

*Saint Mary  
Catholic School  
“We Walk With Jesus”  
Student/Parent Handbook  
2020-2021*



Blue Ribbon School

**MISSION STATEMENT**

*Dedicated to Catholic values, Saint Mary Catholic School is a Christ-centered educational community committed to academic excellence, spiritual growth, individual responsibility, and service to others.*

## **ACCREDITATION**

Saint Mary Catholic School is Accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference. Teachers hired by the school meet the requirements of the State of Florida Department of Education and the Department of Education for the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee. It is the policy of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee not to disclose information about any of our students consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This is done not only to protect privacy but to provide a safe and secure environment in which the students may learn and grow. All media requests must be referred to the Diocesan Communications Office (except for Athletics).

Additional revisions made to this Handbook throughout the course of the school year will be added as an addendum and distributed to the community.

**Saint Mary Catholic School**

**MASCOT**  
Archangels

**COLORS**  
Blue and Gold

**Accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference**  
**Member of the National Catholic Education Association**

**Bishop William A. Wack**  
Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee

**Rev. Doug Halsema**  
Pastor Saint Mary Catholic Church

**Mr. Michael Juhas**  
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

**Mrs. Amy T. Akins**  
Principal

**Mrs. Serra Abel**  
Assistant Principal



## School History

Since its official opening in September 1946 Saint Mary School has been committed to the academic, spiritual, emotional and social well-being of students. During the past seven decades the school has endured challenges, celebrated achievements and proclaimed the Gospel message unceasingly.

On September 11, 1946, Saint Mary School was opened and had an enrollment of 57 students. A third teacher, Sister Frances Louise, arrived shortly after the school year began to assist Sister Marie Dolores and Sister Madelene Sophie. In March of 1947 Bishop Toolen dedicated the school in the presence of Father Sherman as well as many priests from Pensacola and Mobile.

Excitement was high in 1949 when President Harry S. Truman made a visit to Saint Mary (May, 1996), but enrollment had dropped to only forty-eight students and the school was in danger of closing. With the beginning of the Korean War in 1950, however, an increase in military and civilian personnel to Eglin brought new students to the school

On May 6, 1959, ground was broken for a new school with Archbishop Toolen officiating. In October of that year construction began. Sister Marie Judith spoke of having “many moments of anxiety and trust in the Lord” during that time.

On September 8, 1960, the new school on Robinwood Drive was partially completed and opened for grades one through six. The Josephine Gerlach Memorial Library, a gift to the school from the Staff and Gerlach families, was opened on campus on February 28, 1960.

The 50th anniversary of the school brought a chance to reflect on the Saint Mary story. Alumnus Father John Cayer gave the homily during the anniversary Mass. He called the history of the school “50 years of God’s grace” and stated, “Today we celebrate not just tangible reminders of the past, but God’s active involvement in our lives. Let us pray that our ‘yes’ to God today will bring another 50 years to St. Mary School.”

The groundbreaking of a new parish life center dedicated to former pastor Monsignor Mullins was in 2005. Bishop Ricard and Monsignor Mullins attended the ceremony, and many of the 369 children from the school performed songs to commemorate the special occasion. The Parish Life Center would consist of a new gym, cafeteria, offices, meeting rooms and social hall.

In the fall of 2005 Saint Mary School opened its doors and hearts to 87 children and their families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. With enrollment at 470, following the storms several classrooms were filled to overflowing, but the school family was determined to see that anyone in need of assistance was not turned away.

On September 20, 2005, Saint Mary was named a No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon School. The school was recognized for scoring in the top ten percent of the nation on standardized assessments. The school celebrated its 70th year anniversary in 2016.

## **Philosophy**

Saint Mary Catholic School was established in 1946 to proclaim the Gospel message. Saint Mary School provides a distinctive Christian environment in which the Church's tradition of education brings to students the joyful pursuit of faith, wisdom, and virtue. This integration of faith with school life develops students whose values are centered on the teachings of Jesus Christ. Through experiencing the Gospel message, students develop an inner faith, which sustains them throughout their lives. In Catholic Schools, liturgy, prayer, and all forms of faith practice are incorporated into school life.

Catholic education has the responsibility to educate those who seek such an education. The school challenges students to fulfill their potential spiritually, intellectually, physically, and socially. The community of priests, administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students work cooperatively toward the school's goals. A strong foundation of religious education and active academic learning, coupled with close relations with home and family, encourage students to reach out from the school community to the world around them.

Christian standards of social behavior are emphasized at Saint Mary Catholic School. As a result, a strong sense of social justice is developed during the students' school years. The school provides many opportunities for service to others. Saint Mary Catholic School strives to form productive, caring members of society.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

It is the policy of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee to admit students of any race, disability, color, sex, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, disability, color, sex, national and ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, and athletic and other school administered programs.

**THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS** The Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee is committed to healing the hurting hearts of sexual abuse victims and has established Victims Assistance Coordinators who are experienced and trained counselors available to help persons who have been sexually abused.

### **RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN**

**For updates to our health policies and procedures, please see the Plan below in the Appendix.**

## **ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION**

### **PROBATIONARY ADMISSION STATUS**

All newly-enrolled students will be accepted on a probationary basis for the first semester of school.

### **GENERAL ADMISSION POLICY**

Saint Mary Catholic School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national or ethnic origin in selecting students, faculty or staff. Admission is based on the availability of space in each class and adherence to the requirements listed below.

Age entry requirements:

Pre-Kindergarten —Must be 4 years of age on or before September 1st

Kindergarten — Must be 5 years of age on or before September 1st

1st Grade — Must be 6 years of age on or before September 1st (Must have successfully completed a Kindergarten Program).

Parents registering children for the first time must provide the following documentation:

1. Birth Certificate
2. Baptismal Certificate
3. Social Security Card
4. Florida Immunization Certificate (HRS Form 680)
5. Florida School Entry Health Exam (HRS Form 3040)
6. Non-Refundable registration fee per child:

Current Students—\$150.00

New Students—\$200.00

Family Registration--\$400

### **REGISTRATION**

Registration for current students is taken during the first two weeks of February. A registration packet is sent home with students whose financial accounts are current.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Per Diocesan Policy # 310, all students shall comply with State of Florida required Immunization and Health laws prior to admission. If the child's immunization status proves to be inadequate, said student shall be excluded until such time that the appropriate requirements have been completed. Parents have 30 days to bring immunizations up to date from the date they move to the state of Florida. Parents must keep the office informed of all updated immunizations. There are no exceptions to this policy. There are generally recognized to be three types of exemptions sought from the schools' immunization policy – religious, conscience and medical.

- Religious exemptions: There is nothing in Catholic moral teachings which would hold that the use of vaccines is immoral and sinful. Accepting the opinion of the much-respected National Catholic Bioethics Center, the Bishops of Florida take the position that, "Catholic schools or a Catholic diocese cannot grant an exemption from vaccination on religious

grounds since the Catholic Church does not teach that the use of vaccinations...is intrinsically evil.” Accordingly, requests for exemptions based on religious beliefs will not be considered in any Catholic schools of this diocese.

- Conscience exemptions: The risk to public health in our Catholic schools has been determined to be too grave to allow exemptions from immunizations on the basis of conscience, or even for parents who erroneously believe that it would be sinful to have their children immunized. Social teachings of the Catholic Church are firm and consistent on the “common good” as the principle guide to reason in this regard. In justice, we consider and sometimes place the needs of others above our own. It is in that spirit that the Catholic Church recognizes a parent’s right to decide what is in the best interest of their child, so long as the effects of that decision only impacts them or their child. It is clearly a different matter when the consequence of that decision potentially puts others at risk. The good of respecting the conscience of parents of a single child is outweighed by the harm which could come to many as a result of an exemption on the basis of conscience. Accordingly, requests for exemptions based on conscience will not be considered in any Catholic schools of this diocese. 9
- Medical exemptions: Medical exemptions will be considered, but only if a determination can be made by diocesan officials that, based on medical evidence, admission of the child without a vaccination would not constitute a health risk to the school community under the circumstances. If such determination cannot be made, a medical exemption will not be granted. This exemption is reserved to Diocesan officials and is not to be granted at the parish or school administration level.

## TUITION AND FEES

### TUITION PAYMENT

The payment of tuition on time is very important since the school depends upon these funds for its financial operation. Tuition is automatically taken out of FACTS. All families are required to register with FACTS. Failure to pay tuition by the end of the month will result in notification to the pastor and principal. You may be asked to remove your child from the school if your payment is in arrears for three months. As members of a Christian community we are willing to reach out to those members who experience extenuating circumstances. However, it is your responsibility to contact the bookkeeper or principal to make them aware of your particular situation. Families requesting financial assistance above and beyond the Parish Participation Grant must see the principal to request additional help. **Families seeking financial assistance will be required to complete the FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment Application to verify need.** In addition, a brief application requesting additional funding will also have to be completed.

Based on the results of the applications and available funding, additional assistance may be granted.

## **TUITION PAYMENT PLANS**

Tuition payments will be made over a 10-month payment period. Tuition payments are due the 5th or the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, with the first payment in June. If a student withdraws from school prior to the beginning of the school year, two months of tuition is non-refundable. If a student withdraws from school once classes have started, tuition up to and including the quarter in which the student withdraws is nonrefundable.

## **TUITION REFUND POLICY**

For students withdrawing from school at the request of the school administration at any time, a full pro-rated refund of all remaining tuition other than the registration, book and miscellaneous fees, will be made.

If a child is withdrawn prior to July 1st, there will be a full refund of tuition minus fees. As of July 1st, there will be no refund of two (2) months of tuition.

Prior to the beginning of the school year, if two or more month's tuition is not paid the student's registration may be automatically terminated and the student's position is relinquished to another student.

If a student withdraws from school once classes have begun, tuition up to and including the quarter in which the student withdraws is non-refundable.

In the event of a transfer of employment of the parent over 30 miles from their original home, the principal may use his or her discretion in the refunding of tuition and will notify the Schools Office of the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee of his or her decision.

There are no refunds on fees. In the event that a student withdraws from the school at any time, there will be no refund of fees paid. This includes book fees, registration fees, graduation fees, retreat fees or other fees established by the school.

For purposes of calculating the amount of refund due as a result of a student's withdrawal, the departing student will be considered the last child of the family. For example, if a family with three children in school withdraws one of its students, the refund will be calculated using the tuition rate for the third child of the family.

At any time during the school year, if a family is delinquent in tuition payments by more than one month, the student may not attend school until payments are made current. This includes taking semester exams.

A child's attendance may be terminated if tuition is three (3) months in arrears, unless a payment plan has been approved by the Administration.

## **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Financial aid is determined through a third-party assessment by FACTS. An application must be completed through FACTS Grant & Aid Assessment at [www.factstuitionaid.com](http://www.factstuitionaid.com). After



completing the online application, supporting documentation must be mailed or faxed to FACTS. Submission of application does not guarantee financial aid.

