribute a home phone number or a personal cell phone number to students. If a student contacts a teacher or administrator using a teacher or administrator's personal numbers, email or social networking sites, the teacher or administrator should immediately report this to the administrator or appropriate authorities.

**Digital Security** - Digital security must be at the forefront of every user's mindset. Users should always enable the highest level of account security offered. Typically, this means enabling two-factor authentication or multi-factor authentication to increase security. Biometric security features such as fingerprints or face-id may also be utilized to protect an account from unauthorized access.

**Storage Devices** - Use of external removable hard drives, flash or "thumb" drives is strongly discouraged - due to the possibility of information loss, theft, and other digital security concerns. The limited use of external drives in special circumstances may be allowed as long as specific attention is given to the security of these devices.

**Artificial Intelligence** - Students are prohibited from utilizing AI software tools such as ChatGPT for any academic or assessment-related purposes, including but not limited to completing assignments, quizzes, or exams. A student may use AI tools only if a teacher or school administrator explicitly gives permission and supervises its use. The unauthorized use of ChatGPT or other similar AI programs to complete school assignments is a violation of academic integrity and is subject to disciplinary action.

**Note** - Many of these AI programs require users to be at least 13 years of age for use. Schools should be thorough in their research of the AI programs' Privacy Policy to check for compliance with COPPA, FERPA, and CUPA laws before introducing AI programs for student use. The AoP Tech Team is happy to help evaluate any AI tools or programs.

**Electronic and Mobile Devices, Cell phone/Wearable Technology** - Users must adhere to local school policy that may further define uses of mobile devices. The administrator of the local school will determine permissible use. If a particular mobile device is to be used for an educational purpose, the school administration and/or teacher will provide parameters for this use.

**Smart Speakers** - Primarily intended for at-home consumer use, these always-listening devices are not directly intended for the classroom. Therefore, smart speakers (Echo, Google Nest, etc..) are not to be used in the classroom nor connected to the network on a permanent basis during the academic year.

**Remote/Distance Learning** - Remote or distance learning may be used to supplement face-to-face instruction, or where appropriate, may be the primary modality of instruction. To effectively engage in remote or distance learning, users are expected to:

- Participate from an appropriate location in the home.
- To the user's best ability, be in a well-lit and quiet area. Avoid having windows or strong sources of light directly behind an individual when engaging in teaching/learning on camera.
- Wear appropriate and respectful attire. (This may be more specifically defined by the local school administration.)
- Where able, only use first name and last initial to identify yourself via video conferencing software.
- Students are not to use or preserve a photograph, image, video, including-live streaming, or likeness of any student, or employee without express permission of that individual and of the principal.
- Prior to recording any portion of a live classroom session, instructors are to notify the students who are in the same session, face-to-face or online.
- Live class recordings are meant for internal school use only. Recordings are to be saved locally on a network drive or the school's GSuite for Education Google Drive. Recordings are to be deleted at the end of the academic year in which they were recorded. Recordings are not for promotional use, rather solely for educational purposes.
- This Responsible Use Policy applies to students using personal devices for remote instruction.
- Maintaining hardware/devices provided by the local school is the responsibility of the student/family. (Local school policy may define further students' responsibilities and expectations.)

### **Examples of Unacceptable Uses - Users are not to:**

- Use technology to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, annoy, or otherwise negatively impact any individual.
- Post, publish, disseminate, or display any defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive, profane, or sexually oriented material. Users must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, or threatening language. Users must not knowingly or recklessly post or disseminate false information about any persons, students, staff, or any other organization.
- Use a photograph, image, video, including-live streaming, or likeness of any student, administrator, employee, or volunteer without express permission of that individual and of the principal.
- Create any site, post any photo, image, or video of another individual except with express permission of that individual and the principal.
- Attempt to circumvent system security, blocked sites or to bypass software protections.
- The following activities are strictly prohibited, with no exceptions:
  - Effecting security breaches or disruptions of network communication. Security breaches include, but are not limited to, accessing data of which the user is not an intended recipient or logging into a server or account that the user is not expressly authorized to access, unless these duties are within the scope of regular duties. For purposes of this section, "disruption"

includes, but is not limited to, network sniffing, pinged floods, packet spoofing, denial of service, and forged routing information for malicious purposes.

- Executing any form of network monitoring which will intercept data not intended for the user, unless this activity is a part of the user's normal job/duty.
- Circumventing user authentication or security of any host, network, or account.
- Any virus or phishing protection software installed on school or school issued devices must not be disabled or bypassed.
- Deliberately visit a site known for unacceptable material or any material that is not in support of educational objectives. Students must not access social networking sites or gaming sites, except for educational purposes under teacher supervision.
- Violate license agreements, copy disks / hard drives, CD-ROMs, or other protected media.
- Use technology for any illegal activity. Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.
- Breach confidentiality obligations of school or school employees.
- Harm the goodwill and reputation of the school or system in the community. This includes but is not limited to: the mis-use of school images and logos, creation of unauthorized accounts that suggest they are school-sanctioned, or accounts targeting or impersonating school community members.
- Transmit any material in violation of any local, federal, and state laws. This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted material, licensed material and threatening or obscene material.
- Attempt to modify software and/or hardware configurations on a school issued device without proper permission and direction.
- Any attempt to alter data, the configuration of a school issued device, or the files of another user, without the consent of the individual, building administrator, or technology administrator, will be considered a violation and subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the local school policies.
- Load personal software onto a school device or school-issued device without proper permission or direction.
- Attempt to remove covers or protective shells to make repairs to hardware.

