

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Parent/Student Handbook

MISSION STATEMENT

**St. Mary's School is a Christ-Centered School
where all enter to learn and exit to serve.**



School Year 2021-2022

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PHILOSOPHY and VISION of St. Mary's

St. Mary's School is a Pre K-6 Catholic school recognized and supported mainly by the following churches: St. Mary's in Tracy and Immaculate Heart of Mary in Currie and part of St. Michael's in Milroy. It is a school of academic excellence, which integrates moral and spiritual values. This is achieved through a strong faith community, development of positive self-concept, open communication, and the integration of the Gospel Values.

St. Mary's faith community is soundly rooted in the message of Christ. Our Catholic faith is evident throughout our curriculum and in our positive, nurturing school environment. Our faith is lived out through our celebration of the sacraments, in prayer, and in service to one another.

In recognizing each student's unique gifts, we strengthen and nurture their self-concept. We demonstrate respect for one another and affirm the dignity of each child.

Open communication with our parents, community, students, staff, and alumni is the key to the strengths and viability of our school.

We are committed to academic excellence. We recognize the individual differences and uniqueness of each child and employ a variety of teaching techniques to help each child reach their highest potential.

Gospel Values are integrated throughout our curriculum. Our school is based on the teachings of Christ and His Church. By listening to and acting on the Word of the Gospel, we foster an atmosphere of respect, peace, and justice toward one another.

PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING
Reflections of the United States Catholic Bishops
and
Responsibilities of St. Mary's Elementary School

1. DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON-1 John 3:2

All people are created in the image and likeness of God. Our belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation for the principles of our social teaching. People do not lose their dignity because of disability, poverty, age, gender, lack of success or race. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

Dignity of the human person is the underlying principle of the student life policies at St. Mary's School. Students are challenged to recognize the dignity of each person as individuals and as a member of the community. The school community works to help students respect their own innate goodness and dignity—to celebrate their own gifts and talents. When a student does not work to reach her or his full potential in the classroom or other school activities, she or he does not celebrate her/his unique gifts from God. Each time a student brings harm to him or herself, he/she is not respecting God's gift of life to them. Students who don't turn in assignments, cheat, abuse or use substances, engage in risky behavior or do not work to their full potential are not respecting their own individual dignity.

We are also called to respect the dignity of others. Students should be respectful of other students and encourage them in their own unique talents and gifts. Students who tease or put down other students are offending a person created by God. Students who harass or fight with other students are disrespecting the dignity of that individual. Student and teachers are also called to respect one another.

2. CALL TO FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND PARTICIPATION-John 15:17

Our Catholic tradition proclaims that the person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society in economics, politics, law and policy directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. The family is the central institution that must be supported and strengthened. The Catholic tradition teaches that human beings grow and achieve fulfillment in community.

This call to community is the foundation of Catholic schools. We are called to be a faith community, to learn and grow together. As a community, we are responsible to promote the common good. Each of us is endowed with inherent dignity, goodness and gifts that we are called to share with one another. When a student does not promote this common good through his or her actions, he or she is causing harm to the community. At times, students who threaten this common good may be removed from the community through a suspension or dismissal from school. Students are asked to be participating members of the community by attending school and classes. The community suffers when one of its members is absent. Students must also respect the rights of other students to a safe learning environment. Actions that threaten this safety, such as carrying weapons, distributing illegal substances, and tampering with safety equipment are severe and may warrant dismissal from the community.

We are a community, responsible for our own behavior and accountable to one another. Students are asked to share and commit the common values of the school community. When

students, staff and parents become a member of the community, they support the underlying mission and values that protect the common good, even if at times, they do not agree with an individual decision. Students who take any action that may be detrimental to the reputation of the school, whether in school or off campus, may be subject to discipline review.

3. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES – Micha 6:8

The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, to our families and to the larger society.

All students have the right to dignity, to pursue their gifts, to practice their faith and to learn in a safe environment. Students also have corresponding responsibilities and duties to help protect these rights for others and promote a healthy school community. These responsibilities are outlined in course expectations and the student handbook; however, no list of norms can cover every situation. Common sense, mature judgment and Christian values are the guides by which every St. Mary's School student should measure his/her actions. When a student disregards his or her responsibilities, he or she may serve appropriate consequences including after school detention, suspensions, dismissal from class, or assemblies. Students may also be asked to make restitution, participate in school recommended evaluations or be involved in mediations.

4. OPTION FOR THE POOR AND VULNERABLE- Matthew 25:40

A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the last judgment (Mt. 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

As members of a school community we are asked to recognize the differences, economic and otherwise, of those among us. St. Mary's is committed to helping all families who desire a Catholic education, receive one, regardless of income. To quote the Rule of St. Benedict "All are welcomed as Christ." We are called to respect one another as individuals not by our material possessions, the homes in which we reside or the clothes we wear.

5. THE DIGNITY OF WORK AND THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS- Luke 10:7

The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected; the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative. Respecting these rights promotes an economy that protects human life, defends human rights and advances the well-being of all.

St. Mary's School works to help students recognize the dignity of work in two ways. We recognize the school learning environment as the students' workplace and learning as the students' vocation. Students are participating in God's creation through their positive involvement in school. We honor and respect their right to learn free from distractions. We also recognize the value and dignity of the work of our teachers and staff. We ask students and staff to mutually respect one another as they share in this experience. Students may not interfere with this well-being through being disrespectful or distracting behavior.

6. SOLIDARITY- 1 Corinthians 13:27

Catholic social teaching proclaims that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live. We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that "loving our neighbor" has global dimensions in an interdependent world.

St. Mary's School recognizes this solidarity through our school, local and global communities. Students have numerous opportunities to participate in the human family through diversity groups, assemblies, service projects, mission activities and the classroom. Students are taught to respect and honor differences among all of humanity, not just to those within our school community. Students should refrain from any racial, religious, ethnic, gender or sexual orientation slurs. Any form of harassment made directly or indirectly, is an offense to God's creation and will not be tolerated.

7. CARE FOR GOD'S CREATION- Genesis 2:28

Our Catholic tradition insists that we show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day theme; it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living out our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.

We care for God's creations by caring for our St. Mary's School campus. Respecting the environment and showing pride in the school's appearance reflects upon everyone who is a part of the St. Mary's community. Students are expected to be respectful and responsible for the school building, grounds and equipment. Destruction or damage to property will result in monetary and other reparation.

Excerpts from Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions. United States Catholic Conference, 1998. Excerpts are indicated in italic. Adapted from the Hill-Murray School Handbook.

GUIDELINES for ADMISSION STATEMENTS

ADMISSION IN THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL The primary purpose of the Catholic school within the Diocese of New Ulm is the education of young people in order to assist them in their academic, personal, and spiritual growth—"to educate the whole person: mind, body, and soul."¹ As a Catholic school, emphasis is first and foremost on the teaching and practice of the Catholic faith so children and young people can "experience learning and living fully integrated in the light of faith."² Parents and guardians who enroll their children also understand that the school will remain faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church and steadfast in proclaiming them.

(¹ USCCB, National Directory for Catechesis, (Washington, D.C.: USCCB, 2005), p 262; ² Ibid)

The administration of the school recognizes that our students come from a variety of family backgrounds, some of which may not fully conform to the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. The personal family background of a student does not constitute an absolute obstacle to enrollment in the school. Nor does acceptance of any child for enrollment in the school condone or imply approval of any parental living situation which may be contrary to Church teachings.

STUDENTS NOT OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH The presence of students who do not share the Catholic faith provides a wonderful diversity to the school; however, this diversity shall not alter the primacy of Catholic religious formation as an integral component of the educational program in the school. As such:

- All students are expected to participate in the religious formation and education programs of the school.
- All students must participate in liturgies, retreats, other religious functions, and religion classes for credit.
- Catholic Church tenets state that students not of the Catholic faith may not receive the sacraments of the Church; therefore, these students are exempt from formal co-curricular or extra-curricular sacramental preparation programs but not from the catechesis held during the school day.
- Students are expected, for testing and discussion purposes, to be knowledgeable of the Catholic Church's positions on scripture, revelation, and moral practices. While Catholic teaching respects the various faith traditions of the students attending the Catholic school, parents must be aware that it is the Catholic position that will be taught.

