



# Parent/Student Handbook 2019-2020

St. Mary's Elementary School

2 St. Mary's Hill  
Lancaster, NY 14086  
(716) 683-2112  
Fax: (716) 683-2134  
[www.smeschool.com](http://www.smeschool.com)



Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to St. Mary's Elementary School! In choosing St. Mary's Elementary School, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of St. Mary's Elementary School for the 2019-2020 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement along with your children. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of St. Mary's Elementary School during this school year. **It should be noted that this document supersedes any previous Parent/Student Handbook and policies outlined therein, including the student Code of Conduct.**

The faculty and staff of St. Mary's Elementary school look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Together let us pray to God who has begun this good work in us, that we may carry it through to completion.

God bless you,

Rev. Paul Steller, Canonical Administrator

Mrs. Kim Kwitowski, Principal

## **ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

St. Mary's Elementary School is located at 2 St. Mary's Hill (at the corner of North Aurora and St. Joseph's Street) on the campus of St. Mary of the Assumption Church. The school has a full-day Pre-Kindergarten program, 2 days a week and 5 days a week for Pre-K 3 and 3 days a week and 5 days a week for Pre-K 4, along with grade levels from K to 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The curriculum at St. Mary's Elementary School stresses academic achievement within a Catholic community. Vatican II texts are used so that our theology is in compliance with the bishops of the world. United with each other in meaningful liturgy and prayer, the students can further come to an understanding of the Christian life. At St. Mary's Elementary School, we are attempting to be "visible examples of Gospel living." The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the Common Core Learning Standards, are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. The curriculum is marked by current content and fresh approaches to methodology. There is emphasis on principles rather than fact, learning through problem solving rather than by precept. We strive to offer programs that make use of various sources, audio visual technology, and a multi-text approach to the content areas.

### **HISTORY OF ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

St. Mary's Elementary School boasts a rich Catholic tradition. The Catholic Church Society of Lancaster was founded January 6, 1834. Before there was a church building, there was a traveling school at which about twenty Catholic children received an education. This consisted of weekly lessons conducted in Catholic homes in the Lancaster area. In 1837, Father John Neumann, now St. John Neumann, established the first church on the hill, as well as the first parish school, on a piece of land at the corner of what is now Broadway and Transit. A three-room wooden building was constructed as a combination school and residence on St. Mary's Hill in 1842. This was replaced with a small brick structure in 1864. Schoolmasters, all men, were the pioneer educators of St. Mary's children, the last of which was active until 1892. In 1874, the school was expanded and the Miss Nardins were hired to educate all of the girls and the younger boys. They remained at St. Mary's until August of 1898. On August 2, 1898, the Sisters of St. Francis of the Third Order Regular committed to staffing St. Mary's School. In September 1902, Kindergarten was added to the school and in June 1904, the first Regents exams were given.

In the earliest years, St. Mary's was legally annexed to Sacred Heart Academy on Washington Street in Buffalo. On June 17, 1908, St. Mary's School was officially chartered by the state of New York and in 1955 the Diocese of Buffalo assumed the operation of St. Mary's High School moving students to a new building on Laverack Avenue. In spring 1958, a new elementary building, the present structure, was built housing grades K-1 and 6-8. Ten years later, in 1968, a second floor was added to the school and in 2002 an addition to the school included a chapel, new parish center, meeting rooms, administrative offices, a computer lab, an art room, and an eighth grade room.

Today, St. Mary's Elementary School is home to children from St. Mary's Parish as well as from parishes and neighborhoods from the Lancaster/Depew area and their surrounding areas. We remain a member school of the Diocese of Buffalo and a parish school at heart.

## **BUFFALO DIOCESAN SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT**

The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Buffalo are Christ-centered learning communities which nurture academic excellence, Christian character, and service to others. Our mission is to educate individuals to reach their full potential in an atmosphere rooted in Catholic tradition and Gospel values.

**Goal 1:** To partner with Catholic elementary and secondary schools in providing faith-based education, academic excellence and service to the community.

**Objectives:**

- To promote strong Catholic identity by integrating faith and gospel values into all programming;
- To increase teacher/administrative effectiveness by offering high quality professional development;
- To identify opportunities for schools to reach their communities-by sharing resources, talents, and facilities.

**Goal 2:** To empower stakeholders *To Teach as Jesus Did* through open communication, professional development, and school-to school partnerships.

**Objectives:**

- To provide opportunities for collaboration among schools by hosting Executive Council and continuing regional colloquium meetings;
- To ensure access and equity by coordinating public, private funding and programming;
- To ensure a faith integrated approach according to scripture, by offering training opportunities.

## **Four Cornerstone Reasons for Choosing St. Mary's School**

1. **Strong Catholic Identity:** St. Mary's School is *authentically Catholic*, meaning that it follows the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the religious guidelines as found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the *Handbook of Elementary Schools in the Diocese of Buffalo*.
2. **High Academic Standards:** In addition to following the NYS Standards of Education as well as those outlined by the Diocese of Buffalo, St. Mary's School builds an environment where each staff member is highly qualified, teachers distinguish themselves in their field of instruction, and each student is encouraged and expected to reach their highest academic potential in all subject areas.
3. **Family Focus:** St. Mary's School recognizes that the primary educators of a child are the child's parents, thus striving to build a strong partnership between school and home. Staff and students are expected to honor and be supportive of the families, and families are expected to be involved in enrichment, support, and operation of the school.
4. **Quality Investment in the Whole Child:** St. Mary's School is committed to the full development of the whole person. We feel that the best way to educate children is to not compartmentalize their development, but to attend to their spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical development all day, every day.

## **Statement of Faith**

Remaining authentically Catholic means that St. Mary's School will follow the religious guidelines as found in the Handbook of Elementary Schools in the Diocese of Buffalo.

### **Prayer in the Life of the School:**

- Daily prayer, both private and public, helps promote opportunities for the expression and development of a loving relationship with God.
- Children should be made aware of God's presence within themselves and in their surroundings. Talking in a familiar fashion with God and listening to God should be encouraged.
- It is important that the Church's great prayers be understood, memorized, and prayed frequently. Prayers for appropriate grade levels are found in the Elementary Curriculum published by the Department of Catholic Education.
- Children must be imbued with an appreciation of traditional devotions and rituals of our Catholic faith such as:
  - Rosary
  - Stations of the Cross
  - Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament
  - Observance and celebration of the liturgical year and church feasts
- Children must have exposure to contemporary prayer forms, liturgical gestures, rituals, and contemporary Christian songs.
- Shared prayer must be encouraged on all levels by example and practice.
- Celebrating weekly Eucharist with the parish community is integral to the faith formation and prayer life of students and their families.
- School atmosphere and décor should reflect the seasons of the liturgical year.