**Reporting** - Users must immediately report any damage or change to the school's hardware/software that is noticed by the user.

**Administrative Rights** - The school has the right to monitor both student and employee use of school computers and computer accessed content. Due to the evolving nature of technology, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Office of Catholic Education reserves the right to amend or supplement this policy at any time without notice.

All school personnel are reminded that all computer, network, and Internet use will be monitored and there is no assurance of privacy or warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied.

**Personal Use of Social Media** - This section of the policy refers to the personal use of social media sites such as, but not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Tumbler, Ask.fm, Snapchat, Discord, Twitch, LinkedIn, and TikTok.



Teachers and students may not mention members of the school community on social media without their consent unless the subject is of public concern and the speech falls under applicable constitutional protections. This includes: Posting or sharing a teacher's, school personnel's, or another student's confidential information on public sites, or any other unauthorized sharing with the intention to harm/harass.

#### Examples:

- Posting teacher's personal information - such as their personal email address, personal phone number or address
- Sharing a fellow student's phone number without their knowledge and consent in order to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, annoy or otherwise negatively impact any individual
- Manipulating or editing a teacher or student's photo in an inappropriate manner

"Friending" or "Following" of current students by teachers is forbidden on a teacher's personal social media site. Teachers should also not 'friend' former students unless and until such student has attained the age of majority. Personal and professional posts must use appropriately respectful speech, and refrain from harassing, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, threatening, or other inappropriate communications.

Teachers are encouraged to have professional social media accounts, separate from any personal account. Parents are encouraged to follow those for announcements and resources. Teachers are to inform local administrators as to any class utilizing social media, which should be for educational purposes only. In order to ensure the privacy and security of all students, teachers should refrain from posting on social media any audio, photo or video recording that captures a student's face or voice without prior parental authorization.

Permission must be obtained in advance from school administration for recording on school grounds, outside of the school day and / or school sponsored events with the intent to post on personal social media accounts or non-sanctioned school accounts.

Social media postings from school sanctioned accounts should refer to students by using their first name, last initial. Schools should avoid linking posts to students' personal accounts.

School sponsored organizations must obtain permission from school administration to create any social media accounts related to the organization. Such accounts should be created with a school issued account. Accounts should be maintained and controlled by a minimum of two school appointed adult moderators.

In regard to student athletes and coaches:

- No coach, teacher or administrator is permitted to have access to or control of a student's personal social media account.
- Students should never include their email nor their cellphone number in their social media bios.
- Coaches should never tag a student's account when posting social media messages. Coaches may want to post specific highlights, game/season achievements or accolades on either the coach's professional page or on a school's social media page. Students should be mentioned by name only.
- Per the PIAA bylaws, students, teachers, and coaches shall not use social media to criticize contest officials or to promote rumors of questionable practices by opponents. Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action.



## Esports/Gaming Clubs

Esports — “electronic sports” — refers to the world of organized, competitive video gaming. Unlike traditional sports, esports are virtual events. Though relatively young compared to other popular sports, the esports industry may be a viable career option for avid gamers and is gaining participation at the collegiate level as schools seek to recruit student-athletes and join new competitions. Many colleges offer scholarships specifically for students interested in playing esports at the collegiate level.

School sanctioned programs and gaming sessions should have at minimum, one adult coordinator supervising the session both if the team is meeting in person and when the team is meeting virtually.

Games rated E for Everyone or E 10+ are recommended for the Elementary grade level. At the Secondary level, games with a rating of - E, E10, and Teen may be considered. Caution should be used when selecting games with a Teen rating as they may contain content that is only suitable for students ages 13 and over. Games rated as Teen, may contain violence, suggestive themes, crude humor, minimal blood, and the infrequent use of strong language. Parents/Guardians should receive advance notice of game titles that will be used in the esports club - Game title, ESRB rating and link to Common Sense Media review or the ESRB rating review.

Games rated higher than Teen are not recommended for Elementary school students.

For students playing esports at the Secondary level, games with a Mature (17+) rating must be cautiously evaluated by school administration, and the club supervisor and / or students’ parents and guardians prior to approval. Collegiate level esports programs often compete and may offer scholarships for games that are rated Mature (17+). These games often contain content that is only suitable for ages 17 and over, and content may contain intense violence, blood and gore, sexual content, and strong language. Extreme caution must be exercised if selecting a game that is either unrated or rated Mature.