#### CATHOLIC PARISH PARTICIPATION GRANT

To contribute financial assistance in the operation of schools, local Catholic parishes provide a grant of \$800 per child to those parishioners who are registered and participating in that parish. In addition to living up to some basic Catholic responsibilities, your stewardship (giving of your time, talent and treasure—the support of your parish through reportable income—is seen as participation in the parish. Review your commitment to, and participation in, your parish. If you feel as though your family will qualify, complete and submit the Catholic Parish Participation Grant Application to your parish office for your pastor to sign. Until the signed form is received in the Business Office, you will be charged the Non-Catholic/Non-affiliated Tuition Rate. Once the signed form is received, the rate will be adjusted. If the grant is not awarded, you are responsible for the Full Tuition Rate.

#### GEORGE AND MARY KREMER FOUNDATION GRANT

This is a private foundation for needy children enrolled in elementary Catholic schools. Saint Mary Catholic School is notified in March if we will be eligible to participate in this program. Please contact the school office for an application. The deadline for applying for this grant is usually in May of each year. This grant money is not distributed until after September 1st. You must pay the full, monthly tuition amount until your grant is approved and then the school office will reduce your payments accordingly. Students in Pre-K and Kindergarten are not eligible for these funds.

#### BLACK & INDIAN GRANT

This grant may be offered if money becomes available through the Diocese.

#### STEP UP FOR STUDENTS—CORPORATE SCHOLARSHIP

([WWW.STEPUFORSTUDENTS.ORG](http://WWW.STEPUFORSTUDENTS.ORG)) and AAA Scholarship

This scholarship is one of the Corporate Tax Scholarships available in Florida. It is based upon income eligibility and the student must be entering Kindergarten or 1st grade or must have attended the entire previous year in a Florida public school to qualify for 2nd thru 8th grades. The State will determine how much money is to be distributed. If you were on this scholarship last year, you MUST go online to renew beginning mid-February. New applications will be available beginning March 1st of each year. If you need help applying for this scholarship, please call the school office.

#### MCKAY SCHOLARSHIP/GARDINER SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship is for special needs students. They must have attended the entire previous year in a Florida public school and have been eligible for services to get this scholarship. Scholarship notification comes from the local public county school districts.

#### GENE AND JENNY POUSHELL RIGHT TO LIFE GRANT

#### OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS OR GRANTS

Please apply for financial aid to [www.factstuitionaid.com](http://www.factstuitionaid.com)

#### ADMISSION OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

Saint Mary School does accept students with special needs, to include students who have an IEP or 504 Plan, if we are able to provide the services required for the child's educational setting. Parents must meet with the principal to discuss the services needed for their child and provide the documentation, either IEP, 504 Plan, or medical testing, before admission is granted.

#### WITHDRAWAL FEE

There will be a **\$100 withdrawal fee** applied to each account for withdrawal of students before the end of the school year for processing the withdrawal.

#### FINANCE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Finance Council is an advisory committee and is responsible for the preparation and monitoring of the annual school budget and drafting a long-term financial plan for the school. Members are appointed by the pastor and principal.

**School starts August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Last Day of School June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

**DAILY SCHEDULE**

<b>Bell Schedule</b>	<b>Times</b>
Teachers in classrooms, doors open for students	7:45 a.m.
Arrival window	7:45am - 8:15 a.m.
Dismissal for bus students	2:45 p.m.
Dismissal window	2:45p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

**ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL: Changes for the 2020-2021 School Year**

**Morning:**

1. Students not participating in a sponsored morning activity **may not be on campus before 7:45 a.m. unless they are in Extended Care or accompanied by their parent.** If students are on campus prior to 7:45 a.m., they will be sent to Extended Care and will be charged an Extended Care Fee. **For 2020-2021 Arrival window is from 7:45am to 8:15am.**
2. Students who are having breakfast may go to the Cafeteria at 7:40 a.m. to eat and will not be charged an Extended Care fee.
3. Students in K3 through 4<sup>th</sup> grade are to be delivered to the covered drop-off in the main parking lot. Staff members will be on duty beginning at 7:45 a.m.
4. Students in 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades may be delivered to the circle drive in front of the school's office. Students in **8<sup>th</sup>** grade who have siblings in K3 through 7<sup>th</sup> grades may also be delivered in front of the school. This is an 8<sup>th</sup> grade privilege.

**Afternoon:**

1. Regular dismissal procedures are suspended for the first semester to follow health protocols.
2. Elementary dismissal – Parents will pick up their child(ren) in the Gymnasium.
3. Parents shall display car tags on the dashboard of their car for all carpool or carry in hand when picking up their child.
4. K3 and K4 will begin dismissal at 2:30 p.m. **for those students who do not have older siblings in the school.** The teachers will bring the students to the front of the old cafeteria and load the students into the cars. Parents are asked to remain in the cars. K3-

K5 students who ride the bus, go to Extended Care, or have older siblings will be delivered to the appropriate carpool area at 2:50 p.m.

5. For families with one or two students in grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Graders with younger siblings (also those who have K3-K5 siblings), students will be picked up in the Gymnasium.
6. Families in grades 5<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> with no younger siblings than 5<sup>th</sup> Grade will be picked up in front of the school's office. Parents please use your car name tag.
7. Students will not be dismissed from the office after carpool has begun.
8. **No students will be dismissed to parents who are not in the carpool lines until the end of carpool. Do not leave your car to get your student.**
9. CARS THAT ARE PARKED IN PARKING SPACES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO MOVE UNTIL AFTER CARPOOL. Please do not check students out after 2:30, or you will interfere with carpool. For safety reasons, Carpool always takes priority.
10. Cars must remain in line and not pass other cars until after the horseshoe curve.

**Due to COVID-19 our arrival and dismissal procedures are new for the 2020-2021 school year. It takes everyone's assistance for it to be successful and timely. Bring your rosary; it is a great thing to do during the dismissal process.**

#### **ALTERNATE IN-DOOR DISMISSAL**

At this time, there will be no alternate in-door dismissal for the 2020-2021 School Year.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

### HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

The goal of homework is to provide students practice in the concepts and skills that they are learning during the school day. Homework is only assigned after a concept has been introduced. Students in grades three through eight **are required to use agenda books to record assignments**. Homework assignments take into consideration individual differences and are reasonable in length. Homework will include activities completed outside the school which have a direct application to content being studied in school. Homework is evaluated; however, recording grades for every homework assignment is not necessarily required or expected.

#### Homework - Middle School

1. Assignments that are one day late will have a 10% grade reduction.
2. Assignments that are two days late will have a 30% grade reduction.
3. No assignments will be accepted after two days. **A zero may be given for no homework.**

### ABSENTEE HOMEWORK

Parents may request short-term homework for ill or absent students. Such requests must be made at the school office **before 10:00 a.m.** and then be picked up at school dismissal time in the school office. This will allow teachers an opportunity to write assignments without interrupting ongoing learning activities. Students are allowed **three school days** to turn in missing assignments upon returning to school from an excused absence for illness. Failure to complete missed assignments will result in reduction in grades. It is the student's responsibility to obtain assignments and turn in missing work. **If a student is absent the day of a test but was present the day prior for the review, the student will make up the test upon his/her return to school. Homework will be due the following day for students who miss class due to extracurricular activities (sports, etc.), and vacation absences. Students who take extended vacation days, longer than two days, will need to follow their teachers' websites for assignments as assignments can change. For extended vacation days longer than two days, students will need to confirm with their teacher when missing assignments are due, and all assessments will need to be taken immediately upon return.**

**Absences from extended vacation days must be approved by the principal.**

## ACADEMIC GRADES AND PROGRESS

### POWERSCHOOL

The PowerSchool web portal offers parents the ability to access and review their students' grades and attendance online. At the beginning of each school year, parents of new students are given a confidential id and password. You will need these to associate your child's information to a login

and password that you will create to access the web portal and see your child's information. Please keep them confidential to protect your child's information.

If you do not have internet access, you may bring your child's login information to the school and use one of our computers. If this is not feasible due to work or transportation issues, and if you have no other means of logging into PowerSchool, you may send a written request for a paper report to the office.

## USING POWERSCHOOL

To log into the web portal go to this Internet address:

<https://ptdioceseschools.powerschool.com/public/>

If you have previously created a login name and password, enter them in the User Name and Password boxes and click Submit. If you have not done this, click the Create Account.

## GRADES AND ATTENDANCE

When a category or assignment is listed in blue, you may click on it to get more information. Click on a grade to see a list of assignments and tests that make up that grade. Click on the number of tardy days or absences to see a list of dates that make up that total number.

When viewing assignments, you may see some of the following special grading characters:

L – Late Assignment was handed in late. Student's grade may have been penalized.

M – Missing Grade of zero for work that was not handed in.

Ex – Exempt Student was exempt from this assignment.

ü – Collected Assignment was collected, but has not yet been graded.

Both an attendance summary and daily attendance to the most recent two weeks are available on this screen.

## GRADES HISTORY

This screen allows you to see final grades from previous quarters, but individual assignments from previous quarters are not available.

## ATTENDANCE HISTORY

This screen allows you to view attendance for the entire quarter. A legend at the bottom of the window explains the attendance codes that are used.

## E-MAIL NOTIFICATION

This option allows you to elect to have a copy of your child's grades or attendance sent to you via e-mail. You can select how often these e-mails are sent.

Please note these considerations about e-mail notification:

- E-mails are generated by the PowerSchool server and are not as "reader friendly" as using the web portal.
- If you elect to be sent a detailed report showing all assignment scores for each class, and you

elect to receive them daily, you could be sent up to 14 separate e-mails every day.

- If you use a web mail account (i.e. Yahoo or Hotmail), please check and empty your mailbox regularly so that you have room for PowerSchool messages. If your mailbox is full, your PowerSchool mail will be undeliverable.
- E-mail reports are sent from an unmonitored e-mail address. If you wish to discuss something on the report with your child(ren)'s teacher(s), you should click Forward (not Reply) and enter the teacher's e-mail address and your comments/questions.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

A student's progress may be monitored by parents through the Parent Portal of PowerSchool. Progress reports, noting a student's academic progress, are online in PowerSchool at the mid-quarter for each of the four quarters for grades 2<sup>nd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>. Progress Reports may also be given any time a student's progress is not satisfactory.

## **ACADEMIC IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

All students who receive a D or an F on their report card will have an Academic Improvement Plan (AIP). The AIP will list strategies for improvement and will be monitored closely until the grades improve. Academic Improvement Plans will be written at the end of the first, second and third quarters. The AIP will require a parent/guardian signature.

## **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

In cases of prolonged illness or other extenuating circumstances, a student may receive an Incomplete due to missed assignments. The incomplete grade is initially recorded on the report card as an "Incomplete." After 10 days, the "I" is changed to the grade earned; if the incomplete grade is not corrected by the end of the ten-day period, the grade reverts to an "F." Grades will be changed in Power School at the end of the 10-day period.

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

Students who receive a GPA below a 2.0 may be put on academic probation.

## **HONORS CRITERIA AND HONOR ROLL ASSEMBLY**

An Honor Roll will be established each quarter naming those students in grades one through eight who have demonstrated academic excellence together with consistent effort and good conduct. Honor Roll Certificates are presented during Honor Roll Assembly for the 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter.

