



Welcome to St. Mary's School!

“The mission of schools is to develop a sense of truth, of what is good and beautiful. And this occurs through a rich path made up of many ingredients. This is why there are so many subjects — because development is the results of different elements that act together and stimulate intelligence, knowledge, the emotions, the body, and so on.” — Pope Francis

Dear Parents and Guardians,

On behalf of our dedicated faculty and staff, we welcome you and your child/ren to St. Mary's School. In choosing St. Mary's School, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education. We thank you for your dedication and for entrusting us with your most precious gifts from God, your child/ren.

This Student Handbook reflects the policies of St. Mary's School. It has been prepared to help acquaint you with our school not to overload you with rules and nitpicking. We hope it proves useful to new families as well as to those families who have been with us for several years. Please note that this handbook replaces all other handbooks and **contains new information.**

We ask that you please read this document carefully, review it with your child/ren, and sign the attached agreement. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of St. Mary's School during the school year. Individuals who do not respect and abide by the school policies, may be asked to leave.

The faculty and staff of our school look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual formation in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

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

Peace, Love, & Prayer,

Leslie Conyers
Principal

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of St. Mary's School in union with the parents is to gather as a faith-filled community to form students through the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Catholic tradition and to provide an excellent education.

VISION STATEMENT

“In the spirit of Blessed John Paul's call for a New Evangelization, Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Kalamazoo desire to respond to this transformative invitation to holiness with a firm and renewed zeal. As a multi-culturally diverse institution, we joyfully embrace the universal vocation to holiness. We are a community centered in the Eucharistic Christ and an educational system of the highest standards, rooted in our Catholic faith. Our goal is to equip students with an excellent education and a solid faith formation so each student may know the faith confidently, live the faith in a community where families and teachers work together to advocate for each other's salvation and Sainthood, and share the faith with relevance and loving courage throughout their lives.”

CORE VALUES

- We reflect the morals and values of our Catholic faith through the doctrines of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We teach, model, and integrate Gospel values into daily life and service to others. We are rooted in the Christian life to embody the spirit of Christ in the world.
- We will achieve academic excellence by providing researched-based competency in the core curriculum, involvement in enrichment activities, and a safe, nurturing environment. All of this will give each child the opportunity to reach his or her full potential.
- We believe well-educated, well-rounded students are the result of the active involvement of parents, teachers, and the entire parish community. Parish life, school life, and home life are integrated in faith to ensure life-long growth.
- We will be accepting in educating, to the best of our abilities and in an environment of the respect and care, children from all races, faiths, academic abilities, physical abilities and socio-economic levels.
- We give witness to our vision through worship, prayer, setting a Christian example, collaboration, and unity through diversity.
- St. Mary's School is a mission of St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Parish.

SAINT MARY'S SCHOOL

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

We believe that:

- As a precious child of God, each student is treated with dignity and respect.
- The spirit of our school calls each student to a life of prayer.
- Education is the shared responsibility of the student, family, school, and community.
- Teachers and Staff are deserving of respect of dignity.
- A nurturing and safe environment is provided for all students.
- Parents and guardians are active participants in the learning process.
- Individual learning differences are respected.
- Each educator is a model of Catholic identity.
- Self-esteem is a vital component of success.
- Understanding of diversity is essential to world peace and justice.
- Children serve others through their God-given talents and gifts.
- Catholic values are a guide for students now and for the future.
- Reverence and respect are the responsibility of the entire St. Mary's School Community.

ABSENCE

When a student is unable to attend school, parents should call 269-683-9191 between 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m., giving the student's name, the teacher's name, and the specific reason for the absence. In case of communicable diseases, a doctor's release may be required by the Health Department in order for the student to be readmitted to class.

Excused Absence

Absences authorized as "excused" are those caused by illness, quarantine, doctor's appointment, death in the family, school related absences, "take your child to work day", absences prearranged with the principal, and those due to exceptionally urgent matters. However, the child is still marked absent for the time he/she is not in school. A student's parent or guardian must provide a satisfactory written explanation for the student's absence. The student must present this note to his/her teacher upon return.

If a student is absent for three or more days he/she must provide a doctor's note. Extensions of vacation periods for family convenience or trips scheduled on regular school days are not considered legitimate reasons for absence from school.

Unexcused Absence

Students who are chronically absent for other than serious health reasons will not be permitted to participate in any extracurricular activities, field trips or other activities deemed eligible by the school administration.

Chronic absence from school without a diagnosed illness may be viewed as truancy and could result in notification of the proper civil authorities.

If your child is ill before coming to school, parents are asked to keep him/her home. This will prevent spreading illness to other children, as well as avoiding unnecessary trips to the school on the part of the parents. When a child has experienced a fever, he/she cannot return to school for 24 hours.

Emergency names and telephone numbers, kept on file in the secretary's office, are extremely important, and all families are expected to update this information as necessary.

Lateness

A student is late for school if he/she is not in his/her designated classroom by 8:00 AM. If arriving after 8:00 AM, a student must report to the office to obtain a tardy slip stating the reason for lateness. A parent / guardian must accompany the student and sign in the student. Chronic lateness will result in administrative review of the situation.

ADMISSIONS

New Kindergarten students must be 5 years old on or before September 1st of the year in which they are enrolling. New First graders must be 6 years old on or before October 1st of the school year. Testing will be required for Kindergarten admissions. Further, St. Mary's School reserves the right to an observational period for school readiness. Children who demonstrate a lack of maturity for the all-day Kindergarten program may have adjustments made to their schedule. A physical examination and proof of required immunizations or waiver must be provided when a student enters school for the first time. **Age must be verified by a birth certificate.** Catholic students must provide a copy of a Baptismal certificate unless the child has been baptized at St. Mary's Parish. Parents of students who are transferring from other schools must have the transcripts of their academic records sent to St. Mary's School to ensure admission to the proper grade.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

St. Mary's After School Club is a fully licensed childcare program that is available to St. Mary's School students on regularly scheduled school days from 3:15 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. **Students must be five or older to participate.** If you are interested, please call the school office for more information.

The rate is: \$4.50 for 1 child, \$4.25 for 2 children, and \$4.00 for 3 children.