Some examples of popular esports games include: *(The following are examples only, and their appearance here should not be considered as approval or endorsement.)*

Game Title	ESRB Rating	School Level
Call of Duty (COD)	Mature (17+)	Secondary
Counter-Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO)	Mature (17+)	Secondary
Defense of the Ancients (DOTA) and DOTA 2	Teen	Secondary
Fortnite	Teen	Secondary
Hearthstone	Teen	Secondary
League of Legends (LoL)	Teen	Secondary
Just Dance (2023)	Everyone	Elementary/Secondary
Mario Kart	Everyone	Elementary/Secondary

Minecraft	Everyone (10+)	Elementary/Secondary
Overwatch	Teen	Secondary
Player Unknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG)	Teen	Secondary
Pokemon (Sword & Shield)	Everyone	Elementary/Secondary
Rainbow Six Siege	Mature (17+)	Secondary
Rocket League	Everyone	Elementary/Secondary
Super Smash Brothers	Everyone (10+)	Elementary/Secondary
Sports Titles Including: MLB The Show, Madden, FIFA/EA Sports FC, NBA 2K	Everyone	Elementary/Secondary
For ratings of all games, please visit the ESRB Website at <a href="https://www.esrb.org">esrb.org</a> .		

All school sponsored esports activities should have appropriate parental consent forms in relation to the activity.

The following permission forms are offered as templates that schools may use, and maybe customized for their specific needs.

**Link to Sample Permission Form** <https://tinyurl.com/2txvjtc> ([Elementary](#))

**Link to Sample Permission Form** <https://tinyurl.com/3zcbp2pr> ([Secondary](#))

**Link to Sample Permission Form for specific games** <https://tinyurl.com/5h8vh9cm> ([K-12](#))

Parent permission must be granted for titles outside of the recommended ratings, and for any game with a Mature rating. Permission for specific game titles is in addition to obtaining parent permission for overall esports club participation.

Schools may decide to allow students to bring in their personal gaming systems or components for use in school in connection with an approved esports program. Schools must consider security of the devices when they are not in use, the ability of the device to access the school's network and to be mindful of the possibility for potential damage or theft of student's personal gaming devices.

Schools should be aware that many of these games are hosted on platforms such as Discord or Twitch that are not designed for schools and often contain areas, boards, and / or posts that are not school appropriate. School coordinators should make every effort to limit access to their esports space so that only school members may access the site and that school sites are not accessible by general members of the public.

Club advisors should configure game settings, whenever possible, to reduce or disable violence, gore or language settings.

Network security, web filtering, and firewall configuration must be reviewed by the AoPTech Senior tech team prior to the start of any esports program. The setup and network configuration process takes both considerable time and planning to ensure the safety of all participants. Each new game added will require additional network / firewall setup and configuration. Please allow a minimum of three weeks for the AoPTech senior techs to configure and test the school's firewall and network settings prior to deploying the game to the students.

Schools should adopt a Code of Conduct for the esports Teams/Clubs based on the Code of Conduct for the Network of Academic and Scholastic Esports Federations (NASEF). To review the NASEF Code of Conduct, please refer to the following links:

- [NASEF Code of Conduct](https://tinyurl.com/yf8432rb) (PDF Download) <https://tinyurl.com/yf8432rb>
- [Code of Conduct NASEF](https://nabil-ismail.mykajabi.com/code-of-conduct) (Webpage) <https://nabil-ismail.mykajabi.com/code-of-conduct>

Within their esports code of conduct, schools need to include the following topics:

In-game chat, game message boards, screen names and player avatars must be school appropriate, may not contain language or images that are harmful, defamatory, or otherwise offensive.

The misuse of school logos is a violation of the RUP, and students and advisors should exercise caution when developing their avatars or team logos.

## **XIX. ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR iPADS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES V 1.0 AND 1 TO 1 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT EDITION**

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Students and parents are required to review the following Policies and Procedures for iPads, as well as sign the accompanying agreement prior to the use of school issued iPads.

Technology resources are provided for the purpose of supporting the educational mission of the school. The school's goal in providing the iPad is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, research, creativity, communication, increased productivity, and mobile learning.

Use of these technologies is a privilege that carries responsibility and behavioral expectations consistent with all school rules and policies, including but not limited to those stated in the school handbook. It is understood that all members of the school community will use all types of computing devices and the school's network in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner at all times.

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Office of Catholic Education (AOP/OCE), and the local school retains sole right of possession of the iPad and related equipment. The iPad will be issued to students according to the guidelines set forth in this document. AOP/OCE and the local school retains the right to collect and/or inspect the iPad at any time, and to alter, add, or delete installed software or hardware.

### **Caring for your iPad**

Students are responsible for the general care of the iPad they have been issued by the school. iPads that are broken or fail to work properly must be taken to their teacher for an evaluation of the equipment.

**General Precautions** - The iPad is school property; all users will follow this policy & the Archdiocesan acceptable use policy for technology.

- Cords and cables must be inserted carefully into the iPad to prevent damage
- iPads must remain free of any writing, drawing, stickers, or labels
- iPads must never be left in an unlocked locker, unlocked car, school cubby or any unsupervised area
- Students may not use “skins” to “personalize” their iPads
- Screen films used to protect the screen, reduce the need for cleaning, and in some cases reduce glare are permitted.

### **Carrying iPads**

- iPads must always be in a protective iPad case when carried or used
- Avoid placing too much pressure and/or weight (such as folders and books) on the iPad screen

**Screen Care** - The iPad screens can be damaged if subjected to rough treatment. The screens are particularly sensitive to damage from excessive pressure on the screen.