### **Liturgical/Sacramental Celebrations and Prayers:**

- Preparation for liturgy is necessary, and participants are encouraged to be involved in the planning, according to their capabilities.
- The celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy may replace one formal religion class per week.
- The National Conference of Catholic Bishops has decreed the Lectionary for Masses with Children be used at all Masses with children. No other English lectionary for Masses with children may be used.
  
- The Eucharist may not be received by a non-Catholic student or one who has not received First Reconciliation and First Eucharist.
- Well-planned prayer liturgies may be a part of religion class and should be employed often for making group prayer a living, virtual experience.
- Non-Catholic students participate in all liturgical celebrations.

## **MISSION STATEMENT OF ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

The Mission of St. Mary's Elementary School is to foster the development of the complete Christ-like person in a caring atmosphere in which one can reach his/her full potential spiritually, morally, academically, and socially. Through the constant support, presence, and commitment of our families, combined with the dedicated efforts and care of our professional faculty and staff, we work to develop students who combine an enthusiasm for learning and growth with a true respect for and dedication to the values of our community. Thus, the children educated at St. Mary's Elementary School will take with them into the future the faith, intelligence, responsibility, self-discipline, integrity and compassion necessary to both serve and lead their fellow human beings. Inspired by the vision and spirit of our founder, St. John Neumann, St. Mary's Elementary School continues the mission which was Neumann's: to provide excellence in Catholic education for the children of Lancaster, Depew and the surrounding areas. Today, St. Mary's Elementary School continues its commitment to foster in our students the ability to be visible examples of the Gospel, especially by being of service to others.

## **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

Through our educational and service ministry St. Mary's Elementary School (SME) promotes Catholic values and traditions as part of the education of our students. We foster and engage in a partnership between parents, students, and staff. It is our belief that every human being has a right to pursue knowledge corresponding with his/her dignity and God-given ability, regardless of background or sex. Education is of the utmost importance because, through a Catholic education, our children learn to live as responsible, moral beings with a sense of purpose all rooted in Catholic-Christian Values.

## **OUR VISION**

St. Mary's Elementary School will be the school of choice for all families of St. Mary's Parish as well as for other families who desire a quality, Catholic education with academic excellence for their children.

## **ACCREDITATION AND GOALS**

St. Mary's Elementary School is accredited by New York State. Our goal for the current year as well as the 2020 school year is to:

-Maintain a strong Christ-centered environment which incorporates Catholic teachings, liturgies, traditions, and service opportunities; Improve our literacy program in all areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and composition; continue our membership in the National Junior Honor Society; develop and maintain a program of excellence for our Pre-K students; SME will be the school of choice for St. Mary's parishioners when making enrollment decisions through improved and effective recruitment, admissions, retention processes, and meeting enrollment goal



## **ADMISSION INFORMATION:**

St. Mary's Elementary School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs. Children entering Pre-Kindergarten must be three (3) or four (4) years old by December 1<sup>st</sup>. Children entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years old by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

As openings become available, the following priorities will be used to accept students to SME School:

1. Members of St. Mary's Parish
2. Members of Non-Affiliated Parishes
3. Non-Catholic Students

All students are screened as to educational and social needs. If, in the judgment of the principal, the school cannot meet the needs of a student at any level, enrollment will be denied.

All new students will be given a trial period in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If, during this trial period, there are any problems a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at St. Mary's Elementary School. **Parents and students are required to sign the agreement that they will abide by the ideals, directives, and guidelines put forth in the Mission Statement, Parent/Student Handbook, and the school policies both current and evolving.** There is a non-refundable commitment fee, distinct from tuition, payable upon registration.

## **TUITION COMMITMENT:**

Tuition rates are established by the Parish Finance Committee and are announced in advance of the coming school year. SME offers different ways for families to build their own tuition package and there are many different payment options that can be arranged. Registration for the following school year will begin in late January. Registration will first be offered to currently registered school families, followed by St. Mary's parishioners, and then others in the community who wish to enroll their children in our school.

## **FEES AND FINES:**

All financial obligations including tuition, lunch, library, textbook, and after school care (FAST Club) bills must be paid in full by the end of each school year. If such fees are delinquent, further action may be taken including possible denial of registration for the following year.

## **PARENT ROLE IN EDUCATION:**

We at St. Mary's Elementary School consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe you are the primary educators of your children. Therefore, it is your right and duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life-- physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of St. Mary's Elementary School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize the importance of living a moral life. We trust you will be loyal to this commitment. Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

## **PARENTS AS PARTNERS:**

As partners in the educational process at St. Mary's Elementary School, we ask that as the parent you set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights;
- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
- Is dressed according to the school dress code;
- Completes assignments on time;
- Has lunch money or brings a nutritional bag lunch every day;
- Follows the school rules of proper behavior.

In addition, we ask the parents to:

- Actively participate in school activities;
- Ensure that your child pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
- Notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy;
- Notify the school office of any changes of address or important contact information;
- Meet all financial obligations to the school;
- Inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- Complete and return to school promptly any requested information;
- Read school communication and show interest in the student's total education;
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- Support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;
- Treat teachers, staff, and administration with respect and courtesy in discussing any student issues.

## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:**

- 1. Students take responsibility for their own learning.**  
They arrive to school and class on time, prepared, demonstrating a serious and responsible attitude in daily work. All class work and homework is carefully and thoughtfully completed on time.
- 2. Students try to settle differences with one another in a peaceful manner.**  
They respect the property of others and their personal space. They do not take things that do not belong to them and they never physically or verbally fight with other children.
- 3. Students immediately follow the directions of adults in charge.**  
They look at the speaker and do not talk back or disrespect teachers or adults in charge. They use proper tone at all times when addressing adults including substitutes, lunchroom monitors, and volunteers.
- 4. Students are sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.**  
They use appropriate language at all times. They never bully or tease other children verbally, physically, or in writing of any kind either on paper, in text, or in cyberspace.
- 5. Students are expected to move safely through the school.**  
They do not play in the bathrooms or hallways and never run in the lunchroom, hallways, or on the stairways.