Should a waiting list be necessary, preference will be given to students in the following order:

- a) Siblings currently in the school,
- b) Students whose parents are parishioners within the Catholic Area Faith Community,
- c) Siblings of students, who have completed the school program,
- d) Catholic students outside the Area Faith Community, and
- e) All other interested students.

NON-DISCRIMINATION CLAUSE Catholic schools, administered under the authority of the Catholic Diocese of New Ulm, comply with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to the schools, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, disability (see following paragraph), national or ethnic origin or citizenship in the administration of their educational, admissions, financial aid, athletic, and other school administered student programs.

Students shall not be denied admission because of a disability unless this disability seriously impairs the student's ability to successfully complete the school's academic program within the reasonable accommodations that may be provided for the disabled child. Parents are to fully disclose the nature and known extent of any physical, emotional, environmental, or learning disabilities at the time of registration.

This policy does not conflict with the priority given to Catholics for admission as students. Nor does it preclude the ability of the school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to students who advocate on school property or at school functions any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with the religious tenets of the Catholic faith.

PARENTAL ROLE The Catholic Church recognizes, and the Catholic school respects the parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. For a Catholic parent, the promise at baptism to raise their children as Catholic supports these premises and the Catholic school thereby exists to assist parents in the Christian formation of their children—assisting in what is to already be happening in the home. With the school being a continuation of a child's

primary education, all parents enrolling their children in the school are expected to support the school's mission and commitment to Christian principles.

Parents are expected to annually sign the school's Handbook Agreement Form as acceptance of the school's policies as set forth within the handbook.

While present on the school campus be it for academic related activities or extra-curricular events, every adult has the responsibility of appropriate conduct in order to support the school's mission and provide positive role models to our students. A coherent witness to Catholic moral teaching is expected at the school and during any school-related activities.

ADMISSION DOCUMENTS The following documents are required for each student's permanent records at the time of registration: birth certificate or legal verification of the child's age, immunization record listing the dates of all shots in compliance with those required by state law, baptismal certificate (if applicable, Catholic applicants only), custody agreement (if applicable).

ADMISSION/ENROLLMENT DECISIONS A parent retains the right to withdraw a student at any time just as the school administration (principal and/or pastor) reserves the right to accept or deny admission of a student within the parameters of the school policies. The school administration hopes that all decisions may be made through amicable discussion. If needed, a grievance procedure to assist with any discussion is also a part of this handbook.

Updated May 28, 2013

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL
225 6th Street, Tracy MN 56175
(507) 629-3270

FACULTY

Mrs. Lisa Dieter	Principal	507-828-6589
Mrs. Mackenzie Lau	Preschool	507-626-0612
Mrs. Breann Nilius	Kindergarten	763-354-0203
Mrs. Amanda Petersen	1 st & 2 nd Grade Teacher	507-215-0556
Ms. Joni Klimek	3 rd & 4 th Grade Teacher	507-401-0445
Mrs. Jolene Labat	5 th & 6 th Grade Teacher	507-532-3042

**Please refrain from calls after 8:00 p.m.*

SUPPORT STAFF

Chris Schons	Administrative Assistant	507-629-4245
Tim Amick	Maintenance	507-336-2601
Gwen Johnson	Head Cook	507-829-9321

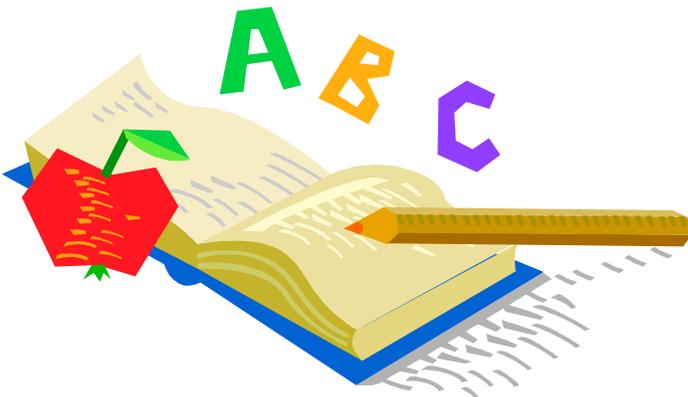
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

John Lanoue, Chairman	507-829-3238
Jenna Buyck, Secretary	507-533-6009
Josh Schreier, member at large	605-929-5143
Chuck Ankrum, member at large	507-829-5070
Lisa Dieter, Principal	507-829-6589
Fr. Tony Stubeda, Parish Pastor	320-979-7248
Fr. Andy Michels, Associate Pastor	507-766-3678

Our School Song.....
(Sung to Rousers melody)

St. Mary's grade school, hats off to thee.
To our colors, true we will ever be.
Firm and strong, united are we.
Rah, rah - St. Mary's
Rah, rah, rah, rah,
this is the school for me.

(repeat)
cheer:





SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

St. Mary's School is a member of the Minnesota Non-public School Accrediting Association (MNSAA). MNSAA has established performance standards and criteria that member schools must meet and maintain to be an accredited institution. An annual report is sent to MNSAA at the end of each school year based on the goals, strategies and action plan. The report is evaluated, and recommendations for continued action are given. This process is vital to the continued high standards, which St. Mary's School now enjoys. To view a copy of the most recent, MNSAA Annual Report, please notify St. Mary's Principal.

LITURGY AND PRAYER

As our greatest prayer, we celebrate Mass as a school once a week. We acknowledge the importance of the Eucharist by making these dress-up days (no shorts, tank tops, etc.) Our Mass is held each Friday or Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. Teachers and students plan the Mass on a rotating basis. We encourage you to come and celebrate the Eucharist with us. In addition to daily classroom prayer, the entire school gathers each morning to begin our day with prayer

PARISH LIFE

It is presumed that families participate in the worship and prayer life of their parish. Parents are the primary and best teachers in modeling the importance of faith. Your participation in weekend Liturgies, regular use of offering envelopes, and sharing in parish and school activities are the foundations of developing a strong faith life in your child.

INSURANCE

Students are not covered by any school provided insurance during the school day should an accident happen that does not involve any negligence of supervision. Families should provide insurance coverage for their students.

Accident claims are filed from the office of the principal.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Announcements concerning the closing of St. Mary's School will also be made over the radio stations KMHL, KARL & KKCK. This will ORDINARILY happen only when the Tracy Area Public Schools are also closed.

CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

All books are school property and anyone who loses, defaces or mars a book must pay for the replacement.

Students are asked to cooperate in helping maintain the cleanliness of our school. To that end, we require students to wear boots during inclement weather so as not to bring mud into the building. Please help your child(ren) remember to wear boots or bring extra shoes which can be removed at the door.

USE OF GYM

Gym use is restricted to school, parish, and community functions **ONLY** unless arrangements are made in advance with the school office. A rental fee will be charged.

DRESS CODE

The main reason for appropriate school dress flows from a need to maintain good behavior and discipline for the entire school student body. Whether the students are dressed for school or summer play has a direct effect on their behavior and attitude toward school.

- Mass days are always dress-up days.
- Shorts (*appropriate length*) may be worn after April 15 or on days that are over 60 degrees. Students may bring shorts to change into as the temperature may rise during the day.
- Short skirts, short shorts, midriff tops or tops with spaghetti or no straps and shirts with inappropriate words/pictures are not acceptable at any time.
- To determine appropriate length of shorts and skirts/dresses, the length must be at least to the fingertips when putting hands at sides of body
- If girls wear skirts or dresses, they are to either wear or bring a pair of leggings, shorts or jeans to wear under their skirt or dress during recess/gym.
- Students should wear appropriate footwear for indoors. Physical Education requires each student to wear tennis shoes and socks. Girls are not allowed to wear shoes with a heel exceeding ½ inch. Sandals are not allowed on the playground or gym.
- During winter, students will go outside unless the "feels like" is below -10° F. Students must have a winter coat, snow pants, hats, gloves, and boots. *{Let the school know if winter clothing is needed for your child(ren)}.*

MASS SERVERS

Students in grades four, five, and six have the opportunity to act as Mass servers. Training and practice is conducted through the parish priest. Third graders are trained in the spring of the school year to be available to serve for the following school year and summer masses.