- Do not lean on the iPad
- Do not place anything in the carrying case that will press against or scratch the cover
- Clean the screen with a soft, dry cloth or anti-static cloth. Cleaning sprays are rarely needed, the only kind permitted is iKlear which is sold in Apple Retail stores or online at [www.klearscreen.com](http://www.klearscreen.com). Use sparingly.
- Do not “bump” the iPad against lockers, walls, car doors, floors, etc. as it will eventually break the screen

**Passwords** - iPads will be password protected. During orientation, each student will be given a 4-digit password. Students may not change the password.

**Media and Personalization** - Background photos, a standard background will be preset on the iPad, this may not be changed.

**Photos Photo/Image** - Storage of student personal photos or downloaded images is not permitted. Downloaded images are permitted if they pertain to a project and should be deleted upon completion of the project.

**Sound, Music, Games, Apps** - Students may not download music from iTunes or their home computers. Illegally obtained music may not be put on the iPad.

- Sound must be always muted unless permission is obtained from the teacher
- Students may not download and install apps

### **Managing Files and Saving Work**

**Saving Work to the “Cloud”** - It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that work is not lost due to mechanical failure or accidental deletion. iPad malfunctions are not an acceptable excuse for not submitting work; therefore, students should back up all work to their Google Drive.

**Network Connectivity** - The Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the local school makes no guarantee that the school wireless network will be up and running 100% of the time.

## iPad Software/apps

Software required by the local school and/or Archdiocese of Philadelphia must be on the iPad in usable condition and be easily accessible at all times. The deletion of apps is therefore not permitted.

**Inspection** - Students may be selected at random to provide their iPad for inspection. The local school and Archdiocese reserve the right to inspect iPads and all contents at any time.

## Acceptable Use

This policy is provided to make all users aware of the responsibilities associated with efficient, ethical, and lawful use of technology resources. If a person violates any of the User Terms and Conditions named in the iPad Acceptable Use Policy, or the general Archdiocesan Acceptable

- Violent and non-age-appropriate games are not allowed on the iPads.

Use Policy for Technology, privileges may be terminated, access to the school's technology resources may be denied, and the appropriate disciplinary action shall be applied. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension/expulsion for students. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved.

**Parent/Guardian Responsibilities** - Talk to your children about values and the standards that your children should follow on the use of the Internet just as you do on the use of all media information sources such as television, phones, movies, and radio.

## Students Responsibilities

- Use the iPad in a responsible and ethical manner
- Obey general school rules concerning behavior and communication that apply to iPad use
- Use all technology resources in an appropriate manner so as to not damage school equipment. Damage includes, but is not limited to, the loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the student's own negligence, errors or omissions.
- Help the school protect our computer system/device by contacting a teacher about any security problems
- Securing the iPad after they are work is completed to protect work and information
- Print a copy of any email containing inappropriate or abusive language (or if the subject matter is questionable) and turn into the principal

## Student Activities Strictly Prohibited

- Illegal installation or transmission of copyrighted materials
- Any action that violates existing School policy or public law
- Sending, accessing, uploading, or downloading, offensive, profane, threatening, obscene, or explicit materials
- Installing games/apps that contradict our mission as a Catholic school
- "Jailbreaking" of your iPad
- Spamming- sending mass or inappropriate emails
- Gaining access to other student's accounts, files, and/or data without permission

- Vandalism (any malicious attempt to harm or destroy hardware, software or data, including, but not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses or computer programs that can infiltrate computer systems and/or damage software components) of school equipment will not be allowed.
- Transmission or accessing materials that are obscene, offensive, threatening or otherwise intended to harass or demean others
- Bypassing the school's content web filter through a web proxy.

### **iPad Care**

- Students will be held responsible for maintaining their individual iPads and keeping them in good working order
- Only labels or stickers approved by the school may be applied to the iPad
- iPad ear buds should be stored in a way to prevent them from being tangled rather than put directly in a pencil case. A small container, such as a tic-tac box or Altoids mint box work well or products such as a SmartWrap (<http://www.sumajin.com/products/smartwrap/smartwrap.html>) You can also make earphone wrapper out of a used gift card (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJQZD88ar14>)
- iPads that malfunction or are damaged must be reported to the classroom teacher. Students will be responsible for the entire cost of repairs to iPads that are damaged intentionally.
- iPads that are stolen must be reported immediately to the principal and the Police Department

**Legal Propriety** - Comply with trademark and copyright laws and all license agreements. Ignorance of the law is not immunity. If you are unsure, ask a teacher or parent. Give credit to all sources used, whether quoted or summarized. This includes all forms of media on the Internet, such as graphics, movies, music, and text.

### **Protecting and Storing your iPad**

**Storing Your iPad** - When students are not using their iPads, nothing should be placed on top of the iPad.

**Procedure for re-loading software** - If technical difficulties occur, the iPad will be restored. The school does not accept responsibility for the loss of any software or documents deleted due to a re-format and re- image. It is therefore recommended students regularly save to their Google Drive.

**iPads Left in Unsupervised Areas** - Under no circumstances should iPads be left in unsupervised areas. Unsupervised areas include the school grounds and campus, the lunchroom, computer lab, library, unlocked classrooms, and hallways. Any iPad left in these areas is in danger of being stolen. If an iPad is found in an unsupervised area, it will be taken to the School Office.