## **SCHOOL INFORMATION**

### **ACADEMIC CURRICULUM**

The Diocesan curriculum guidelines, consistent with the Common Core Learning Standards for Education in the State of New York are followed for the teaching of all secular subject areas. SME School offers students opportunities for growth in the following major subject areas:

#### **Religion**

Students in grades Pre-K – 8 receive religious instruction that focuses on age appropriate topics including, but not limited to: Catholic doctrine and traditions, Bible study, social justice, preparation for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Liturgical services are held weekly for the entire school community. Students attend the St. Mary's Parish Friday Mass each week as a class, as well as holy days of obligation.

#### **Technology**

Students in grades Pre-K through 8 receive regular weekly instruction in technology that includes, but is not limited to: keyboarding, word processing, data base creation and entry, spread sheets, Internet research, and presentation programs and applications that integrate with curriculum subjects.

#### **Fine Arts**

Students in grades Pre-K through 8 receive regular weekly instruction in art and music.

### **Handwriting**

Students in grades Pre-K – 1 will learn proper letter formation in manuscript writing. Students in grades 3 through 8 are expected to submit all handwritten work in cursive using the Zaner Bloser handwriting method unless otherwise instructed by the teacher.

### **Language Arts**

Students in grades Pre-K through 8 receive daily instruction in Reading, English, Spelling, Vocabulary, Composition, Library Skills, and Appreciation of Literature.

### **Mathematics**

Students in grades Pre-K through 8 receive daily instruction in mathematic skills, computations, and concepts.

### **Physical Education**

All students in grades Pre-K through 8 will receive weekly instruction in physical education that is appropriate for each grade level.

### **Health**

Students in grades 6, 7 and 8 receive instruction in healthy living including nutrition and proper diet, exercise, sports, and other physical activity, as well emotional and mental wellbeing.

### **Science**

All students in grades Pre-K through 8 will receive regular instruction in science, including but not limited to general science and laboratory experiences.

### **Social Studies**

All students in grades Pre-K – 8 will receive regular instruction in social studies based on curriculum per grade level, including, but not limited to: history, geography, economics, New York State history, and current events.

### **Spanish**

Students in grades Pre-K through 5 will receive weekly Spanish instruction and grades 6-8 will receive instruction multiple times a week focusing on vocabulary, common expressions, grammar, conversation, and culture.

### **SACRAMENTAL FORMATION PROGRAMS:**

The sacramental life of our children in the Catholic tradition is an important component of the religion program at St. Mary's Elementary School. There are preparations for two sacraments, **Reconciliation (grade 2) and Eucharist (grade 3)** which form the core of instruction for these grade levels. Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these sacraments. The sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition and are usually administered at your home parish.

### **STUDENT RECORDS:**

St. Mary's Elementary School adheres to the FERPA Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the U.S. Mail. No records will be given to parents/guardians to transport to the new school.

Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the School Office. All forms should be submitted to the SME School Office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent via the U.S. Mail. Special handling will require that all postal fees be paid by the parents.

**\*No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.**

**SCHOOL OFFICE RECORDS:**

Parents are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers or emergency contacts. This will guarantee that the office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

**SCHOOL HOURS/OFFICE HOURS:**

The school office is open daily from 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. and staffed with office personnel to assist you. Outside of the outlined business hours, please call 683-2112 and leave a message.

If you need to reach the personnel in FAST Club, our after-school care program, please call 683-2112 ext. 117 to make arrangements for your children.

**DAILY ROUTINE:**

The current Pre-K3 and 4 full day program consists of sessions that run from 8:10-2:10 a.m. Pre-K3 meets on Tuesday and Thursday and Pre-K4 meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. We also have a 5-day Pre-K program for the 3 and 4-year olds.

For Grades K through Grade 8, school hours are 8:00 a.m. - 2:20 p.m. Students not seated in homerooms by 8:10 are considered tardy. Please note, excessive tardiness or absences will have a direct impact on a student's academic evaluation and promotion to the next grade. **The limit for absences is 18 days.** Students absent for more than 18 days face retention in the current grade. Exception to this policy is if a student is absent due to a chronic or long-term illness. In this case, illness must be documented and verified by a student's physician and submitted to the school office. All missed student work during student absence must be completed and turned in as applicable.

At St. Mary's Elementary School, we work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their child/ren to enter the building on their own each morning. Various classes invite parent involvement or visitation on particular occasions.

The school doors will be opened for students at 7:30 a.m. Students arriving at that time will go to the school gym where they will be supervised until they are dismissed to their classrooms at 7:50 a.m. New this year is our early drop off program that begins at 7:00 a.m. this is provided free of charge.

Any student not in homeroom prepared for instruction at 8:10 a.m. is considered late and must sign in at the main office.

Pledge of Allegiance, Prayer, and announcements begin at 8:10 a.m. and instruction begins promptly at 8:20 a.m. The dismissal process begins at 2:15 p.m., with all students being dismissed by 2:20 p.m. Please check the school calendar and weekly newsletter for any early dismissal dates.

FAST Club (Friends After School Together) offers an after-school care program from 2:15p.m. until 6:00 p.m. daily. FAST is housed in the school cafeteria. Students staying for FAST Club will be dismissed to Club Directors at school dismissal time. On 10:45 a.m. early dismissal days, FAST Club will not be available. 1:00 p.m. early dismissal days the service is available. Should other instances arise, St. Mary's Elementary School will publish the dates and times affected in the school newsletter and the school website as necessary. FAST Club applications are available in the School Office for your convenience.

**USE OF SCHOOL TELEPHONE:**

Permission to use the School Office telephone must be obtained by office personnel or the principal. The office phone is a business phone and students are permitted to use it only in case of an emergency. **Forgotten homework, athletic equipment (P.E. clothes), or musical instruments do not constitute an emergency.** Arrangements for after-school visits with friends should be made in advance at home and a note turned in to the main office indicating such changes in dismissal.

**SCHOOL BUILDING VISITORS:**

School visitors (parents, guardians, volunteers, etc.) must come to the school's Main Office upon entering the building. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office and receive a visitor pass when he/she has entered the building for any reason. All visitors and/or volunteers are required to sign out at the time of departure.

