

ST. MARY'S VISITATION SCHOOL

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2020-2021



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Mission Statement

Responding to the teaching mission of the Catholic Church and embracing our Catholic identity, St. Mary's Visitation School strives to inspire, encourage, and challenge each student in its care, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and intellectually within a Christ-centered environment.

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PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

We believe that parents are the primary educators of children. It is the role of the staff at St. Mary's Visitation School to work in partnership with the parents to develop each child to his/her fullest potential in a Catholic Christian atmosphere where the child can understand and apply the Christian values taught both at home and at school. Together we seek to nurture the spiritual, physical, social, psychological, and educational growth of the child while recognizing the distinctive qualities that make each child unique in the eyes of God.

ACCREDITATION.

St. Mary's Visitation School is accredited by the Michigan Non-Public School Accreditation Association. Our preschool is licensed by the State of Michigan (license # DC030018856).

ADMISSIONS POLICIES

St. Mary's Visitation School admits students of any sex, race, nationality, ethnicity to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded and made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its education policies, admission policies and school administered programs.

If classrooms reach capacity, priority will be given to those students who are Catholic. Those wishing to enroll in St. Mary's Visitation School may do so through the school office. In the spring, each family with currently enrolled students receives a registration packet which contains all forms necessary for enrollment to St. Mary's Visitation School for the following year. St. Mary's Visitation School requires a registration fee to complete the registration process.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

St. Mary's Visitation School will, to the extent that available resources permit, try to meet the needs of all children, including those with disabilities and special needs.

When considering accepting a child with a handicap or disability, the school must consider the following as they relate to the child's educational success:

- Are sufficient financial resources available to provide for the needs of the student with disabilities;
- Is the building configured so the child can safely get around;
- Are there special equipment needs that the child may have and who will provide them;
- Are personnel trained and equipped to handle the child and his/her disability;
- Are special materials needed for the child and who will provide them, if needed.

In order to ensure that all applications from handicapped or disabled students who apply to St. Mary's Visitation School are treated in an equitable manner, parent and

professional input will be sought to determine the requirements and needs of the student. That input will be evaluated against the capabilities of the staff and the financial resources of the school in order to determine if St. Mary's Visitation can adequately meet the needs of the student.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Registration Fee

SMV School is waiving enrollment fees for the 2020-2021 school year for each family if tuition is current or paid in full. Online registration is completed for each child through FACTS (Renweb) by May 1, 2020.

After May 1st there will be a \$125 registration fee

Tuition

Tuition for 2020-2021 is found in the table below.

K-6	Tuition Rate
First Child	\$3,292
Two Children	\$5,535
Three or more Children	\$7,426

Tuition payments are expected monthly August through May on the 15th of the month. If this payment plan does not meet your needs, you **must** contact the school principal to make other arrangements. St. Mary's Visitation School has a scholarship fund. For more information or to apply for a scholarship please see your enrollment packet or the school principal

Fundraising

Fundraising allows St. Mary's Visitation School to keep our tuition as reasonable as possible. Our major fundraisers are a parish breakfast in October, the fall Walk-a-Thon, the winter dinner auction, and family fun night. Families are expected to participate in these activities through a donation of time. Each two-parent family is expected to volunteer for six time periods for the various events. Single parent families are expected to volunteer for three time periods. Parents who do not meet these commitments will be charged an activity fee of \$100 per credit not worked. Please Note: All families are required to fill one slot for the dinner auction.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Homework is assigned for the following reasons:

- 1) To enrich and extend what the pupil has learned in class,
- 2) To prepare to share with others something discovered, read, or created,

- 3) To improve basic skills,
- 4) To complete assignments not finished in school.

Grading

Students in grades kindergarten – six have a report card based on mastering state standards. Their marks will be based on whether they meet state standards, exceed standards or need improvement.