After School Club Late Pick Up Policy

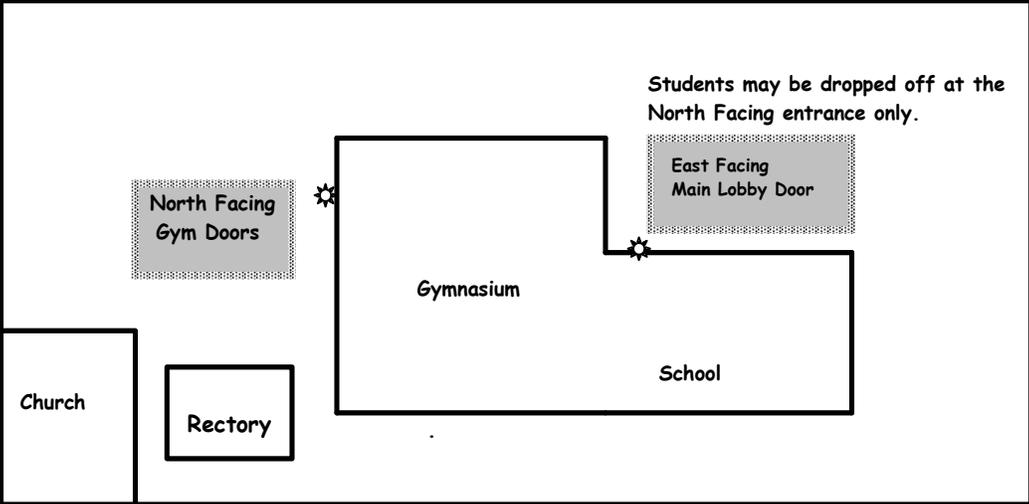
St. Mary's School understands that emergencies and accidents do happen. However, the After School Club policy for late pick up is as follows: \$5 per child for the first 10 minutes after the program is officially closed and \$1 per child every minute after that first 10 minutes. If you are going to be late, please contact Miss Rickords, the ASC coordinator. If you are going to be more than 20 minutes late, please ask someone else on your pick-up list to come for your child.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

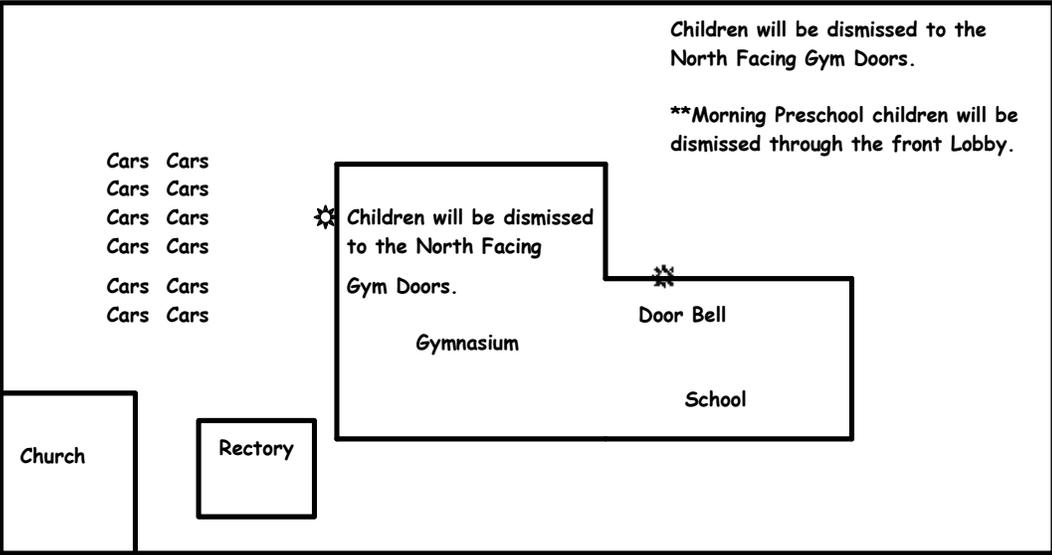
To drop off or pick up a student, please use the entrance next to the dumpster on State Street. Please follow the directional arrows to the exits. No parking, drop off or pick up is allowed on Lincoln, State or Elm Street. If you wish to park and escort your child to the gym, please use the parking lot entrance at State and Clay Street. **The parking area behind the Church and Rectory is designated for parent parking.** The parking area behind the gym is designated for staff and visitors only. Students should arrive after 7:20 a.m. and enter the school at the north gym door. Students should go to their classroom meeting area in the gym. Students may visit quietly or read a book as they wait for opening prayer at 7:50 a.m. Parents are encouraged to help their children be on time.

School is dismissed at 3:05 p.m. All students will gather in the gym at their assigned classroom area for afternoon prayer five minutes before dismissal. Students will be dismissed by grade level and exit through the north gym door. It is very important that all children leave immediately for home and are picked up promptly. Students who are not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will automatically be sent to After School Club for appropriate supervision, and **parents will be charged for this service.**

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES



DISMISSAL PROCEDURES



ASBESTOS AND CHEMICAL SPRAYS

St. Mary's School, in accordance with the Diocese of Kalamazoo, has an asbestos policy. The policy, including the location of the asbestos, is available in the office. Interested individuals should inquire at the main office. Further, it may become necessary to spray chemicals in or around the building; these applications are generally limited to the summer months. St. Mary's School will notify families no less than 24 hours prior to a chemical application if school is in session. Additional information on the applications may be obtained in the office.

ATTENDANCE

St. Mary's School regulations emphasize the importance of classroom instruction. Written work is only one part of the school day. Regular attendance is required by State Law. Excessive absenteeism will be handled on the advice of the Diocesan School Office. Attendance is documented in your child(ren's) school records and is sent with these records when they transfer to another school.

BACKPACKS AND BAGS

Students are given space in the classroom to hang their bags and backpack. Student's desks are considered the property of the school. It may be necessary sometime to search the desks and or backpacks. Such searches are the reserved right of the school under Public Act 87 of 2000. Bags and backpacks will be searched if school officials feel there is just cause. Parents will be notified if a search was necessary.

BICYCLES

Bicycles may be used by students as a means of transportation to and from school. St. Mary's School is not responsible for damaged or stolen property.