Parents who volunteer to lunch monitor or volunteer in another capacity in the school may not drop into any classroom to see their child during the day. This is an interruption to the teacher and to the educational process.

**VOLUNTEERS:**

All volunteers (including coaches) who work in the school or with children on a regular basis are required to complete a Uniform Volunteer Application form, Diocesan Code of Conduct, and complete the requirements of the Buffalo Diocese to be VIRTUS certified under the Protecting God's Children Program. Volunteers need to register at [VIRTUS.ORG](http://VIRTUS.ORG) and attend the workshop set forth for certification. Certified VIRTUS volunteers will be required to complete monthly training bulletins to keep the certification current.

The main responsibility of a volunteer is to assist the administration or teachers. For this reason, pre-school siblings are not allowed to accompany parent volunteers. In special circumstances, younger siblings may be allowed. This will be solely at the discretion of the Principal.

**WEATHER OR EMERGENCIES INVOLVING SCHOOL CLOSING:**

If it is necessary to close the school because of weather conditions or another building emergency, an announcement will be made over local radio and television stations. St. Mary's Elementary School follows the Lancaster Central Schools emergency closing schedule. If Lancaster Central Schools are closed due to weather and not a specific school building related emergency (non-functional heat or boiler), St. Mary's Elementary School will also be closed. If school is closed, so are the Evening Activities including FAST Club, our after school program housed in our building.

### **MEDICATION:**

If a child is under a doctor's care and must ingest medicines either formally prescribed or recommended by a doctor, that medication must be brought to the School Nurse/School Office by a parent in the container received from the pharmacy, be accompanied by a doctor's order, and must have on its label the following information:

- a. Child's name.
- b. Name of doctor prescribing the child's medication.
- c. Frequency, dosage, and date.

All non-prescription medications (cough drops, lip balm, Tylenol, etc.) should be brought to the School Nurse/School Office with the following information. All information provided must be accompanied by parent/guardian signature with a contact phone number:

- a. Child's name
- b. Frequency
- c. Dosage, and date
- d. Phone contact number for parent/guardian

If your child has any other medical condition that needs special attention during the school day, this must be disclosed to the school administrator and classroom teacher(s).

### **LOST AND FOUND:**

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school secretary to be placed in the Lost and Found container located in the cafeteria. Items placed in the Lost and Found remain there until the end of each marking period. At the end of the marking period, items are donated to charity if not claimed. Any Student who loses a library book, textbook, or workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping in order to replace the lost book.

### **SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM:**

St. Mary's Elementary School offers a hot lunch option on all days of school except 10:45 a.m. dismissals, unless otherwise noted. Families who qualify for free or reduced lunches will be provided a lunch each day their children are in school. Milk is an optional food item with all regular lunches. For those not eligible for free or reduced lunches, they may purchase lunch daily for a nominal fee. A la carte items are also available for purchase during lunch. Lunch menus are available on the school website before the first of each month. Your child needs to bring a lunch from home on days they do not wish to order the school lunch. Students are not allowed to bring glass bottles, soft drinks, sports drinks or excessive candy or snack items.

Please do not send a lunch that needs microwave or oven heating. This option is not available at any time for any of our students. Parents cannot bring into school outside food or drinks from carry-out restaurants. This includes cold or hot coffee drinks, lattes, etc.

### **SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS:**

The purpose of the school is to educate students, and therefore, the purpose of the field trip should be educational. Substantiation of this purpose can include lesson plans, worksheets, assessments, etc. They are a privilege and not a right. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips. Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity. The cost that is incurred with some field trips is the responsibility of the student's family. Any fund raising

efforts to defray costs must be approved by the Principal.

Individual teachers, in consultation with the Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct and any other behavior deemed unacceptable by the principal. Refunds will not be given in such instances.

An official written Diocesan permission slip signed by the parent/guardian, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. Verbal permission cannot be accepted. Permission slips are due in the office forty eight (48) hours before the scheduled outing. **A telephone call and or email will not be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.**

Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend a field trip will be marked absent for the day. Students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus/vehicle to and from the field trip with their class or chaperone. All monies collected for a field trip are non-refundable.

Parents who chaperone field trips must be VIRTUS certified through the Protecting God's Children Program in the Diocese of Buffalo. **Parent chaperones will be asked at the discretion of the teacher. Not all field trips will need parent chaperones.** Adult chaperones must be approved by the Principal. Parent chaperones on a field trip may not bring pre-school or school-age siblings on the field trip. All adult chaperones must be 21 years of age or older.

#### **SCHOOL TO HOME COMMUNICATION:**

In order to ensure that all communication from school reaches home in a timely manner, SME uses a Blue Folder system that is sent home with the oldest or only child once a week. Folders should be emptied and returned to school the following day. There is a \$5.00 replacement fee for blue folders that are not returned and considered lost. Other school-wide communications are sent via e-mail and placed on our website at [www.smeschool.com](http://www.smeschool.com).

#### **SME HOME SCHOOL ASSOCIATION:**

St. Mary's Elementary Home School Association works to support and enhance the educational ministry of the school. Fund-raising, parent education, fun-making, and building our community are goals of this organization. Home School Meetings are held throughout the school year in a specified location and time. Your support of this organization directly affects the quality of your child's educational experience. Please support the SME Home School Association by attending meetings regularly and by participating in both the fund-raising as well as fun-making efforts.



## **ABSENCE AND TARDINESS**

### **STUDENT ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL:**

Parents should contact the school office by 9:00 a.m. on the day or days of student absence by dialing (716) 683-2112, ext. 120 to leave a message. When a child returns to school after an absence, a written excuse must be submitted within three days after the absence. Student absences without an accompanying written excuse are recorded as unexcused (illegal) absences. A note must be sent in even if the student has been called in as absent.

In addition, a physician's note is required for absences that are three days or longer. Students should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. Students who are sent home during the school day with a fever will not be allowed to return to school the next day unless otherwise directed by a physician.

No student may participate in any extra-curricular activity (including sports) on a day that he/she is absent from school.

### **ABSENCE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY/EARLY RELEASE**

Students absent from school for medical appointments are required to bring a written note by the parent. Parents are required to sign out their child in the school office. If the child returns to school during the same school day, he/she must be signed back into school in the school office. Parents are required to notify the school in writing the time and need for early release. Parents must report to the office and sign out the student(s) to be released.