+ = Proficient / = Partially Proficient - = Not Proficient

Report Cards

Report cards will be sent home quarterly giving the parents needed information on their child's progress. Teachers bear the responsibility of fairly evaluating each student in the areas of academic achievement, effort, and personal traits on a quarterly basis.

Standardized Testing

Students in Kdg.-Gr. 6 take NWEA MAP (measures of academic progress) tests three times a year. These computerized tests are adaptive and offered in Reading, Language Usage, and Mathematics. When taking a MAP test, the difficulty of each question is based on how well a student answers all the previous questions. These assessments measure growth and identify students' strengths and weaknesses.

Promotion and Retention

Students who make adequate academic progress shall be promoted to the next grade at the end of the academic year. If a student needs to be retained, conversations between the parents, teacher and principal shall take place no later than the end of the third quarter. A student may be placed in the next grade, i.e., they are allowed to move into the next grade, without adequately meeting the requirements of the current year.

LIBRARY POLICIES

SMV operates a library with volunteer librarians. The library is used to enhance the educational program. Students grades K-6 visit the library at least once a week. No library books may be checked out after the third week in May. Books not returned by the last day of school must be paid for at replacement cost or replaced with a copy of the book in good repair.

RECORDS/RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act requires the school to provide the parents and students access to records directly related to the student; permits parents and students to challenge these records on the grounds that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights; to obtain the written consent of parents and students before releasing personally identifiable information about the student contained in education records.

Parents may make a request in writing to view their child's records. All viewing will be done in the presence of the administrator. The records do not leave the building.

Non-custodial parents are provided access to the child's records unless a court order specifies that no information is to be given to this particular individual. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order. This is in compliance with the Buckley Amendment.

ATTENDANCE/ABSENCE POLICIES

School and classroom attendance instills a concept of self-discipline, exposes a student to group interactions with teachers and fellow students, and enables a student to hear and participate in class discussion and other related learning experiences.

Students are expected to be in school every scheduled day except in the case of illness. Parents may choose to schedule medical/dental appointments or request release due to special activities. The school office should be notified in writing and students must be signed in/out in the office.

Parents must notify the school when their child is absent. The reason for the absence is necessary for health department reporting. Calls must be made by 8:00 a.m. The school office will call the parents of those children whose absence is not called in to the school.

If a child arrives after the tardy bell or is being picked up by a parent before school dismisses for the day, the parent must sign the student "in" or "out" at the office. This is a safety requirement. Excessive absence or tardiness can negatively impact your child's education. The state of Michigan requires that all children who have not reached the age of 16 attend school [MCL 380.1147]. We reserve the right to take necessary action, up to and including notifying the authorities. [MCL380.1586]

Vacations/Optional/Extended Absences

If a student will be missing school due to a scheduled vacation, or optional absence, parents are required to notify the school and the child's teacher. Parents are welcome to request work missed in advance. The teacher is not expected to prepare work in advance for these types of absences. The teacher reserves the right to decide what is best for their planning and progress of the curriculum progress at that time. If you request work ahead of time and the teacher agrees all the work prepared for your child is required upon their return to school. Any work missed due to these types of absences is expected to be made up. The number of days absent will be the number of days a student has to complete the missing work.

Arrival/Departure

Students may not arrive before 7:15 except under special circumstances cleared with the office. Students who arrive by 7:25 (first bell) will enter at the east end of the building. They are not to enter at the office unless being met by a teacher. At 7:25 a.m., students will be admitted to the building to go to their classrooms to begin their day. If a student arrives after the first bell at 7:25 they are to report to the school office doors. At 7:35 the tardy bell rings and the first class of the day promptly begins. Anyone arriving

after 7:35 is marked tardy. Children riding a bus that is running late will not be marked tardy.