CALENDAR

The calendar for the current school year is available on the school's website, the school's Facebook page, the PAC (Parent Advancement Committee) Facebook page, and in the school office. Please consult this calendar for scheduled half days, days off, and holiday breaks. Consult the monthly calendar in the newsletter for current events, class field trips, Mass schedules, and other events of interest.

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL

Cancellation of school may take place during extreme weather or other emergencies. Parents and students are advised to listen to local television stations for announcement of cancellations or check the PAC Facebook page. The local television stations that will

receive notification from the schools are WNDU, ABC57, WSBT.

Please do not call the Parish Center, the rectory, or individual teachers. For weather related school closures, St. Mary's School adheres to Niles Community School. There may be times when St. Mary's School will close without the Niles Community Schools being closed. Attempts will be made to ensure that St. Mary's School closures are specifically announced to the media, however if this does not happen, please conform to the Niles Community School closure. Therefore, if Niles Community Schools are closed, St. Mary's School is also closed.

In the unusual circumstance where classes must be canceled during the school day, the school will determine that all students have satisfactory transportation and supervision at their homes before releasing them.

DO NOT ALLOW A CHILD TO BE LEFT AT SCHOOL UNSUPERVISED. IF A CHILD HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO SCHOOL AND SCHOOL HAS BEEN DELAYED OR CANCELLED, THERE WILL BE NO SUPERVISION. ANY CHILD LEFT AT THE SCHOOL UNSUPERVISED WILL BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS. THIS IS FOR YOUR CHILD/REN'S SAFETY.

CELLPHONES

There are legal issues involved in permitting students to carry cell phones in schools:

- The potential to communicate about illegal activities.
- The responsibility of the school to provide the best possible learning environment, which can be compromised by ringing phones.
- The potential to engage in cheating or other forms of academic dishonesty.

The administration and staff of St. Mary's School believe the wisest course of action is to permit students to bring cell phones to school with a number of conditions:

1. Cell phone use is not permitted in the classrooms, hallway, or on school grounds by students.
2. Students may not use their cell phone to record audio, video, take pictures, or post to social media during school hours.
3. All cell phones must either be turned-in to the classroom teacher upon entering the classroom each morning or kept in the student's backpack. Any student caught with his/her cell phone during school hours (ASC included), will have his/her phone confiscated until the end of the day. The parent/guardian will be given the confiscated phone by either the classroom teacher or administrator.

Students have no need of a private phone while in the school building.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/TELEPHONE

Notify the school immediately if you have a change of address or telephone number during the school year. Also, if the family is a member of St. Mary's Parish, please notify the Parish Center of the address change. The number is 269-683-5087.

CHEATING

Cheating is a serious compromise of a student's integrity and in direct opposition to the Catholic teaching of honesty. Cheating will not be tolerated at St. Mary's School. If cheating is discovered, the student's work will be confiscated and a failing grade will automatically be recorded for the assignment. The student's parents will be notified.

CLASSROOM PARTIES

Three classroom parties will be held to celebrate Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Room parents organize the celebrations with the help of other parents from the classroom. Treats may be brought for a student's birthday (after arranging the date and time with the classroom teacher). Please be sensitive to individual allergies when considering classroom treats. Handing out invitations to private parties in the classroom is discouraged, unless all students or one gender of students are invited.

COMMUNICATION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A major form of communicating school news, scheduled events, and other items of interest is the weekly newsletter and school's PAC or Facebook pages. The newsletter is sent home with the oldest child on Fridays. Additional notices may be sent at other times, i.e., a notice that school pictures will be taken the following day. Reminders may also be sent regarding half-days and holidays. Teachers send field trip permission slips and other notices home with the student.

COPYRIGHT

Use of copyrighted material in any way other than that spelled out in the use agreement is in violation of the law and is considered unacceptable behavior for St. Mary's Schools' staff. We are a Catholic school and shall model Christian behavior for our students when it comes to civil and religious law.

CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the Fall and Spring of each year. These conference times are very valuable to the educational program. It is not necessary to wait for the scheduled conferences times if a parent has a special concern. Parent conferences are encouraged and are arranged during the school year by note, e-mail or call to the

office. **If a parent has a complaint about a teacher, the parent is encouraged to discuss the difficulty with the teacher first.**

If a parent is reluctant to meet with the teacher alone, the administrator can be asked to be present at the conference. Parents are asked to make an appointment with the teacher directly. These meetings will be scheduled before 7:50 a.m. or after 3:05 p.m.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:50 a.m	Morning Prayer and dismissal to class
11:25 a.m-12:00 p.m.	Recess and Lunch
12:05 p.m.	Class Resumes
3:05 p.m.	End of the day Prayer and Dismissal

DOCTOR AND DENTIST APPOINTMENTS

Parents are expected to schedule doctor and dental appointments outside of school hours. However, when this is not possible, students will be excused for special appointments. Students are expected to return to class as soon as possible and make up classroom assignments which were missed.

DRESS CODE

Wearing of uniforms begins the first day of school.

Used uniforms are available through the uniform exchange rack; parents are encouraged to bring out-grown uniforms that are clean and in good condition to the school office for donation or exchange.

- **Shirts must be tucked in. Please make sure shirts are long enough to stay tucked in. An untucked shirt will result in a uniform violation.**
- **Pants must be classic style-no stretch pants or leggings.**
- **Uniforms must be clean and in good repair.**
- **Hairstyles should not be overly conspicuous or distracting. Hairstyles must be neat and clean in appearance.**

GIRLS:

Shirts - SOLID powder blue, navy blue, or white.

Shirts must have a collar and sleeves.

Bottoms - Navy blue or Khaki

Jumpers, skirts, skorts, shorts (may NOT be shorter than 2" above the knee), or pants (No leggings or yoga pants. No holes, metal studs, bell-bottoms)

Pants/shorts are to be worn at the waist.

Sweaters/Hooded Sweatshirts - SOLID powder blue, navy blue, or white or Spirit Wear.
NO JACKETS ARE TO BE WORN IN CLASS.

BOYS:

Shirts - SOLID powder blue, navy blue, or white.

Shirts must have a collar and sleeves.

Pants/Shorts - Navy blue or Khaki

Must be worn at the waist.