**The following criteria will be used:**

**Academic Excellence- All A's, including Specials (Music, P.E., Art, Computers, Library, Spanish), or all E's.**

**Outstanding Academics: Only A's or B's in all subjects, including Specials (Music, P.E., Art, Computers, Library, Spanish), or all E's and G's.**

**Extra Effort – Students who work above and beyond in their studies.**

## **ACADEMIC SERVICES**

At SMCS we offer the following academic services to ensure our students success: School Counselor, certified ESE Teacher, certified Gifted Education Teacher, Title 1 Reading and Math Program, a licensed Speech, Language Pathologist (SLP). In addition, we can work with outside private services such as ABA Therapists and Occupational Therapists.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

A cumulative record of each student is kept on file in the school office. The student record includes final averages for grades from each year, test results, health records, any auxiliary information provided, and school entrance information. A student's record may be transferred to another school only with the appropriate approval of the parent until such student is a legal adult. The **Withdrawal School Form** must be completed and submitted to the school office prior to records being sent. Parents may review their child's records by making an appointment with the principal.

### **RETENTION POLICY**

Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher at the FIRST SIGN of a student's difficulty in any academic subject. It is the teacher's duty and responsibility to notify parents through PowerSchool, conferences and report cards that academic problem(s) exist. Parents and teachers will work together in planning possible remedies to the problem.

#### **Grades PreK3-1**

The faculty involved and the school administration determine retention in grades PreK3 through one.

#### **Grades 2-3**

If a student in grade 2 or 3 receives a D or below in Reading and/or Mathematics, she/he must receive a minimum of 16 hours of instruction per subject administered by a certified teacher or at an accredited facility. The faculty involved and the school administration will determine retention.

#### **Grades 4-8**

If a student in grades 4-8 fails one subject s/he must attend local public summer school if available. In the event that summer school is not available, then grades 4-8 must take the course online through Florida Virtual School. If a student fails in two or more core subjects, it is an automatic retention, and the student will need to repeat the grade. If the student is retained in grade eight, she/he cannot remain at Saint Mary Catholic School.

### **STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS**

The Terra Nova Assessment is given to the students in grades two through eight in the spring as required by the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee. The results of these tests are placed in the



student's cumulative files and a copy given to the parents. These tests denote specific skills mastered by students and aid teachers in setting up individual programs for students. These tests are also used to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum.

The Terra Nova is a nationally-recognized, norm-referenced test that meets most states' annual testing requirements. It provides a series of tests that are easy to administer, stimulating to take, and most importantly extremely accurate in their assessment of student achievement.

Terra Nova is a norm-referenced nationally standardized achievement test.

❖ Nationally standardized means that the test was administered to students across the country at the same time. Norms are also set for the time of year the tests are taken.

❖ A statistical sample of students is involved in the norming. This enables the test designers to establish appropriate percentile scales (norms) indicating how well students of a particular age and grade perform on the test items.

❖ Terra Nova is an achievement test, not a proficiency test such as the state administers. Proficiency tests are those in which students have been taught all the content and are now being tested on whether or not they "got" it. Achievement tests include content that students have been taught and include content students may not have been specifically taught, but that they could be expected to have mastered according to their cognitive ability.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued every nine weeks. The nine-week grading period is in accordance with Diocesan policy. Report Cards must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the school within one week of issuance. The last report card of the year will be mailed home as long as financial obligations are clear.

### **Grading Scale**

<u>Grade 1</u>	<u>Grades 2 – 8</u>
E – Excellent	A 90-100
G - Good	B 80-89
S – Satisfactory	C 70-79
I – Improving	D 60-69
N – Needs Improvement	F Below 60
U – Unsatisfactory	I Incomplete

## **CONDUCT GRADES**

Conduct grades are given quarterly and are as follows:

1. Above Average
2. Satisfactory
3. Needs Improvement

#### 4. Unsatisfactory

### FINAL GRADES

At the end of the year, a final average is given for each student in grades 3-8 based on the four-quarter marks. The mid-year and final exam marks are also averaged in the final grade for those students who take them. In computing the final grade, each quarter grade bears twice the weight of a semester exam.

### PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Communication between home and school is very important and part of our philosophy at Saint Mary Catholic School. As such, we require parents to receive their child's first quarter report card at a parent/teacher conference. Throughout the year teachers and parents/guardians may request additional conferences to ensure the best possible education for each student. Please call the school office or email your child's teacher to request a conference. If a parent has any concerns in regards to his/her child's education, they should be addressed with the teacher first and if necessary with the principal.

### CURRICULUM

#### FAITH FORMATION

Saint Mary Catholic School reflects the spirit of Catholic life and learning and offers students a complete program of spiritual activities, including daily Religion instruction as a core subject. Note: all students attending Saint Mary Catholic School, regardless of religious faith, must participate in our Religion classes and activities according to Diocesan Policy #304. Our Catholic faith is celebrated through regular prayer services, the weekly celebration of the Eucharist, and Holy Day liturgies. Parents are always welcome to join the school community in prayer.

#### ACADEMICS

**Kindergarten:** Religion, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Handwriting, Spanish, Music, Computers, Physical Education, Art, Library Skills

**Primary:** Religion, Reading/Phonics, English, Spelling, Handwriting, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Spanish, Music, Computers, Physical Education, Art, Library

**Intermediate:** Religion, Reading, English, Spelling, Handwriting, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Spanish, Music, Computers, Physical Education, Art, Library Skills

**Middle School:** Theology, English, Literature, Mathematics, Science, History, Technology, Physical Education, Spanish, Art

**Electives and Extra-Curricular Activities:** Varsity Band, Junior Varsity Band, Music, Choir, Art, Spanish, Drama and Theater, Theatre Set Design, Robotics Teams, Academic Team, National Junior Honor Society, Yearbook, Athletics (OCSD MS Program Participant), Gifted

Class, Student Council, Mercy in Motion Club, Book Club, Chess Club, Altar Servers, Community Speech and Writing Contests, Community Art Contests

## MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSES FOR HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT AND ONLINE COURSES

SMCS offers courses for high school credit, as well as online courses through Florida Virtual School (FLVS). High School credit courses offered at SMCS are Spanish 1, Computer Science 1 for 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade, Algebra 1, and Geometry. Requirements to take Spanish 1 are a B or A in 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Literature and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade English courses. The requirements to take Algebra 1 are to receive a score of a 10 on the below matrix:

### ALGEBRA 1 HONORS QUALIFICATION MATRIX

SCORE	3 POINTS	2 POINTS	1 POINT
Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test	99-93% ILE	92-86% ILE	85-80% ILE
Terra Nova Math Composite	99-93% ILE	92-86% ILE	85-76% ILE
Pre-Algebra Class Final Grade	100-93	92-86	85-80
Terra Nova Science Composite	99-93% ILE	92-86% ILE	85-76% ILE
Science Class Final Grade	100-93	92-86	85-80

## SCHOOL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

### ATTENDANCE

Students **may not be dropped off for school before 7:45 a.m.** unless they are attending Extended Care. After 7:45 a.m. students may be dropped off and are to go directly to their classrooms. It is important for students to arrive on time each day in order not to disrupt the beginning of the school day and also be present for important announcements. School begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. To fully benefit from the instructional program, students are expected to attend school regularly, be on time for classes, and satisfy all course requirements. Poor attendance or excessive tardiness may result in low or failing grades. **Students will not be tardy for the 2020-2021 school year if they arrive to school by 8:15a.m.**

### TARDY

Students who arrive after **the 8:15 a.m.** must check in the office **with their parents**. Signing in does not automatically excuse the tardy. Tardiness is excused only if it is a result of serious or unavoidable circumstances.

**If a student arrives tardy more than 1 hour late (9:00 a.m.) or leaves school more than 1 hour early (2:00 p.m.), the student will be counted as ½ day absent. (This does not include medical appointments.)**

## **CHECKING STUDENTS OUT EARLY**

There will be no dismissals after 2:00 p.m. except for medical appointments with a doctor's note. This is both an instructional and safety issue. Early dismissals disrupt the class routine for the whole class and it is a safety and security issue during carpool.

Appointments for the doctor and dentist should be scheduled after school. In the event a student must leave school during the day, **a note must be given to the teacher at the beginning of the day**. A student will not be dismissed from class before the parent arrives and signs the student out of school in the Office. The last bell rings at 3:00 p.m. If a student checks out early, they are responsible for the next day's homework and any class work missed. The student is responsible for acquiring the assignments.

## **GUESTS / VISITORS**

**Our visitor policy has changed for the 2020-2021 School Year. Please see our Return to School Plan in the Appendix for our current visitor policy.**

## **REQUIRED ATTENDANCE**

**Any student who has not been in attendance for instruction for a minimum of 90% of the class each semester may not pass the subject unless the student demonstrates mastery of the student performance standards by passing a comprehensive final exam in the course. This will go into effect after 10 days absent in any semester.**

## **ABSENCE OTHER THAN ILLNESS**

Absences other than illness are approved in advance by the principal. Students missing school for vacations or trips of any kind are excused only with advance permission. Students are required to obtain assignments that are missed in advance and **turn the work in the day they return**.

## **ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION**

Students who will be using transportation other than their normal plan must provide a note from home and must be given to the Office. Any transportation changes the day of **MUST BE CALLED INTO THE SCHOOL OFFICE**. Teachers are busy teaching and might not see an email correspondence. For example, if a bus rider will be going to carpool, the parent must confirm this change in writing before the day of the change, or on the day call the school Office before 2:15 p.m.

## **BACKPACK POLICY**

Backpacks are to be used to bring materials and books to and from home. This school year middle school students may use backpacks throughout the school day. The backpacks will be stored in the homeroom of each student. Students who change classes will take their 3-ring binder and their books only. Girls will be allowed to use a small purse.

Students in grades K3 through 4<sup>th</sup> **will not be allowed to use rolling backpacks**. Students in grades 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> may use either type of backpack.

## **BUS**

Safety is our primary concern on our school buses. The safety rules apply to all students. The bus adheres to a strict schedule and does not wait for late students. The bus stops at scheduled stops only. **Please do not ask the bus driver to make unscheduled stops**. This is for the safety of our children and ensures the bus is on time.

- Students should arrive at least 5 minutes early to their bus stop to account for the bus running early.
- Students who ride the bus will be ready for departure at the last bell. Buses will leave the grounds at 3:00 p.m.
- Students may not get off the bus once they board the bus.
- Students will have their temperature taken as they board the bus. Students with a temperature at or above 100.4 F may not ride the bus.
- Except for ordinary conversation, students shall observe quiet conduct on the bus.
- Seatbelts must be used.
- Students must stay seated in their seats while the bus is in motion.
- Students must sit upright with their feet on the floor or aimed toward the floor.
- Students shall not discard garbage on the floor of the bus.
- Students will not eat food or drink on the bus.
- No part of the body shall be extended through the bus window.
- Throwing anything out the window is forbidden and is illegal. A fine can be assessed that the parent will be responsible to pay.
- Students are allowed to ride the bus home with a friend on a space available basis. The cost for a student (who is not a regular bus rider) is \$5.00.
- Students will close their windows when they get ready to exit the bus.
- If no one is at the assigned bus stop to pick up the students, they are returned to After-Care at the school and the parents are charged.