School dismisses at 3:05. Car riders dismiss via the east door near the fine arts room. Do not go to the classroom door until the bell rings as this is distracting for students and teachers. Bus riders leave school via the east door to wait at the designated bus drop-off/pick-up site. If alternative arrangements are made for any school student, the teacher and office must be notified. The teacher and school office must be notified if there is a change in the SMV school bus run. If parents are picking up children who normally ride either the Hopkins or SMV bus, notify the teacher and the school office. If the school is not notified, the child will be put on the bus that he/she normally rides. If parents are running behind and will be late picking up their child(ren), they must notify the school. Students are NOT allowed in the school unsupervised after 3:05 without special arrangements.

We recommend to parents who have after-school meetings with staff, committees, or others to use our after-school childcare program or make other arrangements for the supervision of their children

should they choose to have them remain at school. Children are not allowed to run the halls or be unsupervised in any location.

Tardiness

Being tardy is highly discouraged. Students miss out on announcements by teachers and general morning warm-up activities. If a child is constantly tardy, the principal, child and parents will meet to discuss why this is happening. We reserve the right to take necessary action, up to and including notifying the authorities.

Make-up Work

Students are required to make up all possible assignments missed because of absences. A student is allowed days equal to the number of days absent to complete the assignments. If parents are taking children out of school for an extended period that is not a normal school vacation, school work missed must be made up. Teachers modify their plans on a daily basis to accommodate schedules and learning differences. They are introducing new content on a regular basis. Teachers are not able to accurately predict what the students will miss and therefore assignments missed will be given to the children after their return.

Virtual Snow Days

SMV School will follow the Diocese of Kalamazoo policy regarding virtual snow days.

CALENDAR

The Bishop of the Diocese of Kalamazoo and the Michigan Non-Public School Accreditation Association recommend schools be in attendance for 180 pupil days. Since our local public school does not adhere to this guideline, there may be days our school is in session when the public school is not, and days off for our students when

the public school is in session. Because so many of our students ride public school busses, our school calendar will follow the Hopkins Public School calendar whenever possible.

COMMUNICATION

Parent to School

Parents can contact school personnel in many ways. Each member of the school staff has an e-mail address that they check on a regular basis. Parents may also come and see the staff before or after school. If necessary, appointments can be made for a lengthier meeting. Parents can call the school office and be transferred to a staff member's phone. If instruction is happening in the classroom we ask you to leave a voicemail. The teacher will return your call.

Teachers are not allowed to leave their classrooms while classes are in session, either to answer the telephone or to confer with parents.

Parents coming to work in classrooms must sign "in" and "out" at the office.

If parents have a concern with anyone at SMV School, they are to meet with that person to resolve the issue. The Education Commission has established a communication chain that everyone is to follow to resolve issues before they become critical: Parent/student—teacher—principal—Local Consultative Advisory Board (LCAB)—Priest/Pastoral Council—Diocese.

School to Parent

The school maintains a website found at www.smvschool.org that is used as the primary communication vehicle with families. This site has the most up-to-date school calendars, office and classroom newsletters, as well as forms and additional information.

Newsletters

In order to facilitate communications and to keep parents informed of the happenings at St. Mary's Visitation School, a newsletter will be sent bi-weekly. These newsletters will be distributed via email unless you have no access to email. The newsletter will be posted on the school website.

Each teacher will provide a weekly newsletter informing parents of classroom activities, assignments, and curriculum taught. These classroom newsletters will be posted on the classroom website each week.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year: in the fall at the end of the first quarter, and in the spring after the third quarter. All parents will have an opportunity to meet with the teachers. Individual parent/teacher conferences may be held at any time during the school year when either parent or teachers sees a need. Parents wishing to

meet with their child's teacher are requested to call the school office or email the teacher directly to make an appointment.

Address/Telephone Changes

Parents are requested to notify the school office of any change of address or telephone number, or any other essential information needed for school records and/or emergency use.

Student Telephone Use

Students must ask permission from the Principal or Secretary for use of the office telephone. Calls to ask for assignments, lunches, and other materials for school are highly discouraged as they do not promote student independence and accountability. Plans for alternate after school plans must be made in advance. Teachers and students are not called to the phone during class time unless it is an emergency.