**Policy Violations** - Inappropriate use in contradiction to the above rules will be addressed by the administration of the school. Violation of these rules may result in any or all of the following:

- Loss of use of the school network, computers, and software, including Internet access. The student will be expected to complete work on a non-networked, stand-alone computer system and/or in an offline work environment.
- Issuance of demerits/detentions, if applicable
- Removal from the esports club or limited from participating in public esports competitions
- Possible financial obligations for the repair or replacement of damaged school devices
- Disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal and/or legal action by the school, civil authorities, or other involved parties

## XX. SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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Saint Mary Roman Catholic Church, Schwenksville, Pennsylvania, respects the rights of employees and volunteers to use social media as a form of self-expression and communication. However, because social media is a public medium, all school personnel and volunteers using social media should be aware that they are visible representatives of Saint Mary Roman Catholic Church. No employee or volunteer should engage in online activity that would contradict the mission and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church or express a disregard or disrespect for others. This activity includes not only the advocacy of opinions contrary to Church teaching and doctrine, but also the following:

- Inappropriate images or dress
- Communication or conduct that is harassing, threatening, bullying, libelous, or defamatory
- Encouragement of illegal or immoral activity; including but not limited to the inappropriate use of alcohol or drugs
- Inappropriate contact or communication with minors

Our policy applies to all Church, School and Saint Mary Parish ministries and organizations' personnel (clergy, employees and volunteers) and their postings on the Saint Mary website and Saint Mary social media accounts (i.e. Facebook) as well as postings on personal social networking sites, blogs, or any other kind of social personal websites/applications. Those in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and/or removal from their position.

## XXI. DRESS CODE

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The personal appearance of a student represents that individual. The personal appearance of the entire student body represents the school to others. Saint Mary Catholic School adheres to a strict dress code. Neatness and cleanliness in personal attire are part of a child's education and the responsibility of the parents. **Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Co. is the only authorized distributor for Saint Mary Catholic School uniform, including the Gym uniform (excluding Saint Mary Gym tee shirt).** Students are to be in complete school uniform at all times while in the school building and on school property.

Shoes are a uniform shoe. Permitted styles are: Stride Rite Buckle, Freeman Tuft, Sperry Billfish, Sperry Bluefish, Sperry Lanyard, and Hush Puppies Tuft. Sneakers are not permitted, unless wearing the gym uniform. Uniforms are worn as follows:

- slacks and gym shorts must be worn at the waist
- shirt tails must be tucked in
- shirt sleeves should be worn at their full length or neatly rolled
- skirts may not be rolled at the waist and should be **no higher than 1 inch above the knee**
- Uniforms are not to be frayed, cut, or altered from intended appearance

Although jewelry is not a part of the school uniform, post earrings of a small and conservative style are permitted to be worn by the girls. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings. Ankle and wrist bracelets, pins, and buttons are not a part of the school uniform. This includes all rope, yarn and beaded neck, wrist and ankle bands. A religious medal or cross on a chain is permitted. **Make-up and nail polish are not permitted.**

Student's hair is to be neat, clean, and groomed conservatively. No extreme styles are appropriate, and hair is not to be colored or bleached. Students are expected to come to school in a state of cleanliness. Boys' hair needs to be in a traditional cut, kept to the top of the neck and above the collar, off the ears and from mid forehead to above the eyebrows. Girls' hair must be off their face.



No beads, or sequins or unusual hair adornments are allowed. Ribbons, barrettes, and so on should match the colors of the uniform.

Hats are not considered appropriate attire during the school day; therefore, they are not to be worn inside the school building.

If for some reason a student must be out of uniform, a note from the parent explaining the reason and requesting an exception is required. The Principal will make the final determination on any exceptions.

## **Saint Mary Catholic School Uniform consists of:**

### **Kindergarten Uniform**

- Saint Mary light blue polo shirt / Sweatshirt or Saint Mary Gym Tee Shirt
- Saint Mary Gym Shorts / Sweatpants
- Sneakers and Crew Socks

### **Girls Grades 1-4**

- Blue and white plaid jumper or blue slacks
- Light blue uniform blouse/Peter Pan collar, polo shirt (long or short sleeve) or turtleneck with Saint Mary Catholic School logo
- Navy blue knee or ankle socks, blue stockings or leotards may be worn
- Navy blue sweater with Saint Mary Catholic School logo as needed (cardigan or v neck)

### **Girls Grades 5-8**

- Uniform kilt or navy-blue slacks
- Blue blouse, polo shirt (long or short sleeve) or light blue turtleneck with Saint Mary Catholic School logo
- Navy blue knee or ankle socks, blue stockings or leotards may be worn
- Navy blue sweater with Saint Mary Catholic School logo as needed (cardigan or v neck)

### **Boys: Grade K-8**

- Navy blue slacks with belt
- Blue polo shirt (long or short sleeve), light blue turtleneck with Saint Mary Catholic School logo
- (Optional - white dress shirt w/ blue tie)
- Black or navy crew socks
- Navy blue sweater with Saint Mary Catholic School logo as needed

Optional from Sept. 1 - Oct. 31 and April 1 - End of School

- Navy blue shorts for boys and girls

### **Physical Education Uniform**

- Saint Mary light blue polo shirt / Sweatshirt or Saint Mary Gym Tee Shirt
- Saint Mary Gym Shorts / Sweatpants
- Sneakers and Crew Socks



This uniform is an integral part of the culture of Saint Mary Catholic School; it is a lesson in discipline, Catholic identity, and community. It is our intention to see that it serves its proper purpose. Through the cooperation of the entire school community, this will be achieved. It is the parent's responsibility to see that students have the proper uniform, in good condition, and that children leave home dressed properly. There is a uniform exchange maintained by the school for parents/guardians to use. We will enforce the dress code by weekly examination, home notification and discipline points for continued violations.