### **STUDENT TARDINESS**

All students must be in his/her homeroom by 8:10 AM. Students arriving later will be marked as tardy. Students report to the school office to receive a tardy slip in order to be admitted into class and he/she will be marked tardy on the attendance record for that day. Any student who arrives late to school as a result of a school bus that runs late due to weather or other mechanical reason, will not be considered tardy for school.

Excessive tardiness directly affects a student's academic progress no matter the grade level. School Administration will consult with parents of students who are consistently tardy. These students may be considered and recommended by Administration for retention at the current grade level due to missed class time as a result of excessive tardiness.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### DETERMINATION OF EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES, TARDINESS AND EARLY DEPARTURES:

Pupil attendance shall be recorded daily on line via eSchool Data.

The record for each student's presence, absence, or tardiness shall be recorded into the eSchool attendance system each day. Each absence or tardiness will be marked as "excused" or "unexcused" according to the eSchool code for the reason.

1. **Excused:** An absence, tardiness or early dismissal may be excused if due to personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads due to inclement weather, religious observance, quarantine, required court appearances, attendance at health clinics, approved high school shadow days, "Take Your Child to Work Day", unavailability of transportation due to school districts being closed, or other reasons approved by the Diocese.
2. **Unexcused:** An absence, tardiness or early dismissal is considered unexcused if the reason for the lack of attendance does not fall into the above categories (i.e. family vacations, oversleeping, or death of pet). Please note that vacations are considered illegal absences from school. Parents should notify the school and teacher as soon as possible regarding a planned vacation. The school calendar provides extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process.
3. Excused absences, tardiness or early dismissals **must have proper written documentation** from the parent or other designated officials (i.e. physician, court...etc.) which must be presented to school office personnel within three school days upon the child's return to school. Without the written excuse the absence will be recorded as unexcused (illegal). In addition, a physician's note is required for absences three days or longer. A notation should be made in the records as to the excused reason.
4. All students must be in his/her homeroom by 8:10 a.m. Students arriving later will be marked as **tardy**. Students report to the school office to receive a tardy slip in order to be admitted into class and he/she will be marked tardy on the attendance record for that day. Students, who arrive late to school as a result of a school bus that runs late due to weather or other mechanical reason, will not be considered tardy for school.

### **Intervention:**

1. If deemed necessary by school administration, or if requested by the parent/guardian, a conference will be scheduled between the parent/guardian and appropriate school staff members to address the student's attendance issue and possibly develop appropriate intervention strategies that best meet the needs of the individual student.
2. Regarding intervention of non-compliance with the Comprehensive Student Attendance Policy, a designated staff member will review St. Mary's School's Attendance Policy with the parents/guardians of students who have excessive and/or unexcused absences, tardiness or early departures. Referral to Lancaster Public School District student support services and/or community support services and agencies will be implemented prior to the denial of promotion of the student due to non-compliance with the attendance policy.
3. Letters from the principal will be sent home notifying the parent/guardian of excessive absences/tardies.

### **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE/COURSE CREDIT:**

Students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through eight who are absent 18 days or more and whose parents have not periodically met with the principal regarding the absences are in jeopardy of being denied promotion to the next grade level.

Students are considered in attendance if:

1. The student is physically present in the classroom or working under the direction of the classroom teacher during the class scheduled meeting time.
2. The student is receiving approved alternative instruction (i.e. at-home tutoring due to medical issue).

Students who are absent from class due to their participation in a school sponsored activity (i.e. track team event) are to arrange, with their teachers, to make up any missed assignments in a manner and timeline determined by the student's teacher.

Missed assignments due to excused absences may be sent home with a sibling or picked up at a pre-designated time by the parent at the teacher's discretion. It is the responsibility of the student to consult with the teacher(s) regarding completing missed assignments and/or tests in accordance with specifications designated by the teacher.

**SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RECORDKEEPING/DATA COLLECTION POLICY:**

According to the Administrative Handbook for Elementary Schools in the Diocese of Buffalo, under Section E: School Management, the following law is required:

The Education Law of New York State requires minors between the ages of six and sixteen years to be in attendance at an approved school for full day instruction. Home-tutoring for medical reasons is counted toward the days a child is actually in school. The law also requires that schools be in session not fewer than 180 days each year. It is the duty of the principal and of the teachers to insist on regular attendance (New York State Education Law, Sections 3205, 3602, Sub. 3).

## **ACADEMIC GRADING POLICY**

Teachers set grading standards for their classes that are consistent with Diocesan policy. Student achievement is assessed through various means, including, but not limited to: unit tests, periodic tests, quizzes, projects, performance assessments, teacher observations, class work, homework, class participation, standardized tests, and June exams. The Grading scale is as follows:

Pre K: Ungraded; students are assessed based on progress toward Kindergarten Readiness.

Grades K – 5: 75% Passing

Grades 6-8 70% Passing

Academic Honors will be awarded, once every quarter based on overall average for students in grades 3 through 8.

High Honors: 96-100% overall average for quarter

Honors: 90-95% overall average for quarter

Merit Roll: 85-89% overall average for quarter

## **PROGRESS REPORTS/REPORT CARDS**

Progress Reports and Report Cards are important tools for communication. Report cards will be distributed three (3) times during the academic school year. Progress Reports will be distributed mid-way between each grading period for all students. Conferences may be recommended for parents to meet with teacher(s) and possibly the principal to discuss the educational/behavioral goals of the student. Progress reports and Report cards are uploaded to the parent portal for viewing by parents. Out of household guardians may request a hard copy or view via parent portal with a valid e-mail address.

## **TESTING POLICY:**

At the teacher's discretion, students may be permitted to retake a quiz or a test in order to improve their academic standing. Middle School students (Grades 6 – 8) may be given a maximum of three quizzes or tests per day.

Students in grades 6 -8 will take formal final exams in June to assess the cumulative knowledge of subject matter taught during the academic year. Students in grades 3-5 will be given year end assessments by their teachers. The format of these assessments will be determined by the teacher.

## **State Assessments**

The NYS Assessment in English Language Arts and Math will be given to students in grades 4 and 8. The NYS Assessment in Science will be given to students in grades 4 and 8.

Students who opt out of the NYS Assessments will be given a teacher generated test in its place in order to receive a benchmark assessment grade.