COMPUTER USE

All students must have on file a signed Acceptable Use Policy Agreement. Students will not have access to computers until the form is on file with their teacher. This agreement also has an area for parents to sign regarding the use of student pictures and names in electronic transmissions. Students may not bring electronic devices to school unless a teacher gives the opportunity for an academic or reward purpose. St. Mary's Visitation School is not responsible for electronic devices brought from home.

PHOTOGRAPHS

The school will arrange for student photographs to be taken in the fall. The purpose of these photographs is for use in the yearbook. Purchase of photo packages is optional.

The school will frequently photograph students during the normal school day. These pictures may also appear in other media, such as a newspaper or on the school's website. Many times these students are identified by their first names. Parents who do not wish their children's photographs to be placed in public media must notify the principal in writing prior to the beginning of school each year.

CARE OF BOOKS

Each student is responsible for taking care of his/her books. Books that are written in, destroyed, or lost must be replaced by the student to whom it was assigned. Therefore, we require that a book bag, backpack or other comparable carrier be used daily for books and papers.

DISCIPLINE

Due Process

When a student is accused of wrong doing, he/she will be given the opportunity to tell what happened from his/her point of view. All points of view will be heard before any decisions are made regarding penalties.

Most disciplinary problems may be taken care of by the classroom teacher. Rules and procedures are established by each teacher, and students are expected to comply with them. If a student is sent to the office, the principal will talk with the individual and help the person understand why he/she was sent to the office in the first place. The school behavior rubric will be used to determine the proper penalty for the offense. Offenses that lead directly to the principal's office include but are not limited to: hitting another student, swearing, throwing snowballs or other objects at students, defying the teacher, and other unacceptable behaviors as outlined in the rubric found on the SMV school website.

Corporal punishment in any form is not permitted at St. Mary's Visitation School.

Recess Rules

For the protection and safety of each person on the playground, the following are strictly forbidden:

- throwing stones, sticks, ice, snow, or any other dangerous objects
- returning inside unless it is an emergency
- fighting, wrestling, tackle football, baseballs
- any type of contact sports
- skate boards, roller skates of any type
- standing on swings or slides

Students are not allowed to stay inside during lunch recess unless there are extenuating health concerns. If a child is well enough to be in school, he/she is well enough to go

outside unless accompanied by a doctor's note. This will be enforced throughout the year.

In order to encourage social development and interaction among the students, electronic devices are limited on school grounds.

DRESS CODE

The purpose of having a school dress code is to simplify the matter of student attire and place that issue in its proper perspective with regard to the learning process. The dress code is viewed as a sign of belonging to St. Mary's Visitation is an expression of pride in developing community. A dress code promotes a sense of equality among the students. Cooperation encourages responsibility and self-discipline on the part of the students. Wearing a uniform also begins to prepare the students for their future careers, as most jobs require some type of uniform or professional attire.

Note: Preschool students are invited to wear the uniform but are not expected to do so.

Tops

- Red, white, or gray polo shirts in long or short sleeves; no decoration and no logos other than the SMV logo.
- White broadcloth shirts; no emblems or logos other than SMV

- Red, white, navy, or gray crewneck pullover sweatshirts; no logos other than SMV.
- Gray SMV hoodie; MUST have SMV logo (Not to be worn during school Mass)
- Red, white, navy cardigan, crew neck, or v-neck sweaters; no emblems or logos other than SMV.
- Red SMV quarter zip fleece with SMV logo or gray SMV fleece vest
- Navy “cool to be catholic” hooded sweatshirt (Not to be worn during school Mass)
Shirts must be tucked in at all times (Will be enforced)
- Jackets, hoodies or other outerwear may not be worn during school Mass
- Red or gray fleece with SMV logo may be worn during school Masses

Bottoms

- Black or navy blue pants; woven cotton, polyester, or corduroy. No denim, athletic, or nylon pants
- Black or navy blue woven knee length fabric shorts or capri length pants.
- Black or navy blue woven fabric skirts or skorts; red/navy plaid skort from French Toast – knee length
- Black, navy, or navy/red plaid (French Toast) jumpers – knee length
- Leggings and tights (solid navy or black) are allowed with uniform skirts or skorts. All knee socks must be navy or white.