**Riding privileges may be revoked for rule violations or for conduct that is detrimental to the safe operation of the school bus. The school bus driver is in complete charge of the bus and students.**

## **Saint Mary School Bus Policy**

### **Bus Behavior**

#### 1.0 Policy Statement

1.1 Rules of conduct exist on the school bus to foster thoughtfulness and consideration of others.

1.2 Bus transportation is provided as a convenient and safe way to transport students to and from school.

1.3 In accordance with Saint Mary School regulations, the following guidelines have been set forth to ensure that all students and parents/guardians are aware of the types of behaviors/actions

that are expected of them while riding on a school bus. These guidelines are in place to ensure the safety of all riders.

2.1 The following behavior is not allowed while riding on a school bus and is subject to change on an as-needed basis as determined by Saint Mary School.

- (a) Throwing items inside the bus or out the windows of the bus.
- (b) Standing or changing seats while the bus is in motion.
- (c) Intimidating, or harassing, a fellow student or the bus driver.
- (d) Failing to take a designated seat, when specifically directed to do so by the bus driver.
- (e) Riding without permission on any bus that the student is not normally assigned.
- (f) Exhibiting any inappropriate behavior or language.
- (g) Possessing an object(s) or substance(s) that may cause injury to any individual on the bus.
- (h) Eating while on the bus may be allowed with the consent of the driver and if the area is cleaned of crumbs, containers, wrappers, etc. prior to departing.
- (i) Sitting incorrectly in the seat, including blocking or obstructing the aisle in any way.
- (j) The use of owned electronic technologies is acceptable unless the driver or other riders deem it to be a distraction and must be in compliance with our “Acceptable Use Policy”.
- (j) Students are permitted to use personal electronic technologies under the following guidelines.
  - Saint Mary School is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage of these devices.
  - Inappropriate videos, songs, or content viewed, shared, or discussed are strictly prohibited.
  - The use of these devices must not be deemed a distraction by other riders or the driver.
- (k) Any actions that are a distracting to the driver and, therefore; a safety concern.

3.1 Violations of the rules outlined in section 3.2 will be reported by the bus driver or a student on the to the Principal or Assistant Principal.

3.2 The Principal will determine the action to be taken. The Principal may direct, one or more of the following consequences depending on the severity of the violation:

- (a) The Principal will notify the student’s parents/guardians of the violation.
- (b) One (1) Violation: The student will be issued a warning, outlining the consequences s/he will face in the case of a repeat violation. Additionally, the student will forfeit his/her ability to choose a seat and an assigned seat will be issued.
- (c) Two (2) Violations: The student forfeits his/her privilege to bus transportation for up to one (1) week after the second violation of bus regulations.
- (d) Three (3) Violations: A subsequent referral will result in suspension from the bus service for an extended period of time, which will be determined by the Principal.
- (e) More than three (3) Violations: Any further violations of these rules by a student may result in forfeiture of busing service for the rest of the school year.

### 3.3 MAJOR DISRUPTIONS

Vandalism, unauthorized use of the emergency door, or other major disruptions caused by a student may result in immediate forfeiture of busing services for the rest of the year. Any cost

incurred or repair necessary as a result of a student's actions to or on the bus will be assessed to the family or families involved.

3.4 Students or parents who have comments or concerns about bus behavior guidelines should direct them to St. Mary School.

## **CAFETERIA POLICIES**

Saint Mary School is a participant in the USDA Federal Lunch/Breakfast Program. Hot and nutritionally balanced meals are prepared daily. The five menu categories are Meat/Protein, Vegetable, Fruit, Grain, and Milk, (usually fat-free, reduced fat, chocolate reduced fat and whole milk choices). On most days, there is more than one selection in each of the categories offered. Students in K3 through 1<sup>st</sup> grades will have their trays prepared with 4 lunch items by the cafeteria staff. They will select their milk type (5<sup>th</sup> item).

Lunch costs \$3.00 for students at all grade levels. The non-student (adult) meal cost is \$3.75. A la carte items & extra entrees will cost \$1.75. Students who bring a sack lunch may purchase milk or juice for 75¢. Breakfast costs \$2.00.

It is a parental responsibility to provide for a child's lunch. Students can charge meals if they forget their lunch or lunch money; however, charging should not be considered a normal procedure. Students may not charge for extra servings.

Saint Mary School utilizes **My School Bucks**, an online meal payment program that allows parents to pay for meals online.

Lunches and milk for the week may be purchased in advance from the cafeteria cashier. The money should be sent to the homeroom teacher in a labeled envelope. Prepaid credits are maintained by the cafeteria cashier. Parents may also pay online through My School Bucks.

## **CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR**

Students are expected to follow all cafeteria policies. There are two lunchroom monitors in the cafeteria. The monitors are in charge of the students during their lunch period. Teachers bring students to the cafeteria, get the students seated and then will have duty-free lunch. The monitors will supervise the lunch time for each class and will guide the students in appropriate manners, which will include cleaning up after themselves. Students are expected to use good table manners.

1. Students will keep conversation to an appropriate noise level.
2. Students will remain in their seats during lunch, unless given permission by one of the supervising adults.
3. Students are assigned by the monitors to clean tables.
4. **No canned or carbonated drinks are allowed.**
5. Students will put trash into the container, clean up the floor, and exit quietly when instructed to do so by the monitors or their teachers.

## **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Student cell phones are allowed on campus as long as they remain in the backpack, locker, or cubby, and **turned off**. Phones must be turned off during school hours. Cell phones will be confiscated if found on a student's person and/or used on school property between the hours of **7:45 a.m. and 3:15 p.m., and any student in Extended Care** for the duration of the time the student is in Extended Care. **In addition, Apple watches, smart watches, or Fitbits that have internet are not allowed on school property, and will be confiscated and taken to the Office.** Any confiscated phone or smart watch must be picked up by parents from the principal.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

*There will be no Field Trips for the first semester of 2020-2021. This policy will be adjusted in accordance with local health department recommendations.*

Field trips are recognized as an integral part of a sound educational program and provide a valuable addition to the classroom curriculum. They provide students with experiences to expand their educational and cultural horizons. Each child must have a school-issued permission slip and a medical treatment release form, signed by a parent or guardian, in order to accompany the class on a field trip. (Verbal permission or handwritten note by parent will not be accepted.) If special financial arrangements are needed, please see Mrs. Akins privately.

Field Trips are a privilege, not a right. Students can be denied participation if they fail to meet behavioral or academic requirements as determined by classroom teachers or school administration. All reasonable and prudent steps to safeguard the welfare of participating students shall be taken. Only students enrolled in Saint Mary School will be allowed to participate in class field trips. Younger or older children may not accompany adult chaperones on the class trips. Chaperones must be able to give their undivided attention to supervising class members.

When valid school bus transportation is not available and private vehicles are used, the following is required:

- Qualified volunteer drivers over 25 years of age must complete and be in compliance with all stipulations on the Volunteer Driver Information Form.
- Every student in a car must wear a seat belt or be in a booster seat; they may not sit in the front seat.

Students in grades PreK-2 must be in an approved booster seat, provided by their parents. (If a student is 4'9" or taller, s/he may sit with a seat belt. That student will not be required to have a booster seat, if the seatbelt fits correctly according to American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines.



## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **FLOCKNOTE MESSAGING**

We use a text messaging program called Flocknote. We highly advise signing up for this service. We communicate important school information on a regular basis through Flocknote. You may sign-up for this through the link on the front page of our website.

### **CONTACTING STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

Parents picking up students, leaving messages, lunches, etc., during school hours must go through the Office. Messages for students and teachers will be delivered at a time that does not disrupt classroom activity. Please make every attempt to keep these interruptions to a minimum. It is important that the pick-up procedures/plans be made before the school day begins. We will not accept change in routine instructions for students after 2:15 p.m. unless it is an emergency.

Parents are not to enter the classroom during the school day unless they are scheduled as a volunteer and have signed in at the school office. All visitors to school must go through the Office and our security procedures. If you walk your child to class in the morning, please leave them at the door.

### **OFFICE TELEPHONE**

Students will use the office telephone for emergency purposes only. Items left at home such as books, homework, music instruments, or physical education uniforms/equipment are not considered emergencies. Additionally, phone calls are not allowed to arrange after school activities; these arrangements should be made prior to the beginning of the school day.

### **MONDAY MESSAGE NEWSLETTER AND MONDAY MORNING MEETING**

One Monday during each month, the school will meet together in the gym at 8:00 a.m. to start our day. We call this our Monday Morning Meeting. We will pray together, share school news and upcoming events. In addition, every Monday we send out our newsletter, the Monday Message. The newsletter is an excellent way to be up to date on all school news and participate in school fellowship. The Message is accessible on the school website under the heading SMCS Message and emailed home to all families.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Saint Mary Catholic School philosophy is we walk with Jesus and we treat others as we would like to be treated. Our goal is to provide a positive, caring learning environment where students can reach their full potential. Students and parents are provided a list of specific classroom

procedures and expectations at the beginning of each year. Each teacher has his/her own classroom management system. Please be aware that any one list of rules is not all-inclusive but serves as a general guide. It is our intention to work together to insure that each student progresses. As part of this partnership, the school requests that parents discuss classroom expectations and procedures at home.

#### DETENTION

Grades 2-8: After-school detentions will be held every Thursday from 3:00-4:00 p.m. Teachers and the Assistant Principal will supervise detentions on a rotating schedule. A student in detention will not be allowed to do homework, study or sleep.

Saint Mary Catholic School has adopted the following six Peace Rules.

Peace Rules  
As  
“We Walk with Jesus”

1. We cooperate constructively.
2. We speak respectfully.
3. We listen with an open mind.
4. We act with kindness.
5. We respect each other’s feelings.
6. We take responsibility for what we say and do.

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**FOULS**  
**Blaming \* Bossing \* Bringing up the past \* Bullying**  
**Cruel humor \* Getting even \* Hitting**  
**Making excuses \* Manipulating**  
**Name calling \* Not listening \* Not taking responsibility**  
**Pushing \* Put downs \* Rude gestures \* Shaming**  
**Sneering \* Threats**

#### CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

Each teacher develops a discipline plan that is implemented prior to sending a student to the office. Teachers send a discipline plan home to parents at the beginning of each school year. A Disciplinary Report (DR) is sent home for conduct violations in all grades. These reports must be signed by a parent/guardian and the student and returned to the issuing teacher the next school day. Failure to return the DR or to bring a note from home results in an automatic Detention. When a student’s behavior fails to be corrected in the classroom, the teacher will conference with the parent.