**Dress Down Day** - Periodically, the students are permitted to come to school in street clothes. These days are called dress-down days. A donation of \$1.00 per child is required. The money collected is used for educational materials. During all dress down days clothing should reflect a modest and chaste attitude and never be contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Shorts must be longer than the students arm when standing up straight. Tights may not be worn.

## XXII. HEALTH SERVICES

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Pennsylvania State law requires that students have a physical examination prior to entry to school and again in Grade 6, either by their private physician or a school doctor. A dental examination is required prior to entry to school and in Grades 3 and 7, either by their family dentist or a school dentist. The District Doctor generally visits in late October. The parent/guardian is notified in writing of any deviations found in the screening or examination process.

**Nurse** - The Perkiomen Valley School District is responsible for provide health services to Saint Mary Catholic School. A nurse is assigned to our school on days selected by the school district based on the school's enrollment. The nurse is responsible for checking the vision, height, weight, and BMI (Body Mass Index) of every child each year, hearing in Grades 1, 2, 3 & 7, and scoliosis in Grades 6 & 7. Referrals will be sent to parents/guardians when concerns are found. Care given in the school is limited to first aid for accidents, or care for illness until the parents can be reached to take the child home, to the doctor, or to the hospital. In an emergency, the nurse will arrange to have the student transported to the hospital. The nurse is not intended to take the place of the Family Physician but for emergency, in-school care only. School nurses are prohibited by law to diagnose injuries or illnesses. **Please do not send your child to the nurse for diagnosis.**

**Medical Records, Emergency Contact & Health Forms** - Your assistance in providing necessary information and documentation is vital in order for Saint Mary Catholic School to administer effectively our health-related programs.

- The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has mandated that all children entering Kindergarten or First Grade present documented proof that the prescribed immunizations have been received
- Information on new immunizations, surgery, accidents, communicable diseases, or special medical conditions should be reported in writing to the school nurse
- If your child has a specific medical condition, please notify the homeroom teacher and the nurse of the problem. Medic-Alert bracelets are strongly recommended for any child with a medical condition.

- Emergency cards, forms, questionnaires, etc. need to be completed and returned promptly. Changes in a telephone number, address, emergency contact, employment, which happen during the school year should be reported to the school nurse and the school office immediately. It is important that we have an up-to-date emergency number on file in case of an emergency during the school day involving your child.
- The nurse maintains all health records. All health records are confidential.

**Illness at Home** - Please keep students out of school if they experience a temperature above 99 degrees without medications or experience any vomiting or diarrhea. Students should not return to school until they have been symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours.

In the case of a pandemic or epidemic, Saint Mary Catholic School will issue parents/guardians new health guidelines based on the recommendations of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia Office for Catholic Education, the Center for Disease Control, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Montgomery County Health Department.

**Accident/Illness at School** - Accidents or unusual illness occurring at school are reported immediately to the Principal or main office personnel. When a student becomes ill, the parent/guardian will be contacted so the student may be taken home. If a student has an accident, only basic first aid may be administered. Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately if there is any question regarding the extent of an injury. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. No medicine of any kind, including aspirin, may be given to the student.

**Medications** - It is generally recommended that prescription medicines be given to the student before and/or after school in accordance with the physician's directions. In those rare instances where the medication must be given during the school day, the following procedure will be followed:

- Administering medication must be done in the presence of the Principal, School Secretary or Nurse
- A parent/guardian may come to school at any time to administer medication to their child. This is to be done in the main office.
- Prescription and non-prescription over the counter medications must be in the original container with a note from the parent **and** physician which includes student name, name of medicine, dosage, and time of administration
- Medications may be sent in by the day or week. All medications are to be kept in the Nurse's office. No medication should be in the student's possession, unless written pre-approval has been given for medications, such as inhalers and EpiPens
- Parents/guardians and physician are required to sign a medication authorization form, which is available from the School, if the student must take medication at the School

## XXIII. HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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Saint Mary Home and School Association (HASA) identifies its objectives as the following:

- To advance Catholic Education and the welfare of all the children enrolled in our school
- To act in the promotion of parent-school activities and to increase, on the part of its members, interest in educational and civic affairs
- To enhance the parents' and teachers' role in the education of the child by increasing their knowledge of education and its processes, by increasing their mutual understanding of children, and also by providing an opportunity for parents and teachers to work together for the good of the child
- To play an important role in supporting the Parish and building the community that supports the school.

General meetings are held to provide information on issues pertaining to our children, families, and community. These meetings are announced in school communications. In order to generate more involvement in school, we ask that at least one parent from each family attend meetings. Children are not expected to attend. All classroom parents are required to attend general Home and School Association meetings. The HASA fee will be deducted directly from FACTS in the Fall.