Jewelry

- Girls may wear stud style earrings. Boys may not wear earrings.
- Only religious necklaces and bracelets may be worn with uniforms.
- Hair must be natural in color
- Fingernail polish must be in soft neutral colors (neat and cared for).

Other

- Socks (black or navy) must be worn at all times.
- Students must have two pairs of shoes: one for indoors and one reserved for outdoors. Indoor shoes must be all black (no colored logos). This helps us keep our building and classrooms clean. Shoes must be tied and/or fastened at all times.
 - Black shoes must have non-marking soles or
 - Students may bring an additional pair of tennis shoes for PE class instead of finding black shoes with non-marking soles
- If there is snow on the ground, students must wear boots. Their activity outside will be restricted if they do not have boots.
- Hats may not be worn except when specifically approved for special dress days.
- No makeup is allowed.

MASKS

As stated in the Governor’s Reopening Schools Roadmap, our students will need to wear masks in hallways and other common areas, unless face coverings cannot be medically tolerated as documented through written and signed verification by a physician. They will be allowed to take masks off after they enter the classroom as our students are self contained, except 5th and 6th grade. Students in the 5th and 6th grade class must wear masks in the classroom. Students will be asked to have clean masks

daily. Masks should be in good repair and in good taste representing the values and beliefs of St. Mary's Visitation School. Masks with reference to drugs, tobacco, sex, alcohol or contain messages which interfere with any student's ability to concentrate or study are prohibited.

DRESS CODE VIOLATIONS

If students come to school without the proper school uniform (see above) a uniform violation will be written by a member of the administration or staff. The violation serves as a form of communication and reminder of our dress code. Parents are required to sign any/all violation notices and it must be returned the following school day.

Violation Stages:

- 1) Warning/Reminder (Dress code violation notice sent home)
- 2) Dress code violation notice sent home & letter written to principal-"How to prepare for school each day." (written by student)
- 3) Dress code violation notice sent home & subsequent color day forfeited

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Through a shared team with St. Stanislaus School, Saint Mary's Visitation School offers interscholastic basketball for boys and girls, volleyball for girls, and bowling for fifth and sixth grade students. These teams are members of the Grand Rapids Area Catholic Elementary Athletic Council (GRACEAC)). All students are encouraged to participate; however, they must meet eligibility standards in order to play.

Eligibility Code

It is expected that the athlete maintains a C minus average in all subjects in order to participate in any sports. Should a student fail to meet this weekly requirement, the student will not be allowed to participate until such time as the grade requirements are once again met. Practice and game attendance shall be mutually agreed upon by the student's parent(s) and the coach.

Each Friday during the activity season, the teacher of those students who are participating will determine if the athletes have missing assignments and/or have fallen below a C- or 70% average in any subject. Students will be evaluated at the end of each week, and the results will be sent to the coach/advisor and principal. The athlete will not be allowed to participate in events the following week if he/she fails to meet the requirements. While students who are ineligible may not participate in the actual event, they are expected to participate in all practices during their week of suspension. Students are also expected to attend all events and support their teammates.

Students are expected to maintain proper conduct at all times. If a student is sent to the office for disciplinary reasons, it will be at the discretion of the principal as to whether the student participates in an activity.

The St. Stanislaus athletic handbook will be provided to all athletes. Parents and student athletes must sign a commitment form in order to participate. A copy of the handbook is available for perusal in the office.

HOT LUNCH

A hot lunch program is provided by the Hopkins Public Schools; checks must be made payable to St. Mary's Visitation School. Hopkins Public Schools will invoice SMV School for all lunches. Parents are encouraged to pay for hot lunches via the Hopkins Public School Portal. Parents can locate their child's account number in the school. Menus are sent home monthly. Free and reduced lunch applications are available in the office as well as on our website.