#### Level One Offenses

Minor offenses that include (but are not limited to)

- \*Failure to bring materials to class
- \*Excessive talking in class
- \*Uniform violations
- \*Tardy to class
- \*Issues of mild disrespect
- \*Level one offenses are cumulative for each semester**

### Level Two Offenses

More serious offenses that include (but are not limited to)

- \*Foul and/or abusive language
- \*Destruction of school property (reimbursement is required)
- \*Fighting
- \*Defiance
- \*Dishonesty
- \*Level two offenses are cumulative for the entire year**

### Level Three Offenses

Extreme offenses that include (but are not limited to)

- \*Serious and/or repeated disrespect to persons in authority (faculty, staff, volunteers)
- \*Disruptive, immoral, or indecent behavior
- \*Any actions dealing with drugs, alcohol, or weapons
- \*Harassment/sexual harassment
- \*Any other infractions deemed serious by the principal
- \*Level three offenses can result in automatic expulsion**

## CONSEQUENCES

### DETENTION

Detention is held every Thursday afternoon from 3:00p.m. to 4:00p.m. Failure to arrive on time will be considered a level two offense. Detention may be assigned for the following offenses:

- \*Three level one offense accumulated during any semester.
- \*One level two offenses
- \*Failure to return a discipline report

Teachers, as well as administrators, may assign detention. Parents are notified by the teacher assigning the detention.

### SUSPENSION

This is a serious disciplinary measure and is used only after other actions have not succeeded in correcting the problem. There are in-school suspensions and out-of-school suspensions. Parents or guardians are notified by telephone of the suspension and are requested to come to the school for the student unless the suspension is in-school. All concerned parties will meet to discuss the problem and seek a solution.

Suspension may be assigned for the following offenses:

- \*Three detentions accumulated during the school year
- \*Any level two or level three infraction deemed suspension-worthy by the principal
- \*Suspensions are cumulative for the entire school year\***

**Any student with two suspensions on their record at the end of the school year will be placed on probation for the first semester of the following school year.**

## **PROBATION**

This is a trial period when a student must demonstrate good behavior and a willingness to cooperate with other students and the school's staff.

## **EXPULSION**

This is a disciplinary measure used only when incorrigible behavior or conduct threatens the physical or moral welfare of other students or seriously affects the learning process. A parent conference is imperative when such a problem is discovered. The principal, with the approval of the pastor, may expel a student for a grave reason. The Superintendent of Schools is made aware of such problems prior to the parent conference and expulsion.

- \*Three suspensions are grounds for expulsion
- \*Any level three offense may result in an automatic expulsion regardless of prior behavioral record.

## **SERIOUS OFFENSES**

- Violations of the accepted code of conduct
- Jeopardizing the safety of anyone
- Seriously impeding the learning of others
- Serious insubordination
- Bullying

## **HARASSMENT/SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Saint Mary Catholic School does not tolerate any form of harassment. Harassment is defined as communication or conduct designed to reduce the dignity of an individual in the form of requests for favors, unwelcome teasing, or other verbal or physical contact (can be written, physical, visual, or verbal). Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

## **BULLYING POLICY**

### **DEFINITION OF BULLYING:**

Bullying is defined as a person *willfully* and *repeatedly* exercising power or control over another person by the use of words or physical aggression. This imbalance of power can take place on

school grounds or to and from school, or during any school-sponsored field trip or event. Electronic bullying via email, text, or websites is included in the Saint Mary Catholic School Bullying Policy and will not be tolerated.

Complaints of bullying made to any teacher, administrator, or staff member will be addressed in the following manner:

**1<sup>ST</sup> OFFENSE:**

An investigation of accusations will take place.  
The parents of all parties will be contacted.  
The parents of the offender will conference with the principal and teacher.  
The offender will receive detention.  
All parties will sign an infraction form.

**2<sup>ND</sup> OFFENSE:**

An investigation of accusations will take place.  
Principal will conference with parents and student.  
Principal will suggest counseling.  
Offender will be suspended (in school or out of school) at the discretion of the principal.  
All parties will sign an infraction form.

**3<sup>RD</sup> OFFENSE:**

An investigation of accusations will take place.  
Parents of the offender and the victim will be contacted  
Parents of the offender will conference with the pastor and the principal.  
Parents will seek counseling for the offender. If parents do not wish to seek counseling, they will seek other educational arrangements for their child.  
All parties will sign an infraction form.

**TOBACCO POLICY**

No student, staff member or school visitor is permitted to use any tobacco product at any time, including non-school hours (24/7). Further, no student shall be permitted to possess a tobacco product while in any school building; while on school grounds or property; or at any school-sponsored or school-related event, or at any other time that students are under the authority of school personnel.

For the purposes of this policy, the definition of any tobacco product includes “Electronic Smoking Device” which means any electronic device, the use of which may resemble smoking, which can be used to deliver an inhaled dose of nicotine or other substances to the user.

**DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES**

In the event of serious misconduct, the teacher will notify the administration in writing on the Principal’s Discipline Report. Parents are notified each time a student receives a Principal’s

Discipline Report. A copy is sent home outlining the disciplinary consequence. Forms must be signed and returned the next day to the teacher/administrator who sent home the report.

## **CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL**

Saint Mary students must behave in a manner consistent with the beliefs, values, and code of conduct of the school both on and off school property. Behavior includes but is not limited to electronic communication. Any conduct deemed by the principal and/or pastor to be inappropriate or disrespectful to the integrity of Saint Mary Catholic School or any of its students, may be subject to school disciplinary action.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

- I will not talk or leave my seat in class without permission from the teacher. If I have a question, I will raise my hand and wait to be recognized.
- I will be in my seat ready to start class when the bell rings.
- I will have all books and supplies needed for my classes. I will keep my desk, locker, or cubby neat and clean. I will use the locker/cubby only at the designated times. I will not touch anyone else's property.
- I will walk in line. No roughhousing, horseplay, or running will be allowed.
- I will respect the property of the school, parish, teachers, and fellow students and will help keep the schoolrooms and grounds neat and clean.
- I will be courteous to all students, teachers, staff, and volunteers who assist at our school.
- I will be courteous in the cafeteria and will not make any loud or disruptive noises.
- **I will not bring toys, games, or any electronic devices to school.**
- **Cell phones must be off and out of sight in the student's backpack.**
- Chewing gum is not permitted anywhere on the campus.
- No physical displays of affection are permitted in school.
- When attending functions in the PLC/gym or church, I am under the direct supervision of the accompanying teacher.
- I will adhere to the uniform code and wear the uniform correctly.

I HAVE READ AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## UNIFORM POLICY

Students will wear a uniform for each school day. Cleanliness and appropriate wear of the uniform is expected at all times. Parents have the responsibility to assure that their children wear only the regulation uniform and adhere to dress code policies. The school reserves the right to determine if a student's dress and appearance satisfy the school's policy. Students may wear their PE Uniform (4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades) to school on their PE day.

### Uniforms

The uniform is to be worn properly until the student leaves school grounds. Students who ride the bus must wear the uniform properly on the bus. School uniforms will be clean at the beginning of each day. Shirts must be **tucked in**, and skirts and jumpers must be hemmed.

Face Masks: To encourage students to wear masks, different color masks will be allowed, along with developmentally/school appropriate images. Administration will use their discretion to determine the appropriateness of a mask. Bandanas or scarves are not face masks; only items specifically designed as a PPE face mask or shield will be allowed.

### Bottoms

Pants must be of the uniform type sold as uniform pants. They are khaki-colored, pleated or flat front, or pull-on, plain, straight or gently flared. No capris, cargo style, or skinny/legging style. (\*No hip-huggers, bellbottoms, corduroy, denim or jean style – 5-pocket look, decorative pockets, decorative stitching, double-stitched seams, decorative buckles, lace, ruffles or edging).

Shorts follow the guidelines for pants. Shorts must be at least fingertip length and no more than 3 inches above the knee.

Uniform skirts and skorts are available at Stitch FX.

### Belts

For K to 5<sup>th</sup> Grade, belts are optional unless required for pants to function properly. Middle School students are required to wear belts. Belts should be black or brown.

### Socks

Plain; solid in color, white, black, and navy only. Athletic, ankle socks can be worn. No ruffles, lace, beads, charms, edging or decorations. Socks must be worn at all times.

Tights: opaque, cable knit, or flat knit; seamless; solid color, white, black, or navy only. No decorative patterns.

### Shirts

K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade wear light blue polo shirt with khaki shorts/pants, plaid skirt, skort or jumper. White peter pan-collared blouse may also be worn with plaid jumper. Shirts and skirts or jumper purchased at Stitch FX.

6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade wear royal blue polo with plaid skirt or plaid skort. Shirts, skirts and skorts purchased at Stitch FX.

8<sup>th</sup> grade white button-down shirts may be long or short sleeve and purchased at Stitch FX along with the navy blue tie.

### Shoes

Must be solid white, black, or brown. May be dress or athletic shoe. Athletic shoes must be one solid color with no stripes, lights, characters, charms or beads. Solid color shoelaces (white or black). For dress-up days, maximum 1.5-inch heel.

### Coats and Jackets

- **Any coat** may be worn to school and in the hallways and outdoors.
- We define a **coat** as a heavier garment with a zipper or buttons. A coat is **not** a fleece jacket, sweatshirt or hoodie.
- Non-uniform fleece, sweatshirts and hoodies may **not** be worn to school or in the classrooms.
- Children may wear an SMCS fleece jacket or SMCS sweatshirt to school.
- SMCS Fleece jackets or sweatshirts may be purchased at Stitch FX.

### PE Uniforms

4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades - PE uniform must be worn to school on a student's PE day and must be approved PE uniform top and shorts or pants. Students must wear solid black or white athletic shoes on PE days. PE shorts and pants are sold at Stitch FX. Navy or black compression pants may be worn under PE shorts on cold days.

K5 through 3<sup>rd</sup> grades – Students may wear PE uniform to school (see above) on PE days, but are not required to and may wear their regular school uniform. Students must wear solid black or white athletic shoes on PE days. Solid black shoes with white soles are acceptable. No converse shoes.

PE grade and ability to participate may be affected by failure to wear the correct uniform/shoes in all grade levels.

**School uniform and PE shorts and pants are to be purchased at Stitch FX**

**PE uniform shirts are available for purchase in the school office only.**

### Undershirts

Must be plain white and not visible below the sleeve of the uniform shirt.



### Boys' Hair

Boys' hair is to be neat, combed, clean, and out of eyes, and not touching ears or collar. It may **not** be worn tucked behind the ears. No facial hair is permitted.

### Girls' Hair

Girls' hair is to be neat, combed, and out of eyes. No distracting styles (including hair wraps, color, etc.) are permitted. *Headbands and hair bows should be school uniform color only* (white, blue(s), yellow(s), beige, red) and of appropriate size without sequins or glitter.

### Jewelry

Boys and girls are permitted to wear religious medals as a necklace and one wristwatch. No earrings for boys. Girls may wear stud earrings in each ear lobe only (only one stud earring per ear). This applies to all days including dress-up days and jeans days.

### Nail Polish, Makeup, Tattoos

No nail polish or artificial nails, French manicures, false nails, tips or acrylic overlay, nor makeup may be worn (including dress-up and jeans days). Tattoos—Students are not permitted to have a tattoo (real or wash-off) or any other visible markings.

### Dress Your Best Days (Girls)

Dresses and skirts shall be no shorter than two inches above the knee. Dress slacks. **No form-fitting pants, leggings, or jeans are allowed.** Dresses may not have slits above the knees. Sleeveless dresses are allowed, but must be modest with a wide band on shoulders. No cropped tops. Heels on shoes can be no higher than 1.5 inch and must have a back strap; no flip flops.