VOLUNTEERS

Our school could not function without the volunteer help of parents and other parish members. You will receive a form to indicate the ways you will be able to help out at school this year. All volunteers who work with our students on a regular basis will be required to receive “Safe Environment” training (VIRTUS) as provided through the Diocese of New Ulm.

Diocesan Safe Environment Policy

The diocese has a safe environment program in accord with the United States Council of Catholic Bishops requirement. All clerics, employees and those volunteers who are unsupervised with children **MUST** attend or complete an annual training and are bound by diocesan policies/procedures. There are certain instances when outside speakers, public school teachers, etc., have unsupervised contact with students enrolled in the school. Depending on the circumstances these outside contractors may not be bound to diocesan requirements. In these cases, applicable parents/guardians must sign and return a waiver which will be given out to them by the school office prior to the event taking place. One such waiver included within this handbook and accepted as a condition as a school policy involves public school employees (including band instructors, school counselors, Title I instructors, special education instructors and public school bus drivers).

The Notification is as follows:

NOTIFICATION FOR CHILDREN and YOUTH ATTENDING CLASS(ES), ACTIVITIES, TUTORING AT A NON-DIOCESAN/PAROCHIAL FACILITY, AND/OR INSTRUCTED/SUPERVISED BY A NON-DIOCESAN/PAROCHIAL EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER, OR RIDING A SCHOOL BUS.

As part of the ongoing effort in the Diocese of New Ulm and St. Mary’s School to provide a safe and secure environment for your child, we hereby inform you of the following when your child attends/participates in a non-Diocesan/Parochial class, activity, tutoring, or ride a school bus.

“The Diocese of New Ulm and St. Mary’s School holds no real or implied legal responsibility or jurisdiction over the employees/volunteers of Tracy Public Schools and Tracy 4.0 Bus Service. Therefore, Tracy Public Schools/Tracy 4.0 Bus Service are responsible for the conduct of its employees/volunteers, and in all cases where the conduct of an employee/volunteer of that School is in question; Tracy Public Schools and Tracy 4.0 Bus Service shall be liable. While public school employees are bound by Minnesota law to have a recent criminal background check on file at the public school, their employees are not subject to the requirements of the Diocesan Safe Environment Program.”

CRIMINAL HISTORY BACKGROUND CHECKS

Mandatory Criminal Background Check Policy: All employees, as well as, all school volunteers who have regular or unsupervised contact with minors are subject to criminal background checks as mandated by the state of Minnesota. St. Mary's School may decide not to conduct criminal background checks on school volunteers who do not have regular or unsupervised contact with minors, as well as, vendors or independent contractors.

The following positions are subject to a mandatory background check:

Teachers, Substitute Teachers, Specialist Teachers, Tutors, Extracurricular Advisors, Academic Coaches, Athletic Coaches, Paraprofessionals, Library Aides, Food Service Personnel, Janitorial Service Personnel, and all paid Parish Personnel when the Parish is associated with a school.

Mandatory USIS Background Check—Mandatory by Diocesan Policy: All employees, as well as, all school volunteers and independent contractors who have unsupervised contact with minors are subject to USIS performed criminal background checks.

The following individuals are subject to a USIS performed background check at St. Mary's School:

All individuals are required to have a BCA check, additionally, school volunteers who have unsupervised contact with minors and independent contractors who have unsupervised contact with minors.

Employees or volunteers are not permitted to work/volunteer without the completed BCA and USIS check prior to start date as per state law and diocesan policy.



FIRE DRILLS, TORNADO DRILLS AND LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Fire, tornado, and lockdown drills are conducted during the school year in accordance with state guidelines. Evacuation methods are posted inside all rooms.

VISITS TO SCHOOL

All persons are required to report to the school office before proceeding to a classroom. This is a matter of safety and security for all of our students and staff. Also, if there is an area of concern, please take the issue up with the appropriate person responsible.

Mrs. Schons must be notified by 1:00 if your child's afternoon bussing plans change. No Exceptions. Thank you.

TELEPHONE CALLS

During school hours, we ask that you call a student or teacher only in an emergency. Students are discouraged from making phone calls except in the case of an emergency. To make an appointment for a conference with a teacher, please call the school office at any time and leave a message with the Administrative Assistant. She will give a message to the teacher who will return your call at his/her earliest convenience.

PATROL SYSTEM

Students in grades five and six serve as patrols and are supervised by a faculty member. It is the duty of the patrols to see to the safety of the children while crossing streets when leaving school. For the successful operation of the safety patrol, all adults/children must respect the students with this responsibility. *Please discuss this with your child.*

OTHER

There is no adult supervision provided for the playground before or after school. NO INSURANCE COVERAGE can be claimed for accidents at any time.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIREMENTS

When you enroll your child at St. Mary's School, you agree to certain responsibilities and requirements. *Every family is required to pay tuition and give service.* Participating in school activities such as being a room parent, classroom volunteer, fund-raising committee member or chairperson, playground supervisor, volunteer coach or various other projects meet this requirement.

All families are expected to participate in fund-raising activities. St. Mary's School has the following fund-raising events throughout the school year: Calendar Raffle, Marathon, Candy Sales, Wreath Sales, Catholic United Financial Catholic Schools Raffle, Soup and Pie Dinners, SMS Basketball Tournament, Greenwood Nursery Certificate Sales, Box Car Day Food Stand and Craft Fair, and the SCRIP Program.

There are also various organizations in which you may choose to serve on to exhibit your interest in the total educational mission of our school. Some of these organizations include: People's Club, Room Parent(s) and Education Committee.

As a parent of a St. Mary's School student, you assume responsibilities and agree:

1. to be a partner with the school in the education of your child
2. to understand and support the religious nature of the school
3. to read all communications from the school and to request clarification when necessary
4. to know who your child's teachers are and to observe parent-teacher conference dates and any special request for meetings
5. to discuss concerns and problems with the person(s) most directly involved before contacting outside authorities
6. to be as actively involved as you can in the life of the school and to volunteer assistance when possible
7. to promote your school and to speak well of it to others
8. to meet your financial obligation in a timely manner and to support the fund-raising efforts of the school when possible
9. to appreciate that Catholic education is a privilege that many persons do not have.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT

St. Mary's 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, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to 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 with an official copy of the court order.

Divorced parents will furnish the school with a copy of the custody section of the divorce decree.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school day begins at 8:00 and ends at 2:50. We ask that students do not arrive before 7:40 a.m. nor remain after 2:50 p.m. unless special arrangements have been made. The State of Minnesota mandates that students may not be left unattended in a school building. Therefore, in order to make it possible for us to follow such statutes, we ask that you make arrangements for the proper supervision of your child in advance. Staff meetings may conflict with the proper supervision of your child, so please be sure to make arrangements well in advance. Your cooperation in this matter is critical.

* St. Mary's School primarily maintains the same calendar as the Tracy Area Public Schools. St. Mary's School calendar is based on attendance dates from that calendar.

TARDINESS

A child is considered tardy if not present by 8:00 a.m. When a student is tardy, she/he should report to the school office before going to the classroom. When a child is arriving to school at a tardy time, the parents must sign their child in at the school office. Please see the truancy policy, page 29.

ABSENCE

To assure the SAFETY OF THEIR CHILD, parents are asked to phone the school office by 8:30 a.m. with the reason for a child's absence. If this is not possible, please send a note with another child. A written excuse or phone call stating the reason for the absence is mandatory before the child returns to school.