FIELD TRIPS

All field trips taken by students at Saint Mary's Visitation School are a privilege and not a right. To provide for the safety of the students, and a well-communicated experience, parents must sign a permission form for each field trip. The only form that is accepted is the official form from the diocese. Email, phone calls, and handwritten notes will not allow the child to participate in the trip. A fax of the original signed permission slip is acceptable. Please be aware that you will be asked to sign a waiver releasing SMV from injury liability.

Volunteer Drivers

In order to ensure the students' safety and the driver's responsibility, a volunteer driver information sheet must be on file in the office before a parent may drive students on a trip.

BUSING INFORMATION*St. Mary's Visitation Bus*

Families living outside of the Hopkins Public School District may request to ride the SMV bus. Please fill out a transportation request form.

Hopkins and SMV Rules

Proper discipline is directly related to the safe operation of a school bus. The driver's attention must not be diverted from the business of driving the bus. For this reason, student misconduct cannot be tolerated.

The Principal will hold a conference with any student who requires disciplinary actions and will take necessary corrective measures. The parents will then be notified of any disciplinary action taken. Riding the school bus is a privilege. If any student abuses the privilege, it will be taken away, if necessary, in order to assure the safety of the other students.

The following list of rules is designed to help the students understand the type of behavior that is expected of all bus passengers:

1. Students are to be ready and waiting for the bus every morning. The bus does not have to wait for them.
2. Stay off of the road while waiting for the bus. Cross the road only when the bus driver has given a signal that it is safe to do so.
3. Remain seated while on the bus.

4. Conversation occurs in moderate levels. There is no shouting, name calling, or use of foul language.
5. The possession of tobacco and/or the use of any fire starting material are expressly forbidden while on the school bus or while on school grounds.
6. The bus driver may assign seats to students. Students are not permitted to change their seats without permission of the driver.
7. Students are not permitted to stand in the seats, have any part of their body out the window, or rough-house in any way while on the school bus.
8. Students are not to throw paper or other items while on the bus. A receptacle is provided at the front of the bus for waste disposal.
9. Any student damaging the bus in any way will be required to pay for the damage and will be properly disciplined for such action.

SAFETY DRILLS

St. Mary's Visitation School conducts fire, tornado, and lockdown drills each year to prepare the students for each type of emergency situation. Fire equipment is inspected in accordance with state law requirements.

Fire Drills - Five drills are conducted each year.

Tornado Drills - Two drills are conducted each year.

Tornado Watch - Students remain in class and continue with the routine.

Tornado Warning - Students proceed quietly to the designated shelter. They will remain there until an "All Clear" signal has been given by Allegan County.

Lock-down/Shelter-in-place Drills - Three drills are conducted each year with the cooperation and assistance from the Allegan County Emergency Management Office.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Whenever Hopkins is closed or delayed due to weather, St. Mary's Visitation School is closed or delayed. All parents are automatically included in FACTS/Renweb Parent Web alert system. You will be immediately notified if school closes early or is delayed in the morning due to weather. Closings will continue to be posted on the television.

HEALTH

Students enrolling for the first time in any school in Michigan must, according to law, submit a statement signed by a physician indicating that they have been immunized from measles, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, Hepatitis B, and varicella (unless student had chicken pox).

Parents of children are notified of meningococcal meningitis disease and vaccine as well as recommended vaccines for children 7-18 years old.

Kitchen

Students are not allowed to be in the kitchen without permission and proper adult supervision.

FIRST AID

In accordance with state regulations, we are only allowed to administer ice packs and bandages. In the event that further first aid is required, every effort will be made to contact the parents. In case of failure to contact the parents, the authorized contact person on your emergency form will seek the emergency care needed, parents being liable for any expense incurred. Michigan Catholic Conference requires a Medical Treatment Release form to be completed for each student. This form gives the authorization of the parent for emergency care when no contact can be made after a reasonable effort.