Sweaters/Hooded Sweatshirts - SOLID powder blue, navy blue, or white or Spirit Wear.
NO JACKETS ARE TO BE WORN IN CLASS.

When a non-uniform day has been announced, students are to wear clean, modest clothes which are in good repair and in good taste. Items such as crop tops or others which expose body parts not meant to be seen in school; shirts with reference to bands, drugs, tobacco, sex or alcohol, and any other article of clothing which interferes with any student's ability to concentrate or study, shall be considered in violation of this policy.

Sweat pants and pajamas are not acceptable.

A student who wears inappropriate clothing on a non-uniform day will not be allowed to participate in any additional non-uniform days and will be asked to call his/her parent/guardian for a change of clothes.

SHOES: Dress or athletic shoes are acceptable. Sandals with backs may be worn during warmer weather. **Flip-flops are not permitted.**

STOCKINGS/SOCKS: Socks or stockings must be worn at all times, sandals excepted.

P.E. CLOTHES: Shorts and appropriate gym shoes are to be worn for PE class for students in grades 4-8. Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd and 3rd graders need not change for gym but they must have **appropriate gym shoes**. PE shirts must have sleeves. **Tank tops and muscle shirts are not permitted.** Shorts must follow the guidelines listed above.

P/3, P/4, P/5 STUDENTS: These students are not required to wear uniforms. Students are expected to dress in a manner that is neat and appropriate for playing and school.

All clothing must be in good repair and properly proportioned for the child. Any attire or personal appearances that are distracting to the Christian educational environment will not be tolerated. Parents will be notified if attire is inappropriate.

DRUG FREE SCHOOL ZONE

St. Mary's School makes an effort to provide a school environment which is totally free of drugs.

Students in grades Kindergarten through 8th grade will be given age-appropriate instruction in substance abuse prevention, clearly teaching that **possession and/or use of such substances is wrong and harmful**. School policy states that the term "drugs" also includes, but is not limited to, prescription medication, alcohol, tobacco, "look alike" drugs, and candy/toys that resemble drugs.

STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO HAVE ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, OR DRUGS IN THEIR POSSESSION.

STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO HAVE PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION IN THEIR POSSESSION.

STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO HAVE NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION IN THEIR POSSESSION.

For the policies and procedures for prescription and non-prescription medication, please see the appropriate section of this handbook titled Medication.

Students, employees and parents of St. Mary's School are equally responsible in accepting these standards of conduct. Compliance is mandatory and any person in violation is subject to sanctions as follows:

1. Notification of parents upon the discovery of a student involved in the sale, possession, or use of drugs, tobacco, or alcohol on school property.
2. Removal of the student from school property.
3. A conference will be held in a timely manner with the student, school staff, and parents/guardians. The conference will be held to determine the best course of action for the school and student. A rehabilitation program MAY be recommended at this time.
4. If the student fails to cooperate with the rehabilitation program or relapses into unacceptable conduct, the school may proceed with expulsion, and if necessary, engage a referral for prosecution.

In a resolution adopted at the September 10, 1990, School Board meeting, St. Mary's School has been declared a DRUG FREE ZONE.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices are not permitted during the academic day unless otherwise specified by physical disability. If such device is a medical necessity, a letter from the doctor must be presented.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Emergency drills are conducted as required by State Education Law. Students are also instructed in procedures to be followed in the event of a tornado, fire, chemical spill or lock-down. The dates for the drills will be posted on the school's website.

Instructions for these emergencies are as follows:

For **FIRE DRILLS**, the signal is a bell ringing with an unbroken sound. Each class has an assigned escape route to an outside area a safe distance from the building. Children move to these designated areas rapidly, quietly and an orderly manner. The escape plans are posted inside the door of each classroom, in the library and in the gym. No one is to re-enter the building until the designated signal has sounded.

For **TORNADO DRILLS**, the signal is bell ringing in a broken pattern. Students proceed to the hallway, assume a position with head covered, and wait in silence for the all-clear signal.

For **LOCKDOWN DRILLS**, **when** the signal is given, all doors are to be shut, all blinds pulled and closed with students out of sight.

When an emergency signal is initiated, all persons within the building, including faculty, staff, and visitors MUST participate.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

In case of emergency, each student is required to have on file in the school office the following information:

1. Name(s) of parent(s) or guardian(s).
2. Complete addresses.
3. Home and work telephone number, cell phone numbers are appreciated.
4. Emergency telephone number of alternate contact.
5. Physician's name and telephone number.
6. Medical alert information.

If any of the above information changes during the course of the school year, please be sure to give the office the updated information.

FEES AND PAYMENT POLICY

St. Mary's School charges fee for services and materials as well as tuition.

A non-refundable registration fee is charged per family.

- * Other fees for the school year are included in the Appendix.
- * Tuition and fees are located in the Appendix.

If you experience difficulty meeting your financial obligation, our pastor or principal is happy to speak with you about this confidential matter.

St. Mary's School reserves the right to require a family to withdraw their child(ren) from the school program for unpaid balances. Collection procedures may be enforced.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips within our city and to nearby points of interest are scheduled by teachers throughout the school year. These field trips are designed to supplement the curriculum and introduce students to the resources in the community. **Participation in the field trips is a privilege, and may be revoked at the discretion of the teacher or administration due to disruptive behavior or conduct. Failure to have other necessary class assignments complete including the parent's signature on the planner may result loss of the field trip privilege.**

Parents will receive notices of the field trips in advance of trip and will be asked to sign field trip permission forms, returning them to the teacher prior to the day of the excursion. **WITHOUT THE WRITTEN PERMISSION OF A PARENT OR GUARDIAN, THE STUDENT WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO LEAVE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.** Sometimes a small amount of money will be requested from each student to help defray transportation or facility use costs.

Parents are encouraged to help provided transportation for these field trips when possible. In adherence to Diocesan policy designed to provide for the safety of the students, parent who provide transportation for class field trips must fill out the DRIVER INFORMATION SHEET, available from Mrs. Haynes in the office. This form is kept on file throughout the year. A driver who has filled out the form for one class trip need not repeat the paperwork for subsequent field trips.