### Dress Your Best Days (Boys)

Slacks or khaki **uniform** shorts, collared or uniform shirts, uniform shoes or other dress shoes and socks. Shirts must be tucked in. Absolutely no jeans or t-shirts are allowed.

### Dress Code for Casual/Jeans Days

Jeans, khaki uniform shorts, or slacks/khakis may be worn with a Saint Mary Catholic School t-shirt. Socks must be worn and shirts must be tucked in. Shoes should be uniform school shoes.

### Eighth Grade Dress Uniform

Eighth grade students will have a dress uniform, which will be worn on Thursdays and other designated days throughout the year. The uniform will consist of the following.

- Boys will wear regular school khaki pants and a white dress shirt (with logo from Stitch FX) with a tie. (No polo shirts and no shorts)
- Girls will wear uniform skirts (no slacks or shorts) and a tailored white shirt (with logo from Stitch FX) with a tie.

### **BIRTHDAY DRESS**

Students may wear "Dress Your Best" clothes on their birthdays (or on the school day closest to their birthdays). Students with summer birthdays may choose a day during the school year.

"Dress Your Best" guidelines above must be followed for birthdays.

## **OUT OF UNIFORM PENALTIES**

Students in violation of the dress code are sent to the office and parents are notified. Parents must write an excuse if a student is unable to wear all or part of the uniform. Being out of uniform will result in disciplinary action.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

All clothing must be marked with the student's name. This is extremely important, as all uniform items look the same. Sweaters, jackets, and gym clothing are turned in to the office daily and sometimes cannot be returned to the owner because of lack of identification. Please use your child's full name rather than initials for labeling purposes. You can use a fabric marking pen on the clothing labels.

## **EXTENDED CARE**

The Extended Care program provides quality supervision that fosters development and is available to children enrolled at Saint Mary Catholic School. Parents must first complete a registration form before they may enroll their children. This form should be returned to the Extended Care staff (see Registration section of the school website for costs). Extended Care is offered at Saint Mary Catholic School during the school year from 6:30 a.m. until 7:45 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. The program provides students with the opportunity to meet before and after school in a supervised environment for both play and study.

## **EXTENDED CARE RULES**

Failure to comply with the rules listed here can result in a phone call to the parent/guardian and then subsequent removal from the program.

1. Students report to the Extended Care staff person immediately upon arrival in the morning and immediately after school dismissal in the afternoon. The Extended Care staff is not responsible for students who do not report after school.
2. Students may not leave the playground and must stay within the fenced area. If weather does not permit outdoor play, students will be in the cafeteria.
3. Students must have the permission of the staff person to re-enter the school once they are outside. The staff must know where the children are at all times.
4. All students will be signed in at the cafeteria and must be signed out by someone listed on their emergency contact card. If other arrangements have to be made for pick-up, please send a note with your child to school or call the school to let the staff know who will be picking your child up. That person will be required to show a picture I.D.
5. All students will be expected to respect the staff and each other, as well as the materials and environment provided. Students who do not adhere to the rules may be placed in time out. Length of discipline will depend upon the student's age and behavior. Second offense of same behavior will result in a parent/director meeting and third offense of same behavior will result in a parent/principal meeting to discuss student remaining in the program.
6. No electronics are allowed in the Extended Care Program, to include cell phones. Please see school electronic policy.
7. Students not picked up by 6:00 p.m. will accrue a fee.
8. Students may order breakfast in Extended Care. Please see our Cafeteria information.

Parents must fill out the Extended Care form to utilize our after-school services. Pick-up and drop-off is through the side gate of the Parish Life Center (PLC). Only approved persons are allowed to pick up students. This is the only time that parents may enter the school campus through the PLC. All students must follow the rules and procedures of our after-school program. More information can be found in the Extended Care Information sent home in the Welcome Packet.

## **HEALTH**

**Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have added policies and procedures to our health and safety protocols. Please see our Return to School Plan in the Appendix below.**

Saint Mary Catholic School encourages student health and fitness to promote a safe and healthy school environment. All students enrolled in Saint Mary Catholic School must have a Florida Physical Examination on file with the school and a Florida Certificate of Immunization for polio, measles, DPT, hepatitis, mumps, and rubella. Enrollment is not possible unless both are on file.

Students complaining of a minor headache or stomachache are allowed to rest in the classroom. Students are not allowed to “rest” in the office. If a student is not well enough to remain in the classroom, the parents are called to pick up the student. Minor scrapes are handled in the classroom. All classrooms have a first aid kit.

Parents/guardians are contacted immediately for information and instructions in case of serious illness or accidents. If the parents/guardians are not available, the Emergency Form is consulted for directions. If no responsible person can be reached, and an illness or injury is serious enough to require medical attention, the administrator in charge will arrange for the student to receive appropriate emergency or hospital care.

Illness covering five days or more requires an excuse by a doctor. A doctor’s statement permitting the student to return to school is required for any contagious disease. Students should be fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Students should be 24 hours clear of any vomiting or diarrhea before returning to school.

## **MEDICATION**

No medication of any kind will be dispensed at school, or at a school-sponsored event, without written permission from the parent or guardian.

### **MEDICATION GUIDELINES**

When a written request is presented by the parent:

Should it be necessary for a child to receive prescription or non-prescription medicines during the school day, the following regulations shall apply:

- A written consent form signed by the parent or legal guardian must be in the office before any medication can be dispensed, non-prescription and/or prescription. (Verbal permission will not be accepted.)
- Prescription medication must be in the original container and have the pharmacy label indicating the physician's name, child's name, and strength of the medication.
- Medication shall be given to the child listed on the label only and will be given in accordance with the label instructions.
- The only non-prescription medications that can be dispensed are Tylenol (acetaminophen), Motrin (Ibuprofen) and Benadryl and must have a signed medical form on file.
- The dosage for non-prescription medicine shall not exceed the label instructions, unless prescribed by a physician, for the particular age of the child.
- No child will be allowed to take medicine without supervision.
- Children will not be allowed to have in their possession ANY medications. Rescue medications such as inhalers for asthma, epipens for severe allergies, and glucose medication for Type 1 diabetics as prescribed by a physician will be kept in an emergency bag that will travel with the child's class for ease of access in the event the child is in acute need.

Parents will need to provide the prescription medication to be left at school. Medication will not travel back and forth from school to home with the child. Parent must put the request for this into writing accompanied by a doctor's note illustrating the need.

The parent must supply all medication. All medication left in the school office at the end of the school year will be destroyed.

It is the parent's responsibility to apprise the teacher and office personnel of any medication a child is taking.

**NOTE: According to Diocesan and County policy, the school will not dispense prescription medication unless the signed authorization to dispense prescription medication form is on file in the school office. These forms are available from the Office Manager at the office.**

## MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

Parents are called for all medical emergencies and are encouraged to take the child to a doctor or hospital for immediate help. If necessary, emergency personnel (911) are called before parents are notified. If a child is injured, parents will be notified according to the numbers listed on the Emergency Cards kept on file in the office. It is absolutely essential that contact information is kept current in the office.

## ACCIDENTS

In cases of minor abrasions, the injury will be washed with soap and water. For other minor injuries, ice may be applied. In cases of more serious mishaps, children will be taken to the office and parents will be notified. School law prohibits the use of first aid equipment and medicine given orally.

## STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee provides accident coverage to school students while they are in school or participating in school sponsored events, including sports. Payments are made on an excess basis, which means the parents first file the medical expense claim with their insurer, and then the diocesan policy can provide payment for the deductible or co-pay. If the family does not have medical insurance, the diocesan policy will reimburse the medical expenses (on a primary basis) subject to the terms and conditions of the coverage.

## **MEDIA CENTER**

The Saint Mary Catholic School Media Center is comprised of the Monsignor Cunningham Library and the Josephine Gerlach Computer Lab. The facilities are used for library and computer skills instruction; they are also available to support the curriculum. Teachers and students are welcome at all times in the Media Center and are encouraged to use resources to the fullest extent possible. The Media Center strives to enrich the learning experience and serves as a resource bank for both teachers and students.

### **LIBRARY BOOKS**

The Library is available for students to use throughout the school day. Students who have overdue material are not permitted to check out additional resources. Report cards may be withheld until overdue books are returned.

### **COMPUTER LAB**

Saint Mary Catholic School has an open format for use of the computer lab. Under this policy teachers are encouraged to bring their classes to the computer lab. This is in addition to the scheduled computer instruction time. In order to ensure optimal facility usage, teachers reserve their desired time for their class and will accompany them in the lab.

### **COMPUTER SKILLS INSTRUCTION**

Computer skills instruction is a regularly scheduled activity. Each class from K4 through 8<sup>th</sup> grade is assigned a weekly computer lab time for a 45-minute period. Library skills instruction is incorporated into the lab time. An example of relevant library skills is retrieval and evaluation of information from the Internet or other electronic resources.

### **INTERNET POLICY**

Controlled Internet access for educational purposes is available at Saint Mary Catholic School. As with other forms of educational media available in our school, every reasonable effort is made to supervise and limit all children's viewing to age-appropriate material that is consistent with Catholic teaching. Parents should take the time to review the following rules with their child(ren). Each child is expected to follow these directions.

1. Students will not attempt to access the Internet without adult supervision.
2. No material will be downloaded without teacher permission.
3. Students will not send or receive e-mail or post messages without the teacher's approval.
4. Students will not enter chat rooms unless under the direct supervision of the teacher and then only to communicate with individuals known to the teacher.
5. Students will not use rude or profane language at any time.

6. Students will not give their names or other personal information to anyone on the Internet unless approved by the teacher in charge. (For almost all purposes, a first name or phrases such as “fifth grade student” will suffice.)
7. Students will only go to web sites approved by the teacher.
8. Students doing net searches will not enter a new site on the search results list unless the teacher approves it first.
9. Students may not instant message without express teacher permission and supervision.
10. Students must honor copyright restrictions regarding use of electronic resources.
11. Students may not share passwords or other account information.
12. Students may not impersonate another person nor use another person’s accounts or passwords.
13. Students may not use school resources to annoy, abuse, threaten, or harass another person.
14. Students may not send, receive, or display inappropriate materials.

## **SCHOOL COMPUTERS USE POLICY**

The photocopy and computer equipment is for Saint Mary Catholic School-related work only. Parents, former students, teachers, and volunteers are not allowed to use school computers or copiers for their own personal use.

Middle school students participate in a 1-to-1 computer initiative that began during the 2018-2019 school year. Each student in middle school is issued a Dell laptop for use both in and out of the classroom. Before a device is issued to the student, s/he and his/her parent/guardian must sign the Dell Contract. (The Acceptable Use Policy, Agreement, Contract and Care for Laptops is on the school website.)

## **SCHOOL SAFETY**

Saint Mary Catholic School takes precautions to ensure the safety of the students, both on school grounds and within the immediate vicinity of the school campus.

### **SAFETY DRILLS**

Students will be asked to practice emergency procedures in the event of fire, tornado, lockdown (intruder), etc. Teachers will review the procedures and inform the students exactly what they are to do in that situation. The school will then have scheduled drills to ensure a timely response can be made to emergency situations. Specific directions are given at the beginning of the school year and are posted in appropriate places. Silence is to be observed throughout the entire drill - in the classroom, halls, and on school grounds.