MEDICATION

School staff members are required to follow the regulations and procedures established and distributed by the Office of Schools of the Diocese of Kalamazoo in regard to student medication. In accordance with these regulations and procedures as well as state regulations. The following definitions of “medication” is adopted for use in the Diocese of Kalamazoo schools: Medication includes both prescription and non-prescription medications taken by mouth, by inhaler, and those that are injectable. Herbal remedies and essential oils are not considered medications approved by the FDA and are not considered medication under this definition. The following rules must be followed:

- Children are not permitted to transport medicine from home to school or school to home. They may administer it themselves at their convenience only with signed permission from doctor and parent.
- Any medicine to be given by school personnel must be in its original container and kept in the office. Only authorized school personnel can administer such medicine.
- All medicine (and this includes aspirin and cough drops) can only be given when there is written authorization from the parent or guardian and doctor in charge stating time and dosage. Diocesan approved forms are available in the office.

Please notify the school if your child suffers from any health problems such as epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, allergies, etc., so that proper procedures might be followed with the least possible disruption to the educational process for the child and/or others.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Each case involving communicable diseases of a serious nature, which has been identified as a disease that may present potential serious health problems for those who come in contact with the disease and/or the disease carrier, will be reviewed on an individual basis by the school administrator. This review should assure that both the rights of the individual and the rights of the populace are protected. If deemed necessary, the school administrator may appoint a fact finding panel in order to review the case. The risks and benefits to both the infected persons and to others in the setting must be weighed. In general, students with long-term illnesses can function in an unrestricted setting without infecting others; however, in some cases it may be

necessary for the school to minister to the person through other means than in a conventional classroom setting. In all cases, the person's rights to privacy must be upheld by all involved. Diocesan Policy 5141.4

COVID-19

Parents will be provided a copy of the COVID-19 response plan upon request. General guidelines will be communicated on an ongoing basis/as needed. The plan is fluid and subject to change based on requirements/recommendations by the State, Diocese, and local health department. Teachers will be provided with the school's COVID-19 reopening the school plan. Staff is required to follow the plan with the guidance of the administration; in collaboration with the COVID-19 task force.

SMOKING

In compliance with the State of Michigan statute, St. Mary's Visitation School is a non-smoking environment.

DRUG PREVENTION POLICY

The unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs, tobacco, and alcohol on school premises or at any of its activities is absolutely prohibited. Attending school or school functions under the influence of illicit drugs and alcohol is also prohibited. Diocesan Policy 5131.7

Students who violate the standards of conduct will be disciplined under the process outlined by Diocesan Policies. Disciplinary sanctions may include the completion of an appropriate rehabilitation program and referral for prosecution.

ASBESTOS

Both St. Mary's Visitation School and the Community Center were inspected for asbestos in 1988. It has been determined that no asbestos materials were used in the buildings.

PESTICIDES

As part of St. Mary's Visitation School's pest management program, pesticides are occasionally applied. Parents have the right to be informed of any pesticide application made to the school grounds or buildings. At least two days advance notice of pesticide application will be provided to parents via email or newsletter. The advance notice will contain information about the pesticide, including the target pest or purpose, approximate location, date of the application, contact information at the center, and a toll-free number for a national pesticide information center recognized by the Michigan Department of Agriculture.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Students' names should be written clearly on all items that belong to them. This minimizes confusion and avoids loss.

PARENT ORGANIZATION AND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Home and School

Everyone who has a child at St. Mary's Visitation School is a member of this organization. The Home and School organization meets four times a year. The purpose of the HSA is to create a positive atmosphere for learning through a cooperative effort between administrators, teachers, staff and parents/guardians by providing financial assistance, organized social functions, extracurricular educational programs and a volunteer parent network.

Hall Credit Policy

Families who would like to have Hall Credits used towards registration or tuition fees should contact the parish business office for authorization.