## XXIV. SAINT MARY CATHOLIC YOUTH ORGANIZATION

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The Saint Mary Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) is open to all youth who are parishioners of Saint Mary Parish or enrolled in Saint Mary Catholic School. CYO offers our youth Social, Spiritual, Service, Cultural, and Athletic opportunities. Those who wish to participate in CYO activities and events need to continue learning about our Catholic Faith through formal religious education (such as at Catholic School, through PREP, or Home-School formation) and the ongoing Reception of the Sacraments. For more information about CYO events and activities, please see the CYO tab on the Saint Mary School website at [www.smsk-8.org/cyo-athletics](http://www.smsk-8.org/cyo-athletics). CYO registration forms, eligibility requirements and sports information can be found by visiting the Saint Mary CYO website at [www.stmarycyo.com/](http://www.stmarycyo.com/) or contact [saintmarysspartans@gmail.com](mailto:saintmarysspartans@gmail.com) for more details.

## XXV. SAFE2SAY SOMETHING PROGRAM

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Saint Mary Catholic School participates in the PA Safe2Say Something Program. Students in Grades 5-8 will participate in an annual workshop to reinforce their knowledge and capacity to maintain the safest possible environment. Safe2Say is an anonymous alert/notification program that allows students and community members to report concerns that may threaten the health and well-being of individual students, the campus environment, or school and parish programs.

In action, the Safe2Say platform facilitates an information platform that can receive anonymous tips regarding threats to student and community safety. Tips received will receive an initial screening, and protective and supportive interventions and responses will be initiated whenever the reported concern warrants such a response. Measures are in place to filter false or unfounded reports, but credible concerns will receive quick and progressively extended attention if necessary.

# SAINT MARY SCHOOL AND CHURCH

## PHOTO MEDIA RELEASE 'OPT-OUT' FORM 2025-2026

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**Photo | Video | Church & School Website | Social Media | Flocknotes | Blogs | Bulletin  
Newspaper Articles in relation to events that happen in the parish**

Please complete all sections of this **Photo & Media Opt-Out Form** and return the signed form to the school office **by September 16th of the current school year, if you DO NOT want your child to be photographed and/or videotaped.**



### PHOTO & MEDIA RELEASE OPT-OUT

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A parent or guardian may withhold permission to have a student photographed, videotaped, and/or audiotaped during school sponsored activities, learning experiences and/or media events. As the parent or guardian of the student identified below, I understand if I opt-out, my child may not be included in pictures taken by the school or parish staff, students or anyone outside the school, including media. *\*NOTE: This does not include security cameras in school, on Saint Mary campus or on school buses and during livestream Mass.*

If the opt-out form is not signed, you are aware that you give the Archdiocese of Philadelphia/ Saint Mary Church, and its successors and assigns and those acting with authority, the unqualified right and permission to reproduce, copyright and circulate pictures and/or video of my child produced and filmed by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia/ Saint Mary Church and School.

Also, if you do not opt-out, you give permission for your child's name to be printed in the Sacramental booklet and parish bulletin. Please note that the parish bulletin is also posted on the parish website.

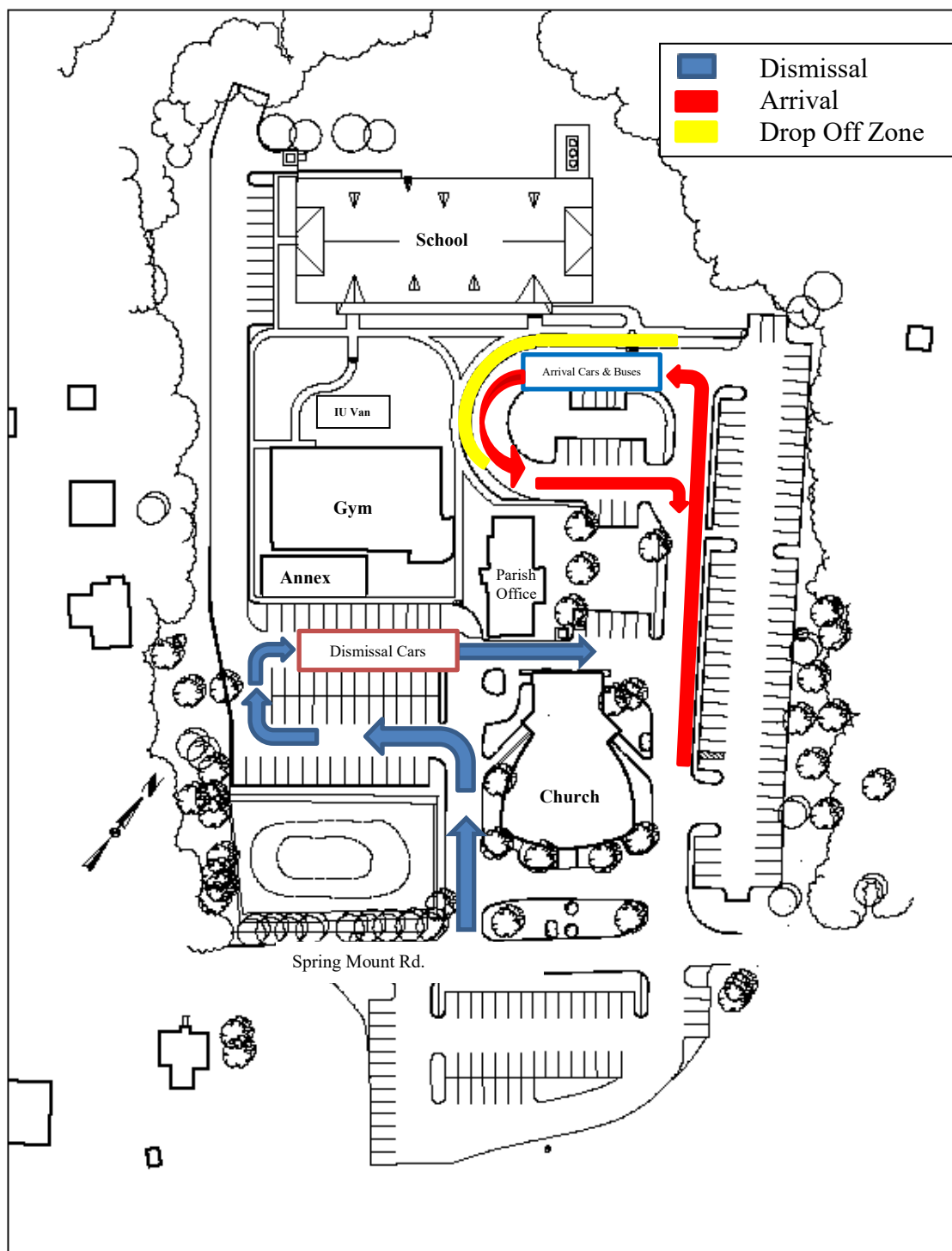
☐ I DO NOT want my child to be photographed, videotaped and/or audiotaped during school and church sponsored activities and learning experiences.\*