### **PLAYGROUND SAFETY RULES**

- Common sense and safety prevails on the playground. Children who do not obey will be given a “time out” and/or issued a discipline note.
- Students will use all equipment only in the manner for which it was designed.

- One person is allowed per swing. Students must keep their hands on their own swings. Students must swing at the height where the swings have been set.
- No pulling/pushing anyone on equipment or the ground is allowed.
- No one is allowed on top of any equipment.
- Students must stay away from fence line.
- Students must stay off the PE field if there is a class on the field.
- Students may not climb trees.
- Students may not throw anything at any time except balls.
- Students may not tumble or perform gymnastic stunts on equipment or on the ground.

### **BICYCLE SAFETY**

Students will make sure they have the proper equipment, including helmet, to ride their bikes to school. Students riding bikes will chain and lock their bikes to the rack near the office. Bikes will be walked on and off the school grounds. The school is not responsible for bicycles damaged or stolen on school grounds.

### **PETS ON CAMPUS**

Per Operations Policy 312: With the exception of certified service animals, pets are not permitted on School Property Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSING**

When Okaloosa County Schools close due to weather or other type of emergency, Saint Mary Catholic School will also close. Please listen to local radio stations for this information. Even if Saint Mary School is not specifically mentioned, we will close if the Okaloosa County School System closes.

### **SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

State law requires designated persons in a supervisory role, having reason to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years has had physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him or her by other than accidental means, where the injury appears to have been caused as a result of physical or sexual abuse or neglect by an adult, must report the matter promptly to the Department of Children and Families in the county where the suspect injury occurred. Parents need not be notified of such a report.

### **PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

The purpose of the PTO is to promote and encourage communication between parents, teachers, administration and the community. The PTO also sponsors and organizes fundraising and school events, which deepen our community spirit and enrich our children's educational, social, and developmental experiences at Saint Mary Catholic School. All parents of SMCS students are members of the PTO, with membership dues incorporated in the yearly tuition.

## **PRE-K3, PRE-K4 /VPK**

A Florida constitutional amendment created a program designed to prepare four-year-olds for kindergarten and build the foundation for their educational success. The program allows a parent to enroll his or her eligible child (four years old by September 1 and residing in Florida) in a free VPK program. St. Mary Catholic School is a provider for the VPK program, allowing students to benefit from free state-supported education in the mornings.

Hours of operation: The SMCS full-time PreK4/VPK program runs five days a week – Monday through Friday. The SMCS PreK3 program runs 2, 3, or 5 days Monday-Friday.

Please see our PreSchool Handbook for more Information.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

Students are instructed the first day of school on the proper care of textbooks and workbooks. **All books must be covered with a cloth book cover.** Students are responsible for any and all equipment or materials issued.

There are periodic book checks throughout the year and each student must have their assigned books. If workbooks are abused or become unsightly, the teacher may ask that the book be replaced at the student's expense

Students may not write in textbooks, on desks, walls, or any other inappropriate surface(s). Damage done to school property is the full responsibility of the offending student's parents.

## **SPORTS**

SMCS Archangels participate in the Okaloosa County School District sports program. Students in grades 5 to 8 may participate.

**Middle School Sports:** Basketball, Soccer, Cross Country, Golf, Tennis and Volleyball, and Swimming.

### **Middle School Sports**

1. Each student must have a 2.0 average in academic core courses in order to participate in sports.
2. Each student must have good conduct in all classes in order to participate in sports.
3. Each student must complete the sport season in order to be eligible for end-of-year accolades.
4. If a student is ruled ineligible because of injury or low grades, they may participate in practice but cannot play any games or matches with other schools.
5. Individual criteria are used for any special needs child who desires to participate.
6. Students who are absent may not participate in sports practice or games on the same day as the absence.



7. All **medical and other paperwork must be received at or before try-outs**. Students cannot participate without their physical and other required paperwork. These forms are found on our website.

## AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS PRACTICE PICK UP

Students must be picked up on time from sports practice. The coaches are instructed to send the students to Extended Care if the parents are not here on time. The personnel in the Parish Life Center are not allowed to supervise children. Any student who is not directly supervised by an adult must go to Extended Care.

Younger siblings may not go to sports practice with older students. They should attend Extended Care.

## STUDENT COUNCIL

Students are represented by grade level through the Student Council. Grades 3 -8 elect two members to serve as delegates at meetings. The president of the Student Council is elected by general vote of all students and must be an 8<sup>th</sup> grader. Student Council candidates and representatives must maintain at least a good conduct and at least a 2.0 in academics throughout the year.

## SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Class parties for special occasions are allowed with the prior approval of the teacher and administration. Treats for special occasions (e.g., birthdays) may be sent to school with the students and is distributed by the teacher. Parents should notify the teacher at least a week in advance. Any social activities occurring after school hours are the responsibility of the parents. Please do not pass out party invitations or any other type of correspondence in your child's classroom unless there is an invitation for everyone and your child's teacher has given permission.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

To further the development of each student, Saint Mary Catholic School has a variety of extracurricular activities and students are encouraged to participate. Activities include band, choir, drama, and sports, as well as Mercy in Motion, Academic Team, Robotics Team, NJHS, and numerous clubs. **Students must have a 2.0** on progress reports and report cards to participate in sports, Academic Team, clubs, Student Council, or the school play. Any activity after school hours or one that may pull a student during academic classes is considered extracurricular.

## SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The purpose of the School Advisory Council (SAC) is to advise the Pastor of Saint Mary Parish and the Principal of Saint Mary Catholic School in the organization and operation of the School. The SAC does not exercise any actual authority with respect to the administration of the School

but rather acts solely in an advisory capacity. This is to ensure that the interests and concerns of the school families are effectively considered in support of the delivery of a strong Catholic education to Saint Mary Catholic School students. The SAC consists of seven (7) to ten (10) members who are parents or legal guardians of Saint Mary Catholic School students. New members are nominated by members of the SAC, approved by the Principal, and appointed by the Pastor and serve for a term of two (2) to three (3) years.

## **MANAGEMENT OF ASBESTOS INSULATION PRODUCTS**

The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1986 requires that all schools be inspected to determine if there are any building materials that contain asbestos. Saint Mary Catholic School has complied with AHERA by completing the following requirements:

1. Inspecting all facilities for both friable and non-friable asbestos-containing building materials.
2. Samples taken during the inspections of all materials suspected of containing asbestos, and the samples were analyzed at an EPA-accredited laboratory.
3. A Management Plan based upon the inspection report and laboratory findings, outlining the administration's intent in controlling and abating any asbestos-containing building materials.

The inspection results are available for review in the administrative office. The Management Plan, maintenance and custodial actions required by the plan, and training of personnel are all dedicated toward a serious and careful effort to always ensure that any potential health hazard from asbestos is eliminated. Students, faculty and employees have, and will continue to have, a safe environment in which to learn, teach, and work.

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

Students are prohibited from bringing weapons or look-alikes to school and school-sponsored activities or having weapons in school or at school-sponsored activities, on the school premises, or in the immediate vicinity of the school. State law requires the reporting of possession of a "dangerous weapon" to the local law enforcement agency. "Dangerous weapon" includes a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, and any knife with a blade over 3 inches long, pocketknife opened by mechanical device, iron bar, or brass knuckles.

### **Definitions**

- A weapon is any object which can be used to threaten or injure another. It includes but is not limited to "dangerous weapon" as defined by the State law.
- School premises include the school building and the adjacent grounds, including but not limited to parking lot, playground, parish office and rectory grounds.
- Immediate vicinity of the school means a one-block radius of the school. Any student discovered to be, or suspected of, carrying, possessing, concealing, or transferring a weapon on school premises or in the immediate vicinity of the school shall be immediately excluded from classes pending investigation.

A search can be conducted to verify the suspicion or clarify the discovery. It may include without prior warning an inspection and search of a student's person, pockets (the student

empties his/her own pockets), book bags, purse, lunch bag, automobile, etc. Questioning of the same purpose may include questioning by the principal, a member of the administrative team, a school teacher, the pastor, or a person acting in the place of any of these. When a body search is conducted, it shall be in the principal's or pastor's office or other appropriate place. A person of the same sex will conduct the search of the student. If a student refuses to cooperate or interferes with a search of a person or possessions or premises, she/he will be warned that refusal to cooperate without legitimate reason will result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school. Depending on the nature of the weapon, the local police department shall be notified immediately.

If possible, a student will be detained whenever the school has reason to suspect a student may have a weapon or when a weapon is present on school premises. Any student found to be in violation of the school's weapons' policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. The principal may exercise the option to both keep non-school persons out of the school and/or retain students in the school until police have completed their investigation. Any student determined to have brought a firearm to school will be expelled. The term "firearm" means:

- any weapon including a starter gun which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
- the frame or receiver of any such weapons;
- any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or
- any destructive device.

## **VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS**

Before any parent or adult volunteers to work in the school or to be a chaperone, he/she must meet requirements as set forth by the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee. Volunteers and Parents are strongly encouraged to complete the requirements early in the year to allow time for processing.

The cost to initiate the volunteer process is currently \$55 and is good for five years. A packet of information is available in the school office.

Complete the on-line Safe Environment Education Program through Armatus. The two required courses are "Recognize, Report and Prevent Child Abuse" and "Detecting Predators". Complete a Level-2 Background Check, which includes fingerprinting.

**In addition, if you will be driving on behalf of the school or Diocese a Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) will be requested and the volunteer driver must be approved.** Individuals must meet all volunteer requirements including:

- Complete and submit the Volunteer Driver Information Form.
- Submit a legible copy of Driver's License and a Certificate of Insurance / Verification of Coverage from insurance provider (usually declarations page).
- Must be at least 21 years old.
- Must be a Florida licensed driver.

- Must have three years of clean driving record history or less than six points on their license within the last year.
- Must have \$100,000/\$300,000 car insurance liability.
- Complete a Level-2 Criminal Background Check, which includes fingerprinting.
- Complete the on-line Safe Environment Education Program (“Armatus”).
- Must not have any medical condition or be taking any medications that would impair ability to operate a motor vehicle.
- Once approved by MVR, the driver is eligible for two years.
- Volunteers **MUST** dress appropriately when volunteering for any reason. Remember the age of the children and dress appropriately.



APPENDIX

**SAINT MARY CATHOLIC SCHOOL**  
**RETURN TO CAMPUS PLAN AUGUST 2020**  
**IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE DIOCESE OF PENSACOLA-TALLAHASSEE RTS**  
**PLAN**

## **Introduction**

Students thrive in our enriching, faith-filled classrooms. Research has shown the importance of face-to-face instruction for the development of the whole child. We have been diligently preparing for on-campus school operations to resume in August of 2020. Specific decisions and plans regarding on-campus operations will continue to adjust based on current conditions and guidelines.