Fundraisers

The LCAB requires that school parents participate in the fundraisers that are part of school operation. Each family is asked to volunteer for a number of positions each year. If a family does not fill its required spots, they will be assessed \$100 per volunteer position. If a parent signs up to work an event and cannot fulfill his/her obligation, they are responsible for finding a replacement. If they do not get a replacement, they will be billed.

Local Consultative Advisory Committee (LCAB)

The LCAB advises the school administration in setting school policy. The LCAB also participates in long range planning and the budget process. It meets once per month, except in the month of July.

Education Foundation and Trust Fund

St. Mary's Visitation Education Foundation is a non-profit organization that supports all education programs at St. Mary's Visitation Parish. The Trust Fund was established with the ultimate goal of assisting the educational needs of SMV parish. The foundation and trust are in the process of being combined as one (as of 2019).

Volunteers

We encourage parents, grandparents and/or friends of the school to help with various activities at school. The Diocese requires all volunteers to complete a background check and have "Virtus" training, a program to educate adults in the prevention and awareness of sexual abuse.

WELLNESS POLICY

St. Mary's Visitation School is committed to creating a healthy school environment that enhances the development of lifelong wellness practices to promote healthy eating and physical activities that support student achievement including: nutrition education, nutritional standards, physical education and physical activity opportunities.

St. Mary's Visitation School students may have a healthy snack in the morning. High sugar content foods will not be permitted in the morning. If children have birthday treats such as cupcakes, they will be passed out to students in the afternoon.

If we have a peanut-free classroom due to a severe peanut allergy, no foods with peanuts or peanut oil, or processed in a plant that may have processed peanuts may be in this room. Peanut allergies can be life threatening if these measures are not adhered to.

WEAPONS FREE ENVIRONMENT

The safety and welfare of students must be a priority of all school community members. Therefore, the St. Mary's Visitation School environment must be kept free of all weapons and explosive devices. Students who use, possess, handle, transport, or conceal any object, which is or could be considered a dangerous weapon or instrument of violence, shall face immediate suspension or possible expulsion.

HARASSMENT

St. Mary's Visitation School, Byron Center, shall maintain an environment for all staff, volunteers, students, and community members, which is free from discrimination and/or sexual insult, intimidation, or harassment. Harassment of any type, including sexual or racial harassment, will not be tolerated.

Harassment may include but is not limited to:

- Displays of unwelcome physical behaviors that can be intimidating.
- Inappropriate touching, grabbing, or pinching.
- Making negative comments about a person.
- Name calling that puts someone down.
- Written comments about a person that are negative

Mean behavior occurs when a person willfully subjects another person to an intentional, unwanted and unprovoked hurtful verbal and/or physical actions. The victim may feel oppressed or threatened. Examples are:

- Punching, shoving, poking, hair pulling, biting, excessive tickling, tripping and pinching
- Name calling, racial slurs, threats, taunts, insults, and teasing
- Manipulating friendships

If mean behaviors involve an imbalance of power and are repeated over time, then it is called bullying. If a student is the victim of any form of harassment, mean behavior, or bullying, the incident should be reported to a teacher or other staff member immediately. Violations of this nature will result in serious consequences, which may include suspension, referral to law enforcement agencies or expulsion. Please see the Violence Prevention Rubric for details regarding disciplinary action.

Title IX

St. Mary's Visitation Catholic School adheres to the tenets of Title IX:

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

Mrs. Beth Schlosser (principal) is the school’s Title IX Coordinator. You can contact her in the school office at (616) 681-9701 ext. 200.

CIVIL RIGHTS

St. Mary’s Visitation School, Byron Center, is subject to the limitations of the Title VII or the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of education policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other school administered programs and activities, employment policies or contractual agreements.

HANDBOOK REVISION

The principal reserves the right to amend the handbook throughout the year if it is deemed necessary. Any changes will be made known to the parents through the bi-weekly newsletter and the school’s website. This handbook shall be reviewed by the principal and staff on a yearly basis.