I hereby confirm that I am the parent or legal guardian of the student named below. I confirm that I have read the Opt-Out Release and that the information I have provided is to the best of my knowledge, true and accurate.

**Signed (Parent/Legal Guardian):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_



## COPY OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR YOUR RECORDS

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received and read a copy of the Saint Mary Catholic School Handbook which outlines the goals, policies, and expectations of Saint Mary Parish, as well as my responsibilities as a parent/ guardian.

I have familiarized myself with the contents of this handbook. By my signature below, I acknowledge, understand, accept, and agree to comply with the information contained in the School Handbook provided to me by Saint Mary Parish. I understand this handbook is not intended to cover every situation which may arise, but is simply a general guide to the goals, policies, and expectations of Saint Mary Parish.

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PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

---

DATE

## SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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This school handbook has been prepared for your information and understanding of the goals, policies, and expectation of Saint Mary Catholic School. Please read it carefully. Upon completion of your review of this handbook, sign the statement below, and return it to the School Office. A copy of this acknowledgment appears at the back of the handbook for your records.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received and read a copy of the Saint Mary Catholic School Handbook which outlines the goals, policies, and expectations of Saint Mary Catholic School, as well as my responsibilities as a parent/guardian.

I have familiarized myself with the contents of this handbook. By my signature below, I acknowledge, understand, accept and agree to comply with the information contained in the School Handbook provided to me by Saint Mary Parish. I understand this handbook is not intended to cover every situation which may arise, but is simply a general guide to the goals, policies, and expectations of Saint Mary Catholic School and Parish.

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PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

---

DATE



# SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL

## PARENT CONTACT INFORMATION OPT-OUT FORM

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I wish to opt out of the Personal Contact Information policy.

Family Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Names: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

***This is a Parent Contact Information Opt-Out Form. Parents/Guardians who do not wish to opt-out need not complete this form. If completing the Parent Contact Information Opt-Out Form, please sign and return this form to the School Main Office by September 16, 2025.***



## PHILADELPHIA ARCHDIOCESAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL STUDENT PLEDGE FOR iPad USE

- I will use my iPad in ways that are appropriate
- I will use appropriate language when using e-mails, journals, wikis, blogs, or any other forms of communication. I will not create, or encourage others to create, discourteous or abusive content. I will not use electronic communication to spread rumors, gossip, or engage in any activity that is harmful to other persons.
- I understand that my iPad is subject to inspection at any time without notice and remains the property of the school
- I will follow the policies outlined in the iPad Acceptable Use Policy and general Acceptable Use Policy while at school and at home during all times
- I will take good care of my iPad
- I will never leave the iPad unattended, and I will know where it is at all times
- I will protect my iPad by only carrying it while in the case
- I will keep food and beverages away from my iPad since they may cause damage to the device
- I will clean the screen with a soft, antistatic cloth and only use approved cleaning solution (currently iKlear)
- I will not disassemble any part of my iPad or attempt any repairs
- I will not place decorations (such as stickers, markers, etc.) on the iPad or do anything to permanently alter the iPad in anyway
- I will not remove or deface the serial number or other identification on any iPad
- I will file a police report in case of theft, vandalism, and inform the principal
- I will be responsible for all damage or loss caused by neglect or abuse
- I agree to return the iPad, power brick and cords in good working condition

I agree to the stipulations set forth in the above documents.

Student Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please sign and return this iPad Form to the School Main Office by September 16, 2025.**