Irregular attendance is disruptive to a student's academic progress. Parents are asked to see that absences are held to a minimum. Parents are asked to avoid taking students out of school and should make vacation plans consistent with the school calendar when possible. *Family vacation days during regular school days count as unexcused absences.* Medical and dental appointments should be scheduled after school when possible.

When an absence is anticipated, please inform the teacher in advance so that the teacher can help the student plan for the missed instructional time.

No child will be dismissed from school during class hours without a WRITTEN request in advance from the parents. In the case of an emergency, the permission may be obtained by calling the principal.

Make-up work, as prescribed by the teacher, is required after a child has been absent. It is the responsibility of the child to request the work and to follow through with the completion of the work. The teacher will provide the student with a timetable for completion.

Absences that are generally considered to be excused:

0. Sickness of a child
1. Dr. Appointment
2. Dental Appointment
3. Psych, Appointment
4. Family illness
5. Death in the immediate family
6. Family funeral
7. Detained in the Office
16. Car Trouble
17. Weather Related
18. Nurses' Office

Excuses for other absences would be granted at the discretion of the administration.

ADMISSION

When a parent enrolls his/her child in St. Mary's School, the parent agrees to follow the rules of St. Mary's School. When St. Mary's School accepts the parent's payment of tuition or other consideration, St. Mary's School has entered into a contract to educate that student.

Children must be **36 months old in order to enter Preschool**. Children must be **five** years of age before **September 1st** of the current school year in order to **enter Kindergarten**. Students entering **first grade** will have celebrated their **6th birthday before September 1st** of the current school year. Special needs students will be accommodated as long as personnel and financial resources are available.

TUITION

Tuition at St. Mary's School for the 2020-2021 academic year, is \$1950.00 per student in grades K-6. A family who has four or more children attending St. Mary's School (K-6) at one time will receive free tuition for the fourth child.

***Discounts on Tuition:** New families to St. Mary's School may use the "New Family" discount. This discount will reduce tuition by 20% per child. If your child was baptized at either St. Paul's Church in Walnut Grove, St. Michael's in Milroy, St. Mary's in Tracy or Immaculate Heart of Mary in Currie you may use their "Baptismal Discount". When you turn in the Baptismal Discount certificate your child will received a 25% discount for one school year. There are no discounts for preschool unless you meet the pre-registration deadline. Discounts will not be "stacked". Only ONE discount per school year per student will be applied.*

Adapted by the Education Committee on April 27, 2017

Tuition contracts will be sent home in the parent packets by mid-August and must be signed by the first day of school. Should circumstances arise which make it impossible for you to meet the payment plan you have agreed upon, simply notify the school principal so that alternate plans can be made. By knowing your situation, it makes it easier for us to plan timelines for meeting our financial obligations.

Tuition assistance programs exist for those who wish to apply. Simply notify the school principal or parish pastor of your needs. Tuition Assistance applications are due by July 15 prior to the new school year.

All tuition balances must be paid in full by the last day of school. If you are making one payment, the balance is due January 15. Report cards and transcripts will not be released until all tuition balances are paid. ***All balances left unpaid will be turned over to a collection agency as of June 15.***

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

As a school committed to academic excellence, our faculty strives to meet the needs of all children with varied and various teaching styles and techniques. Individual instructional needs are identified through special needs testing, standardized testing, review of cumulative student files and teacher observation. ***It is sometimes in the best interest of the child*** to support and reinforce the classroom teacher with help from Title 1 and/or Special Education services through the public school (i.e. Speech and Language, OT, Learning Disabilities, etc.)

Curriculum is reviewed and updated to guarantee that students are receiving a quality education. We follow a Long-Range Curriculum Plan as established during our accreditation.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a very important part of the academic program. It provides practice and the review of skills taught in class, develops regular habits of self-directed work, neatness, responsibility and self-discipline. It also allows optimum use of class time for teaching. Assignments are given regularly and consist of reading of texts, essays and composition writing, computation and problem solving, written answers and memorization.

Written work is expected to be neat and legible. It is also expected that parents will work in the home to reinforce good study habits and self-discipline. Parents are asked to refrain from doing the student's assignment. All homework must be the student's own work. Absence from school for illness does not excuse a student from the responsibility of completing assignments in and out of class.

The following is an estimated amount of homework time to be budgeted (minimum & maximum time allotments):

Grades 1 – 2	15-30 minutes total per evening
Grades 3 – 4	30-60 minutes total per evening
Grades 5 – 6	an average of 20 minutes per subject per night, not to exceed 90 minutes total

All students are encouraged to read each night beyond the regular assignments. Classroom teachers may have an expected number of minutes for each child to read at home—please discuss this with your child's classroom teacher.

GRADING AND REPORT CARDS

Report cards are issued quarterly. Space is provided for comments by both the teacher and the parents. Parents are asked to thoroughly discuss the evaluation with the student and then to sign and return it to the school within one week of receiving the report card at home.

Conferences are encouraged. At the end of the first quarter, all parents are encouraged to attend scheduled conferences. Spring conferences will also be scheduled during the third quarter. Frequent communication between home and school is encouraged. This communication should take place whenever a parent feels that a problem exists. Please use these opportunities to discuss when you feel that “things are going well”, too.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

When it seems necessary to retain a child, the parents should be so advised no later than the end of the third nine-week period. Teachers should advise the principal at the end of the second quarter if they suspect that a child needs retention. No child is to be retained more than once in elementary school.

When a student is “transferred” over the advice of the professional staff, parents will be required to sign a statement that they realize that the transfer is against the professional advice of the staff. The student’s movement to the next grade will be considered a transfer and not a promotion.

Retention may be considered based on the following criteria:

1. Thorough consultation with appropriate personnel.
2. Parental request.
3. Careful evaluation of all aspects of the student’s academic growth and development.
4. Review of current retention literature.

HOT LUNCH

A hot lunch program is provided. Contact the school office for information. Payment in advance is necessary, as charging is not permitted in any government program. St. Mary’s School also assures that there will be no special identification of the students participating in the free, reduced or regular price meal.

[Civil Rights Statement: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs’, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual’s income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)]

MEAL CHARGE POLICY

I. PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal account procedures for St. Mary's Catholic School in Tracy, MN.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- St. Mary's Catholic School recognizes the parent/guardian's responsibility to provide lunch for their children. Proper nutritional intake is essential for adequate learning to occur.
- It is the policy of St. Mary's Catholic School to offer lunch. The Food Service Department strives to produce quality meals at a reasonable cost.
- Students may purchase a meal when funds have been deposited into their student account or by cash payment.
- Households may apply for free/reduced meals anytime during the school year. Applications are included in the enrollment packets at the parent night meeting. In addition, applications are available at the school office.

III. PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFYING FAMILY OF ACCOUNT STATUS

- A. The Parent/Guardian will be notified when the household account is at \$10.00 or less.
- B. The method, for notifying the parent/guardian of children in the Pre-School program through grade six, will be a note sent home.
- C. If the account is negative, the school will call the family. If the household cannot be reached, another letter will be sent home.
- D. Assistance from county Social Services may be requested by the school for possible neglect when above procedures are unsuccessful.

WELLNESS

I. PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects student's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. The education committee recognizes that nutrition education and physical education are essential components of the educational process and that good health fosters good student attendance and education.
- B. The school environment should promote and protect students' health, well-being, and ability to learn by encouraging healthy eating and physical activity.
- C. The school district encourages the involvement of students, parents, teachers, food service staff, and other interested persons in implementing, monitoring and reviewing school's nutrition and physical activity policies.
- D. Children need to have access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn and thrive.
- E. All students in grades Preschool through grade six will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- F. Qualified food service personnel will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; try to accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the

student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

III. GUIDELINES

A. Foods and Beverages

1. All foods and beverages made available on campus will be consistent with the current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. Food service personnel will take every measure to ensure that student access to foods and beverages meet or exceed all federal, state, and local laws and guidelines.
3. Food service personnel shall adhere to all federal, state, and local food safety and security guidelines.
4. St. Mary's School will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.
5. St. Mary's School will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.
6. St. Mary's School will make every effort to provide students with sufficient time to eat after sitting down for school meals and will schedule meal periods at appropriate times during the school day.
7. St. Mary's School will discourage tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students are allowed to eat during such activities.