### **GRADE PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY:**

Advancement to the next grade in St. Mary's Elementary School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Administration may recommend the following for a student: retention of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes (as a requirement for promotion) when, after conferences with teacher and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

A student who is retained in their current grade may or may not be allowed to continue as a student at St. Mary's Elementary School. This decision will be made at the discretion of the Canonical Administrator and Principal.

### **ACADEMIC PROBATION:**

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation will be placed on a five week improvement plan. At the end of the five week period, the student's academic progress will be assessed. **A student whose average is failing in one or more subject area, will not be allowed to participate in any sport or extra-curricular activity including, but not limited to, the school musical, school dances at SME and other schools, academic competitions, or field trips** until the grade has improved to a passing grade of 70% for middle school grades and 75% for primary and intermediate grades. The principal has the final determination of lost privileges.

### **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE:**

The purpose of this conference is to give parents the opportunity to review their child's progress with the teacher and have any questions addressed regarding the child's academic plan. Parents and/or teachers may initiate a meeting of this nature at any time during the school year to discuss a student's progress.

### **SCHOOL HOMEWORK POLICY:**

Formal home study is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement and enrich class work, and to prepare for certain lesson through various experiences.

Since each student has different capabilities and interests, it would be difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. Total homework time per night should be determined by approximately 10 minutes per grade level. So, a student in 5<sup>th</sup> grade should expect about 50 minutes/night. If problems arise, the teacher should be contacted.

Homework may be assigned to students Monday through Friday. Homework assigned to students on Friday evening will be minimal so as to provide time for families on weekends. For long term assignments or projects, parents should help the student plan his/her time so that the assignment can be completed in a timely fashion. **It is important to note, however, that any work failed to be completed by a child during the week is expected to be completed on the weekend to insure academic progress.**

**HOMEWORK: UNEXCUSED ABSENCES and VACATIONS:**

Vacations are considered illegal absences from school. Parents should notify the school and teacher as soon as possible regarding a planned vacation. The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process.

Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations or other unexcused absences. No assignment will be given in anticipation of the vacation. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Please do not ask the teacher to make an exception for homework given in advance of an absence.

**HOMEWORK and STUDENT ILLNESS:**

When a student is absent, a parent may call the school office before 9:00 a.m. to request that class work/homework assignments are set aside. These assignments may be picked up at the main office during regular school hours up until 3:30 p.m.

For a short absence, students should make arrangements with classmates regarding missed assignments. Students may also receive missed assignments from their teacher on the following day.

Students will be allowed one day for each day of absence due to illness. For example, a student who was absent three days should be given three school days to complete the missed work.

**SCHOOL SPORTS:**

Students must maintain academic eligibility to participate in team or intramural sports teams at SME. This includes passing grades in all major subjects.

A student athlete must have a current physical examination on record in the Nurses Office for team eligibility.

Diocesan teams offered: girls' softball, basketball, volleyball, soccer and swimming, boys' baseball, basketball, volleyball, soccer and swimming. Track is offered to students in grades 3 – 8 in the spring. Diocesan sports teams at SME must be supported by a sufficient number of students in order to meet Diocesan team requirements.

Students/parents are responsible for:

- Uniforms for game days
- attendance at all practices and games
- making a full commitment to the team
- arranging transportation as necessary
- Paying athletic fees when sign-up sheet is turned in

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

In accordance with the stated philosophy of our school, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions. All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires for the environment, and many other factors which the students' sense of appropriateness will indicate to them.

The Principal or her designee reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

### **ON CAMPUS and OFF CAMPUS CONDUCT:**

The administration of St. Mary's Elementary School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day. This off-campus behavior includes, but is not limited to, bullying, cyber-bullying, fighting, or any form of physical and/or emotional harassment.

### **SCHOOL CAFETERIA AND BUS:**

Students are expected to use good manners and use appropriate behaviors in the lunchroom and on the school bus. In the cafeteria, eating areas must be kept neat and debris removed and placed in trash receptacles before exiting the lunchroom. Courtesy toward other students and cooperation with the lunch monitors are expected at all times. School bus behavior includes following proper bus protocol as outlined by Lancaster Central Schools Transportation Authority. Students must remain sitting in their seat on the bus at all times. They are expected to follow directives of the bus driver and/or bus aide. Any student who fails to follow lunchroom and bus guidelines may be subject to one of the following administrative actions: detention, suspension, or expulsion from school.

### **BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING:**

St. Mary's Elementary School follows the guidelines as outlined in the DIGNITY ACT which provides a safe environment for all students free from physical, verbal, and emotional abuse based on one's gender, race, and sexual orientation. Any verbal or written taunting or threats made by a student or students against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual while on or off campus are taken very seriously. Any student or students who engage in inappropriate comments or threats via the Internet or in any digital format will face disciplinary action by school administration and the principal.

### **CELL PHONE USE:**

At no time during the day is a student allowed to carry their cell phone on their person or keep it in their locker. Any cell phones brought into school should be given to the homeroom teacher to be locked up for the day. The cell phone can be picked up by the student at dismissal. The cell phone needs to be in the off position for the day. Students are not to call or text anyone, including parents, during the school day. Should parents need to be contacted for any reason, the student is to report to the main office to request permission.

Any items taken away from students (including cell phones) will be returned to the parents at the discretion of the Principal.



### **PERSONAL PROPERTY:**

Items such as, but not limited to, questionable books and pictures, white-out, Sharpie markers, knives, guns, matches, cigarettes, radios, toys, trading cards, pagers, cell phones, laser lights, palm pilots, CDs, iPods, iPads, Kindles or other MP3 players, cameras or anything that will detract from a learning situation are not allowed at school at any time.

The school administration, in accordance with the state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school. Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) on the last day of the school year.

### **RETURNING TO CLASSROOM AFTER DISMISSAL for LUNCH or at END OF DAY:**

Students are not permitted to return to any classroom after dismissal unless having the permission of the principal or the teacher in that classroom. If a student is staying during lunch or after school for extra help, the student will be expected to stay in that classroom with the teacher who is giving extra academic help until they are dismissed by that teacher. Students who enter classrooms or the school building after dismissal or during the lunch periods without a teacher will face detention, suspension, or expulsion.