Drivers must have attended a Protecting God's Children seminar and completed all appropriate paperwork.

If a student forgets to bring home the field trip form distributed by the teacher, a parent can make a copy of the approved PARENT PERMISSION FORM FOR FIELD TRIP PARTICIPATION (see Appendix) filling in the necessary information, signing the form and returning it to the teacher.

FIGHTING

Fighting is strictly forbidden. Breaking this rule will result in a conference with the school principal and parents. If the conference does not put an end to the fighting, the student may have his/her privileges restricted. Repeated fighting will necessitate suspension from school.

GRADES, REPORT CARDS, DAILY PLANNER

Students receive a standards-based report card developed by the Office of School of the Diocese of Kalamazoo.

Report cards are issued four times a year. Dates on which you can expect your child to bring home his/her report card are published in the principal's newsletter. Should a parent have any questions or concerns in regard to the report card at a time when conferences are not scheduled, an appointment with the teacher should be made. **Final report cards will be mailed at the end of the school year.**

Students in Grade Four and above will use a daily planner to record assignments and classroom activities. It is the **student's responsibility** to have his/her parent check the planner for homework, other assignments, and missing work. After reviewing the planner, **the parent must sign it.** The parent signature is a visible sign that the parent has reviewed the homework, made sure it was complete, and is ready to have his or her child/ren turn it in the following day.

Failure to have a parent signature in the planner may result in the loss of recess.

GUM

St. Mary's School does not permit gum. Students are expected to comply with all aspects of this policy.

HARASSMENT/BULLYING

According to Diocesan Policy 4166.4, harassment qualifies as bullying. **This includes but is not limited to all forms of prohibited harassment, namely: race, color, national origin, and disability.** The teachings of Jesus Christ are very clear; harassment is **not** tolerated. Students who verbally or physically harass/bully others will be subject to

disciplinary procedures. Suspension as well as expulsion may be considered.

HOMEWORK

Homework is important. It is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can provide practice and drill that reinforces classroom learning, and can provide opportunities for independent study, research and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by arranging a quiet, comfortable place for them to work and by seeing that their assignments are completed. Parents should NOT do the work for their children, since that reduces the effectiveness of the assigned task, and limits the child's efforts to learn independently.

Teachers make an effort to assign an appropriated amount of work according to the age and abilities of the students. Children in Kindergarten and First Grade might be expected to work at an assigned task for ten to fifteen minutes, Second and Third graders for twenty to thirty minutes, and Fourth graders thirty to forty-five minutes. Fifth through Eighth graders, who are involved in a departmentalized schedule, might expect to work forty-five minutes to an hour and learn to budget time for long-term assignments.

Whenever a student is absent due to illness, every attempt will be made by faculty and staff to aid the student in making up the work. **Students in Fourth through Eighth Grades are expected to ask the teacher for their assignments.** All parents are encouraged to send notification requesting missing assignments.

Procedure for obtaining make-up work:

1. Parents may request the assignments from the teacher(s) by 11:00 a.m. of the day of the absence by note or telephone call.
2. The assignments can be picked up in the school office at dismissal time by the parent, guardian or siblings who attend St. Mary's School.
3. Parents cannot interrupt valuable teaching time to ask teachers for their child's assignments. They should go to the classrooms for work after school hours.

ILLNESS OR INJURY

In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by a member of the school staff. They will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, the parents will be contacted. Every attempt will be made to notify parents when an injury has occurred during school. In the event of a life-threatening injury, 911 will be called.

IMMUNIZATION

State law requires that every student admitted must provide evidence of a complete vaccination record. Students may not be admitted until the child has become current on all state required immunizations.

Kindergarten students must also provide proof of immunization, including chicken pox (or proof of immunity), as well as a physical examination by the family physician by the end of September of the kindergarten year.

INSURANCE

Student accident insurance is provided through Michigan Catholic Conference, and the Diocese of Kalamazoo. Coverage includes in-school time, field trips sponsored by the school and extra-curricular activities on the school grounds when sponsored by the school.

INTERNET USE

St. Mary's School provides access to the internet. This access is strictly for the purpose of promoting the educational goals of the school. There are strict filters for internet use already loaded in the computers. Children are not permitted in the lab without adult supervision. Children will be taught the appropriated conduct for the computer lab. Any student who demonstrates an inability to behave appropriately in the computer lab may lose the privilege of using the lab.

JEWELRY

Simple wrist watches and religious necklaces are permissible for both boys and girls. Earrings for girls must be in good taste-no dangling or "bling" type.

Earrings for boys are not permitted.

ST. MARY'S PRESCHOOL

St. Mary's School offers an early learning program for three, four and young five year olds. A developmental approach to learning in a Catholic environment provides sequential growth and preparation for the all-day Kindergarten program and Grades One through Eight.

The program for **three year olds** is offered on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Children should be three years old by September 1st. The charges include tuition, a processing fee for registration and materials used for the program. Registration is limited.

The program for **four year olds** is offered Monday, Wednesday, and Friday full or half days or Monday thru Friday full or half days. Children should be four years old by September 1st. The charges include tuition, a processing fee for registration and materials used for the program. Registration is limited.

The program for **five year olds** is offered daily for the full day. Charges include tuition, a processing fee for registration and materials used for the program. Registration is limited. Student screening is required.

For specific tuition and fees, please refer to the Appendix.

Other requirements

- Registration form and family emergency card filled out completely.
- Health report signed by a licensed physician with all up to date immunizations recorded.
- A completed notification form of the Licensing Notebook. (See Appendix)
- Child information page completed and turned into the office. (See Appendix)

CURRICULUM

Religion- Our program provides an introduction to God's love and the world he created.

Early Start- Includes reading readiness skills, hands-on math, science made easy, drama, guided discussions, cooking in the classroom, puppets, 3-D projects, original stories, rhythms, games, songs, and finger plays.

Social, Physical, and Intellectual Growth Activities

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

A parent may remove a child from St. Mary's Preschool. The school must have a one-week notification prior to the removal. If for any reason, a child is absent for one week without notification of the school, the child may be released from St. Mary's Preschool. This ensures that those on a waiting list will have an opportunity to enroll.