B. School Food Service Program/Personnel

1. St. Mary's School will provide a healthy and safe school meal program that will strictly comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations.
2. St. Mary's School shall designate an appropriate person to be responsible for the school's food service program, whose duties shall include the creation of nutrition guidelines and procedures for the selection of foods and beverages made available on campus to ensure food and beverage choices are consistent with current USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
3. As part of the school's responsibility to operate a food service program, the school will provide continuing professional development for all food service personnel in schools.

C. Nutrition Education and Promotion

1. St. Mary's School will encourage and support healthy eating by students and engage in nutrition promotion that is:
 - a. Offered as part of a comprehensive program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
 - b. Part of health education classes as well as classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects, where appropriate; and
 - c. Enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and includes participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, and field trips.

D. Physical Activity

1. Students need opportunities for physical activity and to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior. Toward that end, health education will reinforce (a) the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and reduce sedentary activities such as watching television, video gaming, etc.; (b) opportunities for physical activity which will be incorporated into other subject lessons, where appropriate; and (c) classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.



E. Communications with Parents

1. St. Mary's School recognizes that parents and guardians have a primary and fundamental role in promoting and protecting their children's health and well-being.
2. St. Mary's School will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children.
3. ***St. Mary's School encourages parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and refrain from including beverages and foods without nutritional value.***
4. St. Mary's School will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities and will support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- A. The education committee approves the Wellness Policy and the Wellness Policy will be implemented throughout the school district.
- B. School food service staff, will ensure compliance within the school's food service areas and will report to the building principal.
- C. The school's food service program administrator may provide an annual report to the principal setting forth the nutrition guidelines and procedures for selection of all foods made available on campus.
- D. The principal will ensure compliance with the wellness policy and may provide an annual report of the school's compliance with the policy to the education committee.
- E. The school will post this wellness policy on its website, to the extent it maintains a website.

Legal References: Minn. Stat § 121A.215 (Local School District Wellness Policy)
42 U.S.C. § 1751 *et seq.* (Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act)
42 U.S.C. § 1771 *et seq.* (Child Nutrition Act of 1966)
P.L. 108-265 (2004) § 204 (Local Wellness Policy)
7 U.S.C. § 5341 (Establishment of Dietary Guidelines)
7 C.F.R. § 210.10 (School Lunch Program Requirements)
7 C.F.R § 220.8 (School Breakfast Program Requirements)

Local Resources: Minnesota Department of Education, www.education.state.mn.us
Minnesota Department of Health, www.health.state.mn.us
County Health Departments
Action for Healthy Kids Minnesota, www.actionforhealthykids.org

COMPUTER LAB

Each student has the opportunity to use the computer lab to learn keyboarding skills, computer language and to do classwork through our current computer programs. All students that have access to the Internet will do so under adult supervision only. We require all students using the internet to sign an *Acceptable Use Policy* which details school guidelines about acceptable in-school use of the internet. All parents will be required to sign the form as well if they wish for their child to use the internet during school hours.

St. Mary's School Library Policy

Each student has an opportunity to use the library to exchange books, to learn how to use the library, and to work on individual projects. Please help your child return books in a timely manner. Each book is checked out for a one-week period with the opportunity to renew for an additional week. The child must bring the book to school in order to renew.

We want to teach our students responsibility for caring, renewing, and returning books on time so that others may borrow them. We understand that accidents happen! **If a library book is lost or damaged, the best policy is to notify the librarian or school office as soon as possible.**

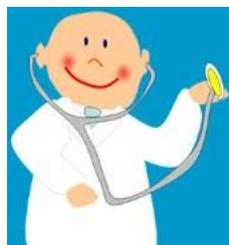
EasyLib

I ♥
MY
LIBRARY



St. Mary's does not charge a fine for overdue books, however, if a book is lost or damaged a bill will be sent home to replace the book if it is longer than 3 weeks overdue. Payment will need to be received within the next two weeks. Your child will not be allowed to check out books until the fine has been paid or the book is replaced. If the book isn't found or replaced by the end of the quarter, your child's report card will be held until receipt of payment or receipt of the book. If you pay for a book and the book is then found and returned, we will reimburse your payment if the book is in the same condition as when it left the school library.

HEALTH SERVICES



of any concern.

A public school health nurse provides services to St. Mary's School. She keeps complete health records for each enrolled student. Various requested health forms will need to be completed by the parents. Immunizations must be current in order for the child to attend any Minnesota school, parochial or public. Please comply with any requests made by the school nurse.

The hearing and vision of all children are screened annually. Both can be tested any time by request of the parents or teacher. Parents will be notified

MEDICATIONS

The school cannot legally distribute medication, prescription or over the counter drugs to any student without written parental permission for each medication. Parents must bring all medications to the school. Students should never bring their medication to school.

Non-prescription or over-the-counter drugs must be provided by the parent/ guardian and be properly marked with the student's name, dosage and date. If your student needs an Epi-Pen, or allergy medication, this must also be provided by the family with proper identification on it.

Any medication including, but not limited to cough drops, anti-acids, Tylenol, etc., will not be dispensed without filling out the correct form. This form includes all information, which is required by law and provides legal protection for our staff. Help us teach the children respect for all "pills" by taking the extra time and effort to see that all medication is given as needed.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Children should not remain in school when they have a rash, fever, sore throat, or severe cold. This is not only injurious to the child, but also endangers the health of others.

Communicable illnesses should be reported at once so exposure letters can be sent out. If a child is hospitalized or has a lengthy illness, the pupil's regular classroom teacher can provide help with their school lessons.

- Chronic situations, such as diabetes, asthma, etc. should always be reported to the school nurse and office. This should be done at the beginning of each year and as often as the physical situation changes.
- If a child complains of or shows symptoms of illness in the morning, please keep them home for observation. You may send them to school later in the day if you are confident that they are well and are not exhibiting any symptoms of illness.
- If a child becomes ill in school, a parent will be called and the child sent home. If the parents cannot be reached a person designated by the parent on the school emergency form will be notified. Since a child who is ill may not be sent home without notification to parents, it is imperative that we have the name and telephone number of an alternate designate.
- A child should remain at home for 24 hours after a fever has returned to normal.

HEAD LICE PROCEDURES

1. If a teacher suspects the possibility of head lice, the child will be sent to the office for confidential screening by the designated health person.
2. If nits are located, the child will be sent home for proper treatment. He/she may return to school the following day, after treatment has occurred.
3. Upon return, the student will be screened again to ensure treatment has been effective. If it is determined the treatment needs to be repeated, the child will again be sent home.
4. Siblings will also be screened at the initial determination of existing head lice.

5. A note will be sent home with students in the classroom, requesting that parents screen their child and treat as necessary.

Preserving the confidentiality of each student/family is mandated. Although MN Department of Health, the Center for Disease Control and other agencies have determined that “children with head lice infestations do not need to be dismissed from school,” St. Mary’s is sensitive to the anxiety that parents encounter and has not changed its procedure of dismissing students from school. Please refer to the Minnesota Department of Health Head Lice fact sheet in your registration packet for more information.

SCHOOL BUSING

Tracy 4.0 School Bus Service handles arrangements for bus transportation.

School bus safety laws mandate bus safety training for all students in grades PreK-10. In keeping with MN law, at the completion of bus training, each student, parent and teacher must sign a “*Statement of Assurance*.” Failure to certify bus training results in denial, on the part of the school district, to provide transportation to the student(s). When the Statement of Assurance comes home, please sign and return to school as soon as possible. *See bus conduct guidelines for Public School District 2904 below.*



Out of concern for the safety of the children and respect for the bus driver, written permission is required for any student to be left off at any location other than the “normal” bus stop. A note with clear directions of where they are going including the physical address and the number of the bus the child needs to take should be sent with the child. In case of emergency, parents may phone or email the school office with the necessary information. **When making a change in transportation needs for your student, phone call/email before 12 noon. Verbal requests from the students will not be honored.** The school Administrative Assistant or other office personnel will write all bus passes. Please adhere to this policy closely and impress upon your child its necessity. A lost child is a frightening experience for everyone.

CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES AND CONSEQUENCES FOR MISBEHAVIOR

Riding the school bus is a privilege, not a right. Students are expected to follow the same behavioral standards while riding school buses as are expected on school property or at school activities, functions or events. All school rules are in effect while a student is riding the bus or at the bus stop.

Consequences for school bus/bus stop misconduct will be imposed by the building principal or the Principal’s designee. In addition, all school bus/bus stop misconduct will be reported to the District’s Transportation Safety Director. Serious misconduct will be reported to the Department of Public Safety and may be reported to local law enforcement.

A. School Bus and Bus Stop Rules

The 4.0 Bus Safety Rules are to be posted on every bus. If these rules are broken, the 4.0 Bus Service discipline procedures are to be followed. Consequences are progressive and may include suspension of bus privileges. It is the school bus driver’s responsibility to report unacceptable behavior to the School District’s Transportation Office/School Office.

B. Rules at the Bus Stop

1. Get to your bus stop five minutes before your scheduled pick up time. The school bus driver will not wait for late students.
2. Respect the property of others while waiting at your bus stop.
3. Keep your arms, legs and belongings to yourself.
4. Use appropriate language.
5. Stay away from the street, road or highway when waiting for the bus.
6. After getting off the bus, move away from the bus.
7. If you must cross the street, always cross in front of the bus where the driver can see you. Wait for the driver to signal to you before crossing the street.
8. No fighting, harassment, intimidation or horseplay.
9. No use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

C. Rules on the Bus

1. Student will obey at all times.
2. Student will be at bus stop on time and remain in the safety zone until loaded.
3. Student will wait for bus off roadway in an orderly manner.
4. Student will cross road in front of bus.
5. Student will keep head and hands inside bus at all times.
6. Student will remain seated when bus is in motion.
7. Student will use inside voices on the bus.
8. Student causing problems will be suspended from riding privileges.
9. Student will not throw things inside or outside the bus.
10. Student will report damage to driver at once and be financially responsible for such damages.
11. Student will show respect for the driver and other passengers.
12. Student will keep bus clean of paper and other litter.
13. Student will know all safety and emergency procedures.
14. Student will refrain from use of profanity, suggestive language, bringing nuisance articles on the bus.
15. Student will refrain from verbally and sexually harassing activities/comments.
16. Student will understand all school policies that apply to bus ridership.

PARENT AND GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

A. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities For Transportation Safety

1. Become familiar with the 4.0 Bus Service rules and policies, regulations, and principles of school bus safety.
2. Assist students in understanding safety rules and encourage them to abide by them.
3. Recognize their responsibilities for the actions of their students.
4. Support safe riding practices and reasonable discipline efforts.
5. When appropriate, assist students in safely crossing local streets before boarding and after leaving the bus.
6. Support procedures for emergency evacuation, and procedures in emergencies as set up by the 4.0 Bus Service.
7. Respect the rights and privileges of others.
8. Communicate safety concerns to school administrators.
9. Monitor bus stops, if possible.
10. Support all efforts to improve school bus safety.

B. Parent and Guardian Notification

A copy of the 4.0 Bus Service bus stop and bus rules will be provided to each family at the beginning of the school year or when the child enrolls, if this occurs during the school year. Parents and guardians are asked to review the rules with their student

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

Christian discipline is growth during formation of the sense of personal responsibility. School rules are a means of developing personal responsibility and concern for others. We believe each student at St. Mary's has a right:

1. to an education in the Catholic faith and Catholic values;
2. to a good learning environment and education;
3. to courtesy and respect from teachers and other students;
4. to have his/her personal property respected.

Each teacher is responsible for formulating rules/consequences with his/her class. These rules/consequences are written, discussed and posted in the classroom. Teachers will make every effort to assist the student in his/her personal behavior.

Consequences for Infractions & Parent Acknowledgement

approved by Education Committee in January, 2016

Each student is responsible and accountable for his/her behavior and actions. When the situation warrants, the teacher and principal will visit with the student, and agree upon a solution. If a student's behavior becomes serious due to lack of responsibility and cooperation. A series of events will be set in motion. The teacher will inform the principal should a child need to move into the following steps: (Steps could be eliminated should the seriousness of an offense so dictate.)

First step: Parents are contacted either by telephone or email by the child's teacher or principal.

Second step: If another incident occurs, a parent conference will be called to review the situation.

Third step: A parent conference is held again. This time the student is placed on Disciplinary Probation with possible in-school suspension or a one-day out-of-school suspension.

Special circumstances: A student will not be kept at St. Mary's School if the suspensions have proven to be ineffective. Additionally, expulsion will occur when conduct is of such a nature that continuation of the student in school will, in the school's determination, pose a significant problem or threat to orderly school activities or danger to other students. The Pastor is involved with the final decision. Parents/guardians and student will be informed.

Documentation will be kept on all discipline referrals.

Adopted by the Education Committee on June 12, 2017

DIOCESAN HUMAN SEXUALITY AND SEXUAL IDENTITY POLICY

All school policies, procedures, resources, employee trainings, and assistance given to families are intended to be consistent with the Church's teaching on the dignity of the human person, including human sexuality.

The following policy statements are included herein to be reflective of a commitment to a culture of transparency and understanding of Church teachings related to school operations with regards to human sexuality and sexual identity.

Purpose and rationale regarding the stated following policies is within the MN Catholic Bishops document, "*Guiding Principles for Catholic Schools and Religious Education Concerning Human Sexuality and Identity.*" The MN Bishops' document is accessible on the Minnesota Catholic Conference web site at <https://www.mncatholic.org/guiding-principles-for-sexuality-identity-in-catholic-education/>

The following decisions, and all pertinent applicable decisions, regarding carrying out policy will be determined by and correspond to a student's identity as male or female that is congruent with one's biological identification based upon physical characteristics present at birth:

- A. A student's name and pronoun usage
 - B. A student's access to facilities and use of overnight accommodations
 - C. The basis for a student's eligibility for single-sex curricular and extracurricular
- Expressions of a student's sexual identity are prohibited when they cause disruption or confusion regarding the Church's teaching on human sexuality.
 - The consciences of students and employees will be respected with the assurance of their inviolable right to the acknowledgement that God has created each person as a unity of body and soul, male or female, and that God-designed sexual expression and behavior must be exclusively oriented to love and life in marriage between one man and one woman.
 - The school will communicate with parents or guardians about their child's behavior at school and inform them of any concerns relating to the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual health, safety, or welfare of their child, except when advised otherwise by law enforcement or a social service agency.

School administration maintains the right to determine any disruptions and subsequent school actions related to the preceding sexuality and sexual identity statements identified in this section.

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL BULLYING POLICY

Effective March 1, 2015; Supersedes: None

Preamble: Created in the image and likeness of God, each child shares a fundamental human dignity. A Catholic school provides an environment dedicated to protecting and fostering the development of that dignity. The school helps children learn how to exercise their God-given freedom responsibly. The goal being that good choices become good habits, that is, *virtues*. The highest virtue is charity, which God both requires and makes possible, ***“Here is my commandment,” says Jesus. “That you love one another as I have loved you.”*** As bearers of the divine image, members of the school community deserve care and respect from all. Bullying and retaliation are not to be tolerated.

This policy serves as a guide, in the event, that expectations of respect are not met, and when reconciliation and restitution are needed.

Definitions: For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

“Aggressor” means a student who engages in bullying or retaliation.

“Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof. That is objectively offensive, is directed at a target, and that:

- causes physical harm or emotional harm that results in clearly identifiable physical symptoms to the target OR places the target in reasonable fear of such harm:
- causes damage to the target’s property.
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or fears the damage to his /her property.
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target.
- infringes on the rights of the target at school, including defamation and invasion of privacy.
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process and the orderly operation of the school.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term **“Bullying”** is used it is to denote either bullying or cyber-bullying.