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE/WEAPONS POSSESSION:**

Substances included are: illegal drugs, prescription drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

Misuse of drugs and weapons possession is harmful to students physically, mentally, and socially and is punishable under the laws of New York State. SME follows the State Education Department in dealing with these issues. The most severe disciplinary action possible will be taken against any student who:

1. Sells, gives, or otherwise deals drugs, alcohol, or tobacco in school or at any school sponsored event.
2. Is under the influence of drug, alcohol, or tobacco in school or at any school sponsored event.
3. Is detected using or in possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, or tobacco in school or at any school sponsored event.
4. Is in possession of weapons including, but not limited to: knives, guns, paintball guns, sharp objects, explosives (fire crackers), or flammable materials (lighters, matches).

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE:**

Any student suspected of being in possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons, or flammable materials, will be subject to a SEARCH and SEIZURE by the Principal. This includes the right to search and seize anything found in the student's desk, back pack, personal property, lockers and on their person. In the event evidence is uncovered, local authorities will be contacted immediately.

### **SCHOOL PROPERTY:**

A student who deliberately or carelessly destroys or damages any textbook, school furniture, equipment, sinks, toilets, windows, or personal property of another will be obligated to make restitution for any repairs/ labor and/or replacement costs. Textbooks rented by the students must have a proper book cover. No writing in rented textbooks is permitted. The student will pay a fine or replacement fee for damaged or lost textbooks including library books, before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

## **ST. MARY'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UNIFORM POLICY**

All uniforms are to be neat, clean and properly fitting. Shirts are to be tucked in at all times.

### **Girls K-8**

1. Skirt/skort/shorts length must fall no more than 2" above your knee. If you are in violation you will be required to change into an appropriate uniform.
2. No makeup or nail polish is to be worn at all during the school year.
3. Girls in grades 6-8 may carry a small wristlet purse for personal items as needed.

### **Girls Grades K-5**

- a.) Uniform plaid knee-length jumper, navy blue or khaki skirt/skort/pants. Navy blue or khaki knee length shorts may be worn in September, October, May and June. No cargo shorts/pants are allowed. A black or brown belt needs to be worn with shorts or pants.
- b.) Red, white or navy blue polo shirt or turtleneck with strongly suggested school logo on shirt. Girls may also wear a white collared blouse or a white oxford shirt with a school plaid tie or plain navy-blue tie.

### **Girls Grades 6-8**

- a.) Uniform plaid skort, navy blue or khaki skirt/skort/pants.
- b.) Navy blue or khaki knee length shorts may be worn in September, October, May and June. No cargo shorts/pants are allowed. A black or brown belt needs to be worn with shorts or pants.
- c.) Red, white or navy blue polo shirt or turtleneck with strongly suggested school logo on shirt. Girls may also wear a white collared blouse or a white oxford shirt with a school plaid tie or a plain navy-blue tie.

### **Boys K-8**

1. Navy blue or khaki pants, straight cut. No cargo pants.
2. Navy blue or khaki knee length shorts may be worn in September, October, May and June. No cargo shorts.
3. Red, white or navy blue polo shirt or turtleneck with a strongly suggested school logo on shirt.
4. White long or short-sleeved dress shirt with a plain navy-blue tie. No bowties.
5. A black or brown belt needs to be worn with shorts or pants.

## **All Students in K-3 & 4-8 Gym**

On scheduled gym days, students in K-3 will wear their gym uniforms as their school uniform.

Grades 4-8 will change into their Gym Uniform for gym class. Please have your student bring their gym uniform to school in a gym bag.

## **K-8 Gym Uniform**

Uniform t-shirt, shorts, white socks and sneakers. Uniform sweatshirt and sweatpants may be worn over the T-shirt and shorts if desired. Order forms in the school office. No fluorescent colored sneakers or shoelaces are allowed.

## **Cold Weather Items**

The only acceptable cool weather tops to be worn during school hours are the SME spirit hoodie, which is available for purchase through the (HSA) Home School Association, the SME gym uniform sweatshirt, a solid navy/white/red cardigan sweater or a navy-blue fleece from a school approved vendor. Navy blue fleece must have school logo on it. (McKay's, Flynn n O'Hara, Lands End)

## **Non-Uniform Days**

**Dress-up Days:** Students wear their good clothes to school. All skirts, skorts and dresses are to be knee-length. Strapless/spaghetti strap dresses/tops are not allowed. Dress shoes with less than a 1" heels are allowed. No strappy shoes, UGGs, moccasins, flip flops or slippers will be worn during the school day. No jeans, sweatpants or wind pants are allowed.

**Dress-down Days:** Students may wear casual clothes which are modest, tasteful and appropriate to school. Jeans may be worn provided they are free of holes, tears, frays, etc. Shorts and skirts must be no shorter than our uniform requirements (no daisy dukes or biker style shorts). Wind pants may be worn; however, no words are permitted to be displayed across the students rear-end. No fleece or flannel pajama bottoms or non-uniform sweatpants are permitted. No strappy shoes, moccasins, flip flops, slippers or combat boots will be worn during the school day. The students may wear UGGs, dress boots and laced up boots. No leggings or yoga pants are allowed.

### **Hair**

1. All hairstyles should be neat with bangs above the eyebrows. Boys hair should be above (not touching) the shirt collar.
2. No extreme hairstyles: extensions of any type, bleached, dyed or streaked colors; mohawks, faux hawks, stripes or designs will be shaved in.
3. No hats will be worn in the building.
4. No scarves or decorative hair attire other than plaid uniform headbands, plain red, white or navy blue headbands or barrettes of the same color.

### **Socks and Shoes**

1. Shoes- A casual dress shoe of neutral color (black, white, tan, brown, grey and navy). Examples are: flats with rubber soles, boat style shoes, dress shoes. No sneakers are to be worn during the school day (unless in grades K-3 for gym days). No fluorescent colored shoes/sneakers or shoelaces are allowed. Gym sneaker colors are permitted on the logos only i.e.: Nike swish or Adidas, etc.
2. Flats are acceptable footwear as long as they have a thick rubber sole. No toeless or backless shoes, crocs or sandals are allowed. No boots, moccasins or UGGs are allowed during the school day. No heels above 1" allowed. All shoes must fit securely.
3. Boys socks- No Athletic socks are allowed. Solid plain white, black or navy socks are required. No Athletic logos on socks. Colored socks, No-show and footie socks are not permitted.
4. Girls socks – No Athletic socks are allowed. Solid plain white, black or navy knee socks or tights with skorts/skirts/pants and jumpers are required. Solid black leggings may be worn under skorts or skirts in the winter months. Colored socks, No-show and footie socks are not permitted.