A child may also be released if he/she demonstrates continual disruptive behavior, or if the program cannot meet the needs of the child. The decision is made at the discretion of the preschool director and administrator.



LOCKED DOOR POLICY

To ensure your child's safety, all doors are kept locked during the school day. All doors can always be used to exit the building. If you are visiting the school, please ring the doorbell at the east lobby entrance (Door E) so we can greet you.

Preschool parents must use the doors by the playground (door E) for entrance when picking up their child from morning session dismissal.

LOST AND FOUND ARTICLES

Parents are encouraged to label each child's jackets, sweaters, lunch boxes, and other personal items. All clothing and other personal items which have been left on the grounds, in the gym or bathrooms, will be placed in the LOST AND FOUND BOX. Money, jewelry, and other articles of value which are found will be with the School Secretary. Students may claim their property after providing proper identification.

LUNCHROOM RULES

Students are expected to use good table manners, avoid wasting food, and clean up the place where they were sitting during the lunch period. The following expectations apply to all students:

1. Prayer is said in the classroom before dismissal for lunch.
2. WALK to the table assigned to your class.
3. Raise your hand if you need assistance and wait for an adult to help you.
4. Talk quietly to the students sitting near you **after the first 10 mins.**
5. Use correct table manners. Sit properly, do not talk with food in your mouth.
6. Clean up your place (table, bench, chair, floor) **when instructed to do so.**
7. Place lunch box in the container provided, and put all trash in the barrel.
8. Food and beverages may not be taken outdoors.

MEDICATIONS

1. Medications must be clearly identified as to the name and type of medication.
2. Medication must be in the original container.
3. Medication must carry a prescription label with the child's name, drug identity, dosage instructions, doctor's name and prescription date.
4. A note dated and signed by the parent, must accompany the medication, giving the child's name, dosage amounts, specific dosage times, and other necessary instructions.
5. Directions for storage of the prescription must be given. A prescription can be refrigerated if necessary
6. Medication will be given by school personnel, but the student must be

- responsible for reporting to the office at the specified time.
7. Non-prescription medication will not be dispensed by school staff.
 8. Do not send non-prescription medications to school.

MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS

It is important that parents are informed about the causes and symptoms of meningococcal meningitis. Parents also need to know how the disease is spread and the availability of a vaccine. Parents and staff can access this information through the Berrien Co. Health Department website.

MICHIGAN TAX CODE

St. Mary's School follows the Michigan Tax Code, which states that items purchased for resale must add sales tax at time of sale.

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, a school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic record 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.

PARENT ADVANCEMENT COUNCIL

St. Mary's PAC (Parent Advancement Council) is an active parent organization which sponsors many yearly activities to supplement the school's academic or extracurricular offerings. Activities which PAC has supported include but are not limited to: the holiday greens sale, Catholic Schools Week Pizza Party and Ice cream social, faculty luncheon, classroom celebrations, school fundraisers, and others.

Parents are encouraged to attend PAC meetings held monthly in the school (the first Wednesday of every month beginning at 6p.m., unless otherwise specified.). Changes to meeting dates and times will be published in the Principal's newsletter and on the PAC Facebook page.

PEST MANAGEMENT

St, Mary's School adheres to a pest management schedule that is available for your viewing in the Office. Annually, schools must advise parents of their rights to be informed when any pesticide application is made to the school grounds or building. If you want this information, you must request so in writing to the school. This letter requests the school to inform you when pesticides will be used in the school. Every

effort will be made to give prior notice, although in certain instances pesticides may be applied without prior notice. In those instances, you will be notified as soon as possible after the application.

PICTURES

Individual student pictures will be taken only in the Fall. Within six weeks of the photography session, the pictures will be available. A composite of students in the class is included in the packet purchased. **A re-take day for students who either missed the original day or whose pictures are “bad” will be announced and information will be sent home.**

PLAYGROUND RULES

1. Students are to observe playground boundaries-fenced in areas.
2. Fighting is strictly forbidden. Students who fight will be sent to the principal.
3. Adult supervisors must retrieve balls from the street at the end of recess.
STUDENTS MAY NEVER GO INTO THE STREET TO RETRIEVE BALLS.
4. Students must respect others: no offensive language, no name-calling, inappropriate physical contact or other signs of disrespect.
5. Students who are uncooperative with others, or who refuse to obey the rules, will be issued discipline points.
6. Students should report injuries to the playground supervisor **immediately**.
7. During noon recess, students may not return to the building to get drinks.
8. When weather does not permit outdoor recess, students are to obey classroom rules and play quiet games. Running around the classroom or throwing items is not permitted.
9. It is understood that teachers and adult helpers are to be shown courteous behavior and cooperation.

Students are to bring boots, gloves, coats, or items necessary during cold and snowy weather. Children who do not have weather appropriate attire may be denied outdoor recess. The school observes a Department of Education recommendation from the State of Michigan which determines whether the outdoor temperature is too cold for the children to go out. This is based on the day's temperature as announced by the local radio or television stations, as well as the wind chill factor.

PLAYGROUND SUPERVISION

School staff and volunteers will supervise the playground during the morning and afternoon recess periods of the primary grades. During the noon recess, the playground supervisors are in charge of the playground. Students are to follow their directions at all times. Any students who do not observe the playground rules will be reported to their

teacher or the principal by the playground supervisor. Misuse or destruction of school or playground property will not be tolerated. Destructive behavior by the student may result in suspension.

The playground is not supervised after school. **Students are expected to leave for home immediately after dismissal** unless they have tutoring arrangements with a teacher or attend the After School Club. Students not picked up by **3:15 p.m.** will automatically be sent to After School Club. The parent/guardian will be responsible for payment.

PROMOTIONS, PLACEMENT, AND RETENTIONS

Promotions and retentions are based on an evaluation of academic, physical, and emotional growth. The primary reasons for retention are:

- (a) indifference or lack of effort on the part of capable student
- (b) physical or social immaturity
- (c) an indication that the student would be unable to do the required work if promoted
- (d) frequent or long absences.

Retention is usually considered as a more positive alternative during the primary grades. Parents can assume that their child(ren) will be promoted unless retention has been discussed during the school year. Parents will be involved in retention decisions.