“Cyber-Bullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but is not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature, including a post on a social network, Internet Website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device.

“Hostile Environment” means a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to materially and substantially alter the conditions of the student’s education.

“Retaliation” means any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, witnesses bullying or has reliable information about bullying.

“School Grounds” mean property on which a school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased or used by a school for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training.

“Staff” includes, but is not limited to: educators, faculty, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, athletic coaches, support staff, and paraprofessionals.

“Target” is a student against whom bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

“*Remedial response*” means a measure to stop and correct prohibited conduct, prevent prohibited conduct from recurring, and protect, support, and intervene on behalf of a student who is the target or victim of prohibited conduct.

Prohibition against Bullying and Retaliation: The school expressly prohibits bullying in all forms, either by an individual or group of aggressors. Bullying, including cyber-bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds owned, leased or used by the school.
- at any school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds.
- at a school bus stop.
- on a school bus.
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, lease or used by the school.

Bullying is also prohibited at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related. Similarly, the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school to commit an act or acts of bullying is also prohibited.

Reporting: Any staff or volunteer who has witnessed or become aware of any instance of bullying or retaliation must report that act to the principal or lead teacher.

Any one student or parent/guardian of a student is strongly encouraged to report all acts of bullying. Reports can be made to the student’s teacher. Who must then report it to the principal.

Anyone with general questions or concerns about bullying or the school’s policy should address those questions or concerns with the principal.

Reports may be made confidentially when requested.

Reports may be made anonymously. The anonymous nature of the report may make it difficult to investigate or corroborate the alleged bullying. No disciplinary action may be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

False accusations of bullying are absolutely prohibited and may result in discipline in accordance with the school’s discipline policy.

Retaliation: Retaliation against a target, a witness to bullying, someone who helps or intervenes for the target, a person who makes a good faith reporting of bullying or who provides information during an investigation of bullying, is prohibited. The school will take appropriate action against any student, staff or volunteer who commits such acts.

Response and Investigation: The school takes seriously all reports of bullying.

Once a report of bullying has been received it must be documented. Any further actions, the determination of the investigation and actions taken as a result of the investigation will be documented and kept on file. Files will be kept until the student or staff member is no longer associated with the school.

Upon receipt of a report of bullying the principal may take immediate action, at their discretion, to protect the target or victim of the bullying. The principal or her designee (which could be the parish Priest or two members of the Education Committee with no conflict of interest) will conduct an investigation. Every effort will be made to begin the investigation within three school days of the report of bullying. Once the investigation is complete the results will be given to the principal. The principal will determine what if any discipline actions need to be taken.

The school reserves the sole discretion to determine the scope and adequacy of the investigation.

The school retains the sole discretion to determine whether bullying has occurred and what the response should be.

If it is determined that bullying or other prohibited conduct occurred, the school will take appropriate action. Responses shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct and shall take into account the developmental ages and maturity level of the parties involved, the degree of harm, whether it is a reoccurring problem, the relationship between the parties and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Depending on the circumstances, the school's response could include but are not limited to:

- remedial responses or positive behavioral interventions ranging from a warning to suspension and/or expulsion.
- notifying the parents/guardians of both the aggressor and the target of the bullying.
- notifying the parents/guardians of the target, the aggressor, and any other affected persons about available community resources.

Any contact with parents/guardians will be conducted in a manner that it will be verified that the parents/guardians received the information regarding the situation and are aware of the situation. If parents/guardians are not talked to directly, multiple forms of communication need to be used such as a read receipt or a returned response which will then be documented that it was received. The response will indicate that the parents/guardians received the information. If no response is received every effort will be made to contact them directly.

Training: Training on this policy shall be provided for staff annually. At the discretion of the principal, volunteers who have significant contact with the students will also receive training. Students will also be provided with information at the beginning of the school year on bullying. The information will include what bullying is and examples of how it might occur, how to prevent it, how to intervene and advocate for themselves and others. Also, refresher training for the students shall be given during the 2nd semester.

Publication and Notice: The principal shall provide written or electronic notice of this policy to the staff. A copy of the policy shall be included in the student handbook which is distributed to families at the beginning of each school year. This policy shall be conspicuously posted in the administrative office of the school.

St. Mary's Truancy Policy

It is Minnesota Law that requires every child between seven and sixteen years of age to attend a public/private school during every day that the school is in session. Regardless of the nature of the class, attendance is necessary if the student is to benefit and achieve at his/her highest level of ability. Students should be encouraged to attend school every day unless there is an acceptable cause for absenteeism.

DEFINITION OF TRUANCY: (From *The Office of the Revisor of Statutes*)

Under Minnesota law, a continuing truant is a child who is subject to the compulsory instruction requirements of section 120A.22 Compulsory Instruction and is absent from instruction in a school, as defined in section 120A.05 (4) Definitions, without valid excuse within a single school year for:

(1) three days if the child is in elementary school; or

(2) three or more class periods on three days if the child is in middle school, junior high school, or high school.

1. The 1993 legislature amended the Minnesota Statute 626.556 Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors, the mandatory child abuse reporting law. “Neglect” now includes failure by a parent or guardian to ensure that a child is educated according to state law. (This may include children under age seven who are on an I.E.P.) This means school personnel must report educational neglect to the social service agency. The law presumes a child’s absence from school is due to the parents’ failure to comply with the law if the child is less than twelve years of age. If the child is twelve or older, the absence is presumed the child’s intent.

The State Department of Education states what will be considered as an excused absence. The following information is taken from the Manual of Instructions, uniform Child Accounting for Minnesota School Districts. Absences that are generally considered to be excused:

- Sickness of a child
- Sickness or death in the family
- Impassable roads or weather making travel unsafe
- Observance of religious holidays
- Quarantine
- Required to be in court
- Medical or dental treatment
- Attendance at a funeral of a close friend or relative
- Excuses for other absences would be granted at the discretion of the administration.

Since it is the primary responsibility of parents that students attend school, it is expected that all absences be documented with verbal or written communication between parents and school. Following the third day a student has been absent due to illness, a letter will be sent to parents notifying them that a written, signed medical explanation from a physician must be sent to the school office. If this explanation is not received at the school office within three school days of absence, a truancy report will be filed.

The law requires that a child’s parent/guardian makes sure the child has adequate food, shelter, and goes to school. This means the parent/guardian must make every effort to make sure the child is appropriately supervised and has enough rest at night. A parent who contributes to a child’s truancy from school can be charged with a misdemeanor.

WHAT OUR SCHOOL WILL DO:

1. Send a written notice of continuing truancy to the parent/guardian.
2. Hold a meeting with the parent to discuss solutions to the student’s truancy.
3. Evaluate whether there are social, emotional, or physical problems which are contributing to the child’s truancy and if so, offer appropriate in-school services or make a referral to a community agency.
4. Provide school-based attendance interventions.
5. ***After (3) three days of absences in the quarter you will receive a letter notifying you of your child’s absences. After (7) days of absences in the semester you will receive a letter notifying you of your child’s absences.***

TRUANCY PROCEDURES

For children under age 12:

1. The principal, counselor, or teachers file a report of educational neglect with social services.
2. An intake worker will assess the report by contacting the parents, student, and school officials. If educational neglect is found, Lyon County will provide Social Services on a voluntary basis or will refer the matter to the County Attorney's Office.
3. When necessary, the truancy petition will be filed with the Court and a hearing scheduled. If the child and/or parents deny the allegation, school personnel may be called to testify.
4. If the child is determined to be truant, a service plan will be established. The Court order may include family or individual counseling, supervision by a probation agent or social worker, placement of the child outside the home, a fine or community work service, or other appropriate alternatives.