**\*\*Students may wear boots to school and change footwear throughout the winter months\*\***

Please see the footwear policy for "Dress-Down" or "Dress-Up" days.

## Miscellaneous

### Jewelry

1. Simple necklaces (i.e. thin chain) for small religious medals.
2. Girls may wear simple post earrings (gold, silver, pearl, crosses or diamond).
3. Boys are not allowed to wear any earrings or necklaces (except small religious metal).
4. No wrist bands, silly bands, loom bands, etc. will be worn.
5. No tattoos.

### Perfumes/Colognes/Deodorant

1. Perfumes and Colognes are not permitted due to allergies and/or breathing difficulties.
2. Body spray (Axe and the like) may be used in moderation, keeping in mind that they do cause problems for those with allergies and/or breathing difficulties.
3. No spray deodorant is permitted at any time in school. If you choose to use it, please spray on at home. Please use stick or roll-on if needed during school hours.

### **ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL.**

The Principal reserves the right to make any changes to the Uniform Policy.

A good rule to remember: If you have second thoughts about something being acceptable, you probably shouldn't wear it! Students who are out of compliance in regards to school uniform or demonstrate unacceptable grooming habits will be written up by a teacher or school Administration for non-compliance. Parents will be called to bring in proper attire for their child should the cause arise or students may be asked to wear spare items from our Uniform Exchange. Three non-compliance notices or warnings for dress code violations will automatically generate an after-school detention for that student.

### **TECHNOLOGY POLICY:**

All students in grades Pre-K -8 and their parents are required to sign a **Student Appropriate Use Policy**. By signing this document, all those who use or supervise the use of technology at school or at home will abide by the conditions as set forth in the contract. Breaking policies in this contract will result in termination of computer/iPad privileges from up to one month to the entire school year.

### **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Discipline is most effective when it deals directly with the problems at the time and place it occurs, and in a way that students view as fair and impartial. Disciplinary action at St. Mary's Elementary School will be firm, fair, and consistent so as to be the most effective in changing student behavior. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, the following things will be taken into consideration.

1. The student's age.
2. The nature of the offense and the circumstances which led to the offense.
3. As authorized by New York Education Law, the student's prior disciplinary record.
4. The effectiveness of other forms of discipline.
5. Information from parents, teachers, and/or others, as appropriate.
6. Other extenuating circumstances.

Unless the conduct is so serious or criminal in nature that a more serious penalty or referral to law enforcement is deemed necessary in the discretion of school officials, discipline, as a general rule, will be progressive. "Progressive discipline" means that a student's first violation will usually merit a lighter penalty than subsequent violations.

### **RANGE OF PENALTIES**

Students who are found to have violated the school's code of conduct may be subject to the following penalties, either alone or in combination. School personnel are authorized to impose the penalty.

1. Oral warning.
2. Written warning. \*Three written warnings for any offense constitute an after school detention.
3. Lunch Detention.
4. After school detention or other age-appropriate in-school penalty.
5. Suspension from transportation.
6. Suspension from athletic participation.
7. Suspension from social or extra-curricular activities.
8. Restitution for the value of stolen or damaged property.
9. Suspension of other privileges.
10. In-school suspension.
11. Removal from classroom.
12. Short-term (five days or less) out-of-school suspension.
13. Long-term (more than five days) out-of-school suspension.
14. Expulsion.

### **DETENTION:**

Detention may be issued for a breach of classroom and/or school rules. These may include: bullying, repeatedly inappropriate and disruptive classroom behavior, repeated negligence toward class work and/or homework, defiance of the authority of school personnel, repeated disregard for Uniform Code and Policy, any threat (verbal or written) of violence directed toward any student or member of the SME community.

Parents are provided with a written notification of the detention. The day, date, and time of the detention are at the discretion of the Principal. **Detention takes precedence over appointments, practices, lessons, tutoring, sporting events, extra-curriculars, etc.** Detention is served on an agreed upon day after school from 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. In special circumstances, detention may be served during lunch (at the discretion of the Principal). While serving detention, the student will assist in the maintenance and beautification of the school.

### **SUSPENSION:**

The Principal has the right to suspend students. Suspension is imposed for a student who has not responded well to continued efforts at following school policies. Suspensions are usually 1-3 days and are served in or out of school.

Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school each day. Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension, including after school activities. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension but no grades will be recorded for this work.

Some conditions for suspension include, but are not limited to: truancy, smoking, alcohol, or drug use on school property or at school sponsored events, damage to SME property, proven case of cheating, plagiarism or theft, acts of physical violence towards other students or SME personnel, bullying, cyber bullying, sexting, or on-line harassment, leaving school grounds without permission.

### **EXPULSION:**

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. It is a last resort, when all other efforts at remediation have failed. A student may be expelled when a crime, scandal, immorality, or disruption occurs constituting a threat to the physical or moral well-being of others. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from St. Mary's Elementary School. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the school without prior permission from the Principal. Students whose parents have violated the Parents as Partners agreement in this handbook may also be excluded from St. Mary's Elementary School.

The process for expulsion includes:

- A record of all measures of discipline, remediation, counseling, detention, and suspension is kept.
- Parents are notified in writing that expulsion is being considered.
- A conference is held with all parties involved: principal, teachers, parents and student.
- The Principal confers with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, giving the specifics of the expulsion.
- The Superintendent of Catholic Schools will assist the Principal in making the final decision on expulsion.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE PAGE – COMPLETE AND RETURN TO SCHOOL:**

I have read the 2019-2020 St. Mary’s Elementary School Parent/Student Handbook.  
I understand and agree to follow all policies and procedures as stated within this document.

Printed Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signatures

Date

I understand the policies outlined in the 2019-2020 Parent/Student Handbook. I agree to follow all policies and procedures as stated within this document.

Student Signature

Date

I understand the policies outlined in the 2019-2020 Parent/Student Handbook. I agree to follow all policies and procedures as stated within this document.

Student Signature

Date

I understand the policies outlined in the 2019-2020 Parent/Student Handbook. I agree to follow all policies and procedures as stated within this document.

Student Signature

Date

I understand the policies outlined in the 2019-2020 Parent/Student Handbook. I agree to follow all policies and procedures as stated within this document.

Student Signature

Date

**FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO THE OFFICE  
NO LATER THAN 9/17/19**