If retention is recommended by the teacher, the following procedures will take place:

1. A parent-teacher conference is scheduled in January, at which time the parent(s) will be informed that the child is working below grade level, and that there is a serious probability that the student will not be ready for promotion to the next grade. The teacher may wish to recommend testing/evaluation to discover visual or hearing impairment, or other learning disabilities.
2. During the Spring parent-teacher conference, the teacher and parent(s) will evaluate the progress made since the January conference, discussing the behaviors and needs which surface at that time, and the direction which had been set. If the teacher's recommendation for retention is still valid, the parent is asked to sign a form indicating agreement or disagreement. A copy of the signed form is given to the parent, and the original is placed in the student's file.
3. When a student has not mastered all the curriculum of a given grade, he/she may be placed in the next grade with reservations. A conference will be scheduled with the parents.

PROTECTING GOD’S CHILDREN/VIRTUS

In accordance with Diocesan Policy, every person associated with St. Mary’s School is to participate in a training session titled “Protecting God’s Children”. This event helps the participants to become aware of the warning signs of sexual abuse.

To register for Protecting God’s Children:

1. Visit www.virtus.org
2. Click on “First-Time Registrant” on the left side of the screen
3. Click on “Begin Registration Process” and follow the prompts.

RECESS POLICIES

Weather permitting, all students are given a recess at noon each day, and students in primary grades may take a short recess in mid-morning and/or mid-afternoon.

Unless it is raining or 10°F or below, students will NOT go outside.

EVERYONE must go outside for lunch recess unless he/she is serving a lunchtime detention or has a written medical not from the doctor.

RELIGION AND MASS SCHEDULE

The freedom to teach and practice our religion is the reason for the existence of St. Mary’s School. We are a Catholic school, and all students, including non-Catholic students, receive instruction in the Catholic faith.

Students will attend Mass weekly, usually on Fridays at 10:45a.m. unless Father is unavailable or there is a Holy Day of Obligation that falls on a different day.

GENERAL RECEPTION OF SACRAMENTS

Communion is received at Mass/Liturgical Celebrations once a week and on Holy days of Obligation by all children who have made their First Holy Communion. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is observed at least twice during the school year.

SCHOOL BOARD, (LCAB)

The St. Mary’s School Board, whose official title in the Diocese of Kalamazoo is the St. Mary’s School Local Consultative and Advisory Body (LCAB), is responsible for forming and approving policies implemented in the operation of the school.

Any registered member of St. Mary’s Parish or parent of a St. Mary’s student 18 years or older, is eligible for membership. Members may include the pastor of St. Mary’s (ex-

officio), the principal of St. Mary's School (ex officio), the president of the PAC (ex-officio), and ten elected representatives from St. Mary's Parish and/or St. Mary's School or any number deemed necessary by the Pastor. Meetings take place monthly throughout the school year, usually the second Monday of the month beginning at 5:00p.m.

SOFTWARE AND INTERNET POLICIES

The School Board of St. Mary's School has implemented the following policy regarding the use of personal software in computers owned by the school:

1. Due to copyright considerations, software programs can be brought to the school by students and operated on the school computers only under the following conditions:
 - A. The software program donated to the school remains the property of the school.
 - B. Any software donated must be initially presented unopened and will be subsequently registered in the name of St. Mary's School.
 - C. Copies of donated software may not be made for the donors or for any other individual's or group's personal use on any computer off of school grounds.

2. Any donated software is subject to the approval of the faculty of St. Mary's School.

Internet use, whether by students or faculty, is to be limited to school work or research projects and restricted to Web sites which are appropriate to the values and goals expressed in the MISSION STATEMENT of St. Mary's School. Anyone who violates these guidelines may lose his/her Internet privileges.

SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM

St. Mary's recognizes the beauty and potential inherent within each student. In an effort to foster continued growth, the school embraces the challenge to provide assistance and programs to serve students with special needs according to the resources available within and to the school. Parents are considered an integral part of the process.

St. Mary's provides for a normal range of learning differences and serves students whose instructional program requires minimal adjustments. St. Mary's School does not offer direct special education instruction. We do, however, provide administrative services to coordinate with resident public schools for the screening and diagnostic evaluation of students and the development of an Adjusted Educational Plan (AEP) or a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP).

Adjustments that allow a student access to the general curriculum, but do not fundamentally lower the standard or expectation of the course, are available to students on an individual basis determined by learning needs and a documented disability. Adjustments do not release students from demonstrating the required knowledge. Rather, adjustments provide students with disabilities the support they need to demonstrate what they know and understand.

St. Mary's strives to address and make appropriate adjustments for special learning needs, but in some cases it may not be feasible. If the system does not have the resources to address the need that has emerged, if an appropriate education requires more than minimal adjustments, if the student seriously disrupts other students' learning, or if the student puts the safety of staff or other students at risk, enrollment may be terminated. In such cases, St. Mary's will attempt to assist families in finding appropriate alternatives.

IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

St. Mary's does not offer a special education program. We do, however, have teachers who work with the parents to make every effort to accommodate children with identified special needs. It is important that parents are forthcoming in registration forms to help us meet a student's needs, and provide any records necessary for St. Mary's to assess appropriate accommodations. The refusal to provide such information is grounds for terminating enrollment in the school. Modifications will be reviewed on a semester basis or as needed to ensure adequate progress. If potential special needs are identified while at St. Mary's School, the teachers will meet with you to discuss the potential needs and accommodations available for the student, the referral process to public schools for additional services and/or to have your child evaluated.

The results of the evaluation will be shared with the teachers, parents, and an Educational Plan will be written and implemented on behalf of the child. In order to accommodate a student who has been evaluated for special learning needs, parents are strongly encouraged to share educational/psychological testing results and any resulting prognosis or treatment plan with the school.

Educational Plans

If a student has a documented disability, a copy of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP)(provided by the public schools), 504 plan (provided by the public schools), and/or Adjusted Educational Plan (AEP) (provided by St. Mary's) should be maintained in the student's confidential file. Students who have a documented disability but do not qualify for services through the local public school, may be eligible for accommodations through an AEP written at St. Mary's School. St. Mary's makes every attempt to adhere to the recommendations set forth by servicing educational institutions. The classroom teachers and parents will monitor the student's progress throughout the year as well as the services provided by the Local Education Association(LEA).