TARDINESS: Students are expected to be to school on time. A student is considered tardy if he/she comes to school at 8:00 a.m. or later. After nine unexcused tardies, a letter will be sent home with an explanation of St. Mary's truancy policy. After fifteen unexcused absences, a truancy letter will be filed with the County Attorney. If a student comes to school habitually late, missing a class/or classes three times or more (due to illness, etc.) the school requires that the student and his/her parents bring a doctor's note explaining to St. Mary's School the illness or injury that is causing the student to miss that particular class/or classes.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A grievance is defined as any cause of complaint arising between the School of St. Mary's and persons served by the School. A complaint or misunderstanding should be resolved on the lowest level with a verbal discussion between the parties involved; however, sometimes a resolution is not reached so there are additional steps one may choose to take, each in hopes to reach resolution.

STEP 1: *Discuss the matter fully with the classroom teacher or with the employee the grievance most directly involves.*

STEP 2: *If the matter cannot be resolved, discussion with the immediate supervisor (typically, this is the principal at St. Mary's School as the principal is responsible for all school personnel).* Note: If the matter concerns the principal the second step is to put the matter in writing to the principal.

STEP 3: *If the matter cannot be resolved, the matter should be put in writing to the immediate supervisor (again, typically the principal). The supervisor will prepare a written response back to the person(s) with the grievance in a timely manner. A written grievance needs to include the following information: the nature of the complaint, including whom the complaint is directed against, any factual data (other than hearsay) which the complainant deems appropriate, and specific recommendations for appropriate resolution of the complaint.*

STEP 4: If the matter has still not been resolved, the pastor would be the next level of authority. He acts in a reconciling capacity. The written complaint should be shared with the pastor along with any additional information that took place after the written complaint was shared with the

principal. The pastor may choose to consult with appropriate diocesan personnel to assist with the resolution process.

If the complaint is in regards to a school policy, the Education Committee may be consulted to discuss the policy in question. This policy review request is typically submitted to the school principal. The written request should include the policy concern and specific recommendations for altering the policy.

At every level and at all times, fair and amiable exchange must be maintained. All efforts should be made to solve the problem through discussion and in a timely manner. Exceptions to this grievance procedure include any incidents involving the physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child. The grievance may go directly to the source of authority. The school will contact the appropriate diocesan personnel and the appropriate legal authorities immediately.

PERMANENT RECORDS

RECORDS AND RECORDS REQUESTS: School records are to be accurate, valid and specific. Since these records may be demanded as legal evidence, it is important that they be kept up to date. St. Mary's Elementary School will endeavor to obtain all requested items of information. These records include the diocesan permanent record, accurate attendance records, and standardized test results. It is recommended that the permanent record card follow the child to his/her new school if he transfers to another elementary school. Graduates of St. Mary's Elementary School will have a copy of the permanent record kept on file at St. Mary's Elementary School. The permanent records are not removed from the office without informing the administrative assistant as to when the records will be returned. No records are to leave school premises.

COLLECTION, SECURITY AND DISSEMINATION OF OFFICIAL SCHOOL RECORDS

PARENTS OF STUDENTS AND STUDENTS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE:

1. Parents/legal guardians may ask to review the contents of any records or data collected on or for their child. "Records or data" may mean any or all of the following: (a) Identifying data; (b) Academic work completed; (c) Level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement test scores); (d) Attendance data; (e) Scores on standardized intelligence, aptitude, and psychological tests; (f) Interest inventory results; (g) Health data; (h) Family background information; (I) Teacher or counselor ratings and observations; (j) Verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior.
 - A. The administrator is provided a reasonable amount of time to reply to a request but not to exceed 45 days.
 - B. The administrator is responsible for determining which records or data will be accumulated in a student's file and the length of time required (retention).
 - C. The administrator (or delegate) will be responsible for maintaining the student's file (subject to the parent's review) with all written requests from authorized personnel and/or agencies. The purpose for which the information is requested and the specific records to be released.
 - D. The administrator (or delegate) will not release a student's records without the written consent of the parents, and a copy of those records to the parents if they desire.

The only exception is in the case of the student's transferring to another elementary school and upon request of the receiving school system for the student's records for which they (the receiving school) have a legitimate education interest.

- E. Advisory/Education Committee will establish procedures for enforcing this policy including methods for hearings in the case of contested data on the part of parents, necessary record keeping forms, promulgation to parents of their rights, and response to state and federal authorities in case of audit.

ST. MARY'S ATHLETIC PROGRAM POLICY

1. St. Mary's School Athletic Program will teach the students in grades 3-6 the skills, fundamentals, and sportsmanship of basketball. This program will be run in keeping with St. Mary's School's education policies.
 - A. As the first and primary teachers of children, parents are personally responsible to see that their child/children are growing spiritually. (i.e. they are comfortable talking about God in and out of the home, Sunday Mass attendance, Holy Days of Obligation, knowledge of basic prayers.)
 - B. All students participating in the basketball program will maintain a "C" average. *If a student's grades fall below a "C" average, the student will not be allowed to practice or play. If a student falls behind on classroom assignments, they will not be allowed to practice or play, at the discretion of the coach and classroom teacher.*
 - C. *If a student is absent from school on the day of a scheduled practice or game, the student will not be allowed to practice.*
2. The Athletic Program will begin the Monday after the Christmas Program and end with St. Mary's Tournament the last Saturday of February. The Athletic Banquet will be held in March.
3. *Practices will be held two times per week and will run TBD. Students must be picked up by TBD.* If there is not school on a designated practice day, the practice will be held the next day.
4. Each practice and game will begin with prayer that will encourage sportsmanship, safety, and positive attitudes.
5. This program will strive to see that all children will be given adequate opportunity for participation in practice and games.
6. This program will only participate in events that will foster positive experiences and sportsmanship.
7. St. Mary's teams will not compete against each other in any tournament.
8. Parents and coaches will provide car-pooling to away games.
9. A permission slip will need to be signed and returned to the school prior to the first practice. Students will not be allowed to practice with the team until the permission slip is received.
10. A medical release will also need to be signed and returned to participate in our program.

TO: Parents and Staff of St. Mary's Catholic School

FROM: Lisa Dieter, Principal

DATE: August 2020

RE: ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF ASBESTOS CONTAINING MATERIALS

In compliance with the US Environment Protection Agency (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), in the fall of 1988 we performed inspections of our school building for asbestos-containing building materials. The inspection findings and asbestos management plans have been on file in the school administrative office since that time.

Air Tech Environment has been contracted to provide environmental services, which includes maintaining compliance with federal regulations regarding asbestos and other regulated environmental concerns.

All asbestos containing materials in our school are in good condition and we will continue to manage them in place, as recommended by the accredited Management Planner.

The results of the re-inspections, as well as, the last six-month surveillance are on file in the *Management Plan* in the school's administrative office. Everyone is welcome to view these anytime during normal school hours (Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) Our Asbestos Program Manager; the Principal, is available to answer any questions you may have about asbestos in our buildings at (507) 629-3270, or you may contact Brian Parrie, Advanced Health, Safety and Security, at 605-430-8842 or 507-763-3606.

We are intent on not only complying with, but also exceeding federal, state, and local regulations in this area. We plan on taking whatever steps are necessary to insure your children and our employees have a safe and healthy environment in which to learn and work.

TO: Parents and Staff of St. Mary's Catholic School

FROM: Lisa Dieter, Principal

DATE: August, 2020

RE: PESTICIDE NOTICE

A Minnesota state law is now in effect that requires schools to inform parents and guardians if they apply certain pesticides on school property.

Specifically, this law requires schools that apply these pesticides to maintain an estimated schedule of pesticide applications and to make the schedule available to parents and guardians. State law also requires that you be told that the long-term health effects on children from the application of such pesticides or the class of chemicals to which they belong.

All applications will be completed at the end of a school day when there will be one or more days of no school following application. In the past, applications have been made during the summer months, once school is in recess. Normal applications of pesticides for weed control, most containing *2-4D* or *Trick*, will follow label instructions. We will notify you in a general manner through our weekly newsletter if an application is scheduled during the school year. If you want further information or have questions, please call the school office.