STUDENT RECORDS

An official cumulative record is maintained for each student enrolled in St. Mary's School. The following data is kept in the official file: student identification, health records, academic transcripts, testing data, and other relevant data.

These records shall serve the following purposes:

1. Provide identification of student and family background.
2. Provide data about the student's educational history.
3. Maintain information relative to current progress as a student.

Pursuant to the enactment of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, parents, upon written request, may inspect and review their children's records. The definition of a "parent" includes a natural parent, a guardian, or a foster parent. The procedure for reviewing your child's records is as follows:

1. The parent requesting the review will be provided with the school approved form which will be completed and turned in to the principal.
2. Within fifteen(15) school days, the parent shall be notified that the records may be inspected and reviewed. This letter shall state the place and time, and the school representative who will be present for the record inspection and review.

STUDY SKILLS

Specific skills and techniques can make learning easier and more enjoyable. The following are student guidelines for achieving good study habits:

1. Come to class prepared with pencil, paper, and other necessary materials.
2. Be an active participant in class. Listen well and take part in the discussions and activities.
3. Ask questions to clarify what is unclear.
4. Plan your day and schedule time to do homework.
5. Use what is learned, and apply it to new situations. Strive to do the very best work possible at all times. Just "getting by" is not a worthwhile goal!
6. Don't wait until the last minute to do long-term assignments.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

Every student will periodically be taught by a substitute teacher. The most common reason for using substitute teachers occurs when a regular teacher is ill. Sometimes,

substitutes are used when a regular teacher is on leave for a family emergency, for professional training, for jury duty, or for very important personal business. Students are expected to be courteous to substitute teachers and to cooperate so that the school day runs smoothly. Any misconduct will be dealt with immediately by the principal.

TARDINESS

Prompt arrival at school is expected of all students. Any student who arrives at school **after 8:00 a.m.** must report to the office BEFORE reporting to the classroom. A tardy slip will be filled out by the school secretary and must be presented to the classroom teacher. Punctuality is encouraged, and parents are asked to have the children to school on time. The number of tardy slips issued per year is part of the student's permanent record.

TELEPHONE

The office telephone is a business telephone used by the students only in **an emergency**. Students are not allowed to use the telephone to make personal arrangements (such as requesting a parent's permission to go to another student's home after school). Student cell phones are not permitted.

TESTING/EVALUATION

The professionals at St. Mary's School utilize many educational tools to provide the best possible educational environment for all students. Formal and informal testing are components of this educational process. Testing and observation are used to determine what is best for each child. Students, teachers, parents, and the principal are all part of the educational team. We, at St. Mary's School, expect all members of this team to communicate. In the event that a student displays unique educational needs, appropriate testing will be discussed with parents and appropriate staff.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks and workbooks are furnished for the academic year. Consumable books are indicated by the classroom teacher. Students are expected to take care of books.

If a textbook or library book is lost, misused or damaged beyond reasonable wear, the student will be charged for the replacement of the book.

TUITION AND FEES

School tuition rates are set annually by St. Mary's Parish School and Finance Committee. Sliding scale tuition rates vary for parishioners and non-parishioners. Parishioner status for all families claiming that rate will be reviewed at the end of each academic semester.

A member of St. Mary's Parish and other parishes in the locale (St. Anthony-Buchanan, St. Gabriel-Berrien Springs, St. Mark-Niles, Our Lady of the Lake-Edwardsburg, St. Ann-Cassopolis, and Holy Maternity of Mary-Dowagiac) is defined as a baptized Catholic who identifies with that parish by registering, worshipping regularly, and supporting the parish through regular contributions.

Families who send their children to St. Mary's School and do not qualify for parishioner status as defined by the above are designated as non-parishioners and pay tuition and fees that are designated for that category.

Tuition assistance is available to those who demonstrate financial need. Forms are available in the school office.

All inquiries and grants for financial aid are kept confidential.

VANDALISM

Our school and school equipment are St. Mary's School property. Willfully damaging or destroying this property is cause for immediate suspension and possible expulsion. Vandal damage must be paid before the student is allowed to return to class. If a student accidentally causes damage, he/she should report it to the teacher immediately, so that the damage is not construed as deliberate vandalism. In a day-to-day living of the Seventh Commandment ("Thou shall not steal"), St. Mary's students are expected to show respect for school property, as well as another's property, at all times. School furniture, doors, windows, etc., should be used in such a way as to avoid damage.

VISITORS

All visitors to the school **must report** to the school office upon entering the building as means of ensuring safety for our student.

Parents are asked not to deliver lunches, jackets, etc. directly to the classroom. This causes interruption of the lesson in progress.

Lunches, jackets and other objects, or messages for individual students should be left in the Office for delivery at recess or noon break. A parent wanting to observe a particular classroom must contact the teacher and principal for permission.

VOLUNTEERS

St. Mary's School considers its parent volunteers an essential resource. Parents are expected to help as room parents or aide in other special programs. Please let a member of the faculty or staff know if you have time or skills you can share to make our school a more exciting place for students to learn and grow. Anyone who volunteers is required to attend a "Protecting God's Children"/Virtus program and complete appropriate paper work.

WALKING STUDENTS

Students who walk to school should come straight to school, remaining on sidewalks at all times, and crossing only at the designated crosswalks. Students should remember the safety rules: walk with a friend, and NEVER accept a ride with a stranger.

WEAPONS

The safety and welfare of our student must be a prime concern of all school community members. Therefore, the school environment must be kept free of all weapons and explosive devices. Students who use, possess, handle, transmit or conceal any object which is or could be considered a dangerous weapon or instrument of violence, shall face immediate suspension and/or expulsion.

WITHDRAWALS

An application for withdrawal (Release of Records) must be completed by the parents of any student who is withdrawing during the school year or at the end of the school year. Teachers and staff will summarize the student's progress and prepare the student's CA 60 file for forwarding to the next school of enrollment. St. Mary's School will not release a student's records unless a signed request is on file in the office.

Appendix

Child Information Form

Field Trip Permission Form

Health Appraisal Form (2 pages)

Licensing Notebook Notification Form (Preschool parents)

Tuition and Fees