We have created this plan to aid in navigating the reestablishment of our school where employees, students, and families feel safe and to reduce the impact of COVID-19 conditions upon returning to our school. The guidelines referenced in this plan are based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Florida Department of Health (DOH). We continue to look at best practices in education while listening to the recommendations being made by the Department of Education (DOE), Office of Early Learning (OEL), the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA), and the Florida Catholic Conference School Executive Committee (FCCSEC) and Accreditation Committee (FCCA). Regular updates will be made to this plan based on information provided by all the organizations mentioned above, and applicable federal, state and local agencies.

Our priorities are:

**Safety:** Mitigating and slowing the growth of COVID-19 in the context of a return to school. Understanding that there is inherent risk in returning from social distancing while in a pandemic, we also understand that we are part of a societal decision that accepts balancing COVID-19 risk against the need for life to continue.

- a. Hygiene: Within classrooms, we will emphasize strong hygienic practice.
- b. Presence: Keeping school open daily. We do not want to burden parents with challenging schedules that require them to stay home and out of work - we want our students at school in their cohort for the full day.
- c. Students will be grouped together in their “cohort” and interaction with other student groups will be greatly limited.

**Growth:** Despite limitations, we want our children to continue their academic progress in their studies and in their faith and to live our mission.

Below are our site-based decisions for the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee Return to School Plan.

*This document will be updated regularly. The school principal will share the updated document on the school website and distribute the updated version to parents via the school information system.*

## **SECTION I: SCHOOL PROTOCOL TEMPERATURE SCREENING & HEALTH PROTOCOL**

Saint Mary Catholic School will screen all students upon arrival to campus in the morning. This will happen in Carpool, before students get on the bus, or when they arrive to their class. Students must not have a temperature above 100.4 F per the AAP or they will not be allowed to come to school. Students and staff are screened prior to entrance into buildings.

- Screening includes CDC checklist administration and temperature check.
- Students and staff who answer yes to any questions and/or have an above-normal temperature must return home. Staff should self-check before they come to work.
- Students and staff will sanitize hands as they enter the campus.
- Gloves and face coverings should be worn by staff members conducting screenings.
- Safe distancing should be maintained during drop-off and screening.
- Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

We will stagger arrival and dismissal in order to protect the students from large gatherings. Detailed Arrival and Dismissal procedures will be shared the week before school starts.

Our arrival window will be from **7:45am to 8:15am**.

Students may arrive on campus as early as 7:45am and until 8:15am. Students who arrive before 8:15am **will not be marked tardy**. In order to assist in traffic backing up on Robinwood, we will also stagger dismissal from **2:45pm to 3:15pm**.

It is more important than ever that our parents use the Carpool system. In addition to being the safest arrival and dismissal procedure, we know our parents will understand that we cannot have large numbers of people on the campus during arrival and dismissal.

K3 and K4 Teachers will be contacting their parents with alternate plans for drop-off for the first two weeks to accommodate parents who wish to walk their child to school.

### ● BUS DRIVERS/BUS PROTOCOLS

Bus drivers must disinfect the buses at a minimum:

1. Right before starting a route to pick up students.
2. Right after the morning and afternoon routes.

Students temperatures will be taken upon entrance to the bus. Students with temperatures over 100.4 F will not be allowed to ride the bus. Bus drivers must not report to work if they suspect they are sick, if they have symptoms such as fever or difficulty breathing, or if they have been in contact with other people who have any confirmed respiratory illness or disease in the last 7 days.

## **HEALTH PROTOCOL**

Masks will be highly encouraged and will be required at various times throughout the school day. All students must have a mask for school. Masks are mandatory for employees during Carpool, arrival and dismissal, transitions, in the Office, small group instruction, and any time when social distancing cannot be maintained. When teachers are in their classroom they may take the mask/shield off for instruction **if social distancing is possible**. Students will be required to wear masks on the buses, when attending Mass, in the Art room, and in small group instruction or any situation when social distancing cannot be obtained. We will be constantly reviewing the safety protocols recommended by the Center for Disease Control, American Academy of Pediatrics, the Office for Catholic Schools and our local public school districts, and we will implement social distancing, mask usage, signage, barriers, the use of an isolation room, and/or other safety measures based on the collective information, recommendations, and guidance from these Agencies. Decisions made will err on the side of the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff. **Final decisions on masks will be made closer to the start of school based on local health department recommendations.**

### **If a person is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 at school:**

If an employee or student is ill, has a positive COVID-19 test result, or exposure to someone with COVID-19, we will follow the **local health department directives. Positive results will be shared with the local health department, and student privacy preserved. A COVID-19 Decision Tree based on health department directives will be followed for employees and students.**

It is the responsibility of the individual to report a positive test result for COVID-19 to Administration and follow the guidelines provided.

If a student presents with symptoms of COVID-19 during the school day, or has a fever of or greater than 100.4 F, he/she will be moved to an isolation room, have their temperature taken, and may be asked to wear a mask until a parent arrives to take him/her home or to the nearest health center. The Office will call to notify the parent immediately, and the child will **need to be picked up within 60 minutes**. Parents, please update/confirm your emergency call information to assure we know whom to contact in case of illness or an emergency.

The school or center staff member assigned to monitor the isolation room must complete the Suspected COVID-19 Case Form and will notify the Office to call the parent to pick up the child from school.

The staff member attending to the suspected infected person will also wear a protective mask and gloves while working with the ill child.

If a student has to be out for two weeks to quarantine, they will be provided assignments for while they are home. If they are ill, those assignments will need to be adjusted and we will work with the family to get the student caught up.



## **ATHLETICS**

We will continue to comply with all guidelines established by OCHD and FHSAA. This will be updated as we receive more information from the county. The procedures we implemented this summer for our conditioning camps went very smoothly and proved successful. At this time, we are still waiting on updates from the county schools regarding our middle school sports program.

## **VISITOR PROTOCOL**

- To minimize risk, our new Visitor Protocol puts strong limits on visitors entering our school during this pandemic. While we love having our parents volunteering and being in our schools, we will not allow any parents or visitors in the building during the school day due to the potential exposure.
- Only visitation by appointment, via the main office, will be allowed until further notice. All visitors/guests on campus will report to the main office and have their temperature checked. Temperature checks and potential exposure to COVID questions will be asked. Visitors may be asked to sign a waiver and follow the mask protocols of the school while being escorted around the campus. Any visitor with recent positive COVID-19 results will only be allowed back on campus with documentation of a negative COVID-19 result.
- If a student forgets their lunch, lunch will be provided by our Cafeteria. Do not bring/deliver food or beverages from outside eating establishments to school.
- If a parent provides snacks for a class, they must be store-purchased and individually store-wrapped and sealed. No homemade snacks may be brought in for students.
- No visitors, parents, or volunteers may enter the front Office without prior appointment or approval.
- For student pick-up, parents will call the front office and their child/children will be brought out to them.
- For students who are Tardy or arriving from an appointment and arrive after 8:15am, they will need to be checked in by their parent/guardian. We have a new check-in system through our Raptor Security System. Parents will be buzzed in to the campus on a one-at-a-time basis by Mrs. Tucker.

## **CLEANING & DISINFECTING**

Saint Mary Catholic School has been purchasing alcohol-based hand sanitizers, cleaning supplies that meet CDC standards, updating air condition filters, and working with our custodial company and new cleaning procedures. Our custodial company has purchased the backpack spray fogger sanitizers for sanitizing the classrooms.

Hand sanitizers have been installed throughout the school and in common areas. Cleaning sprays and wipes bucket systems have been purchased and added to every classroom to clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as desks, handles, and keyboards. The school and center custodial staff will clean all workspaces at their designated cleaning time. Please refer to the chart in the Diocese Plan, which we will follow.

Common areas and high-touch surfaces will be cleaned multiple times throughout the day in accordance with CDC, DHHS, and AAP guidelines.

Teachers will wipe down high-touched areas in between classes with their disinfectant buckets they have been supplied. In classes that see multiple groups of students, such as Art and Computers, keyboards/mice now have protective plastic coverings and will be disinfected between each class. Art Class will rotate supplies, utilize students' own supplies, and clean supplies at the end of the day.

**Water fountains are being fit with bottle fillers and the ones with mouth pieces are being changed. Students should bring their own water bottles to school.**

Please note that proper equipment such as acceptable disinfectant and PPE will be used when cleaning individual workspaces.

### **MASS, ASSEMBLIES, AND LARGE GATHERING ARRANGEMENTS**

- Mass attendance will be staggered and will be attended by only two grades at a time, except for Middle School in which all three grades will attend. K3, K4, K5 and 1st Grade will not attend Mass at this time. This will be readdressed later in the year. **All students will be required to wear masks to attend church.** Tentative schedule: 2nd Grade attends Mass Tuesday, 3rd and 4th on Wednesday, 6th-8th on Thursday, 5th on Friday.
- Monday Morning Assembly, Pep Rallies, and other large gatherings will not take place the first semester. Faculty Meetings will be held in the Cafe with seats apart by 6 feet, or on video conferencing platforms.

### **STRATEGIC SOCIAL DISTANCING AND PROTECTION**

- Our goal is to keep students as much as possible with their individual class throughout the school day. This limits students' contacts and possible exposure.
- We will follow the safety protocols recommended by the Center for Disease Control, American Academy of Pediatrics, the Office for Catholic Schools and our local public school districts, and will implement social distancing, mask usage, signage, barriers, the use of an isolation room, and/or other safety measures based on the collective information, recommendations, and guidance from these Agencies. Decisions made will err on the side of the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff.

- Following CDC and AAP recommendations, we will be placing desks 3 to 6 feet apart, facing one direction. In classrooms with a greater number of students or smaller square footage where we cannot social distance the desks, we have ordered plexiglass protectors for the desks.
- Recess will be scheduled and staggered to keep students with their class.
- We will be limiting the number of students in the Cafeteria for Lunch to keep the capacity to 25% of students in the Cafeteria at one time and allow for social distancing. Students who purchase lunch will eat in the cafeteria, and students who pack their lunch will eat in the classrooms. Students who pack their lunch will still have the availability to purchase milk, yogurt, etc.

#### Extended Care:

We will observe all protocols put in place for daily school operations. Staff will wear face masks/shields. Students and staff must use personal materials and supplies. Toys will be cleaned at the end of each day and/or rotated out in small groups and shelved for 48 hours. All spaces will be thoroughly cleaned after being utilized for before care.

Students and staff must wash/sanitize hands before leaving from Classrooms to go to AfterCare. Staff will ensure students are adhering to recommended social distancing measures. If tutoring in a small group, face masks must be worn by students and staff.

#### Clubs and Tutoring

- All school clubs must follow size limitations and social distancing. If unable to stay 6 ft apart, masks must be worn.
- If tutoring one-on-one or in small groups, our teachers will observe CDC, DHHS, AAP, and state recommendations for social distancing.
- Students and staff must use personal materials and supplies only.
- All spaces will be thoroughly cleaned after being utilized and prior to the next student/group.

#### Traveling

The Middle School hallways will be labeled with directional arrows. If students travel to a special subject classroom, after their departure the room will have high-touch areas wiped down before the arrival of another class. Middle School students may use their backpack to go to other classes to eliminate visits back to the classroom.

#### Bathrooms

The middle school bathrooms are in the process of being remodeled and will be finished by the start of school. Handwashing training for staff and students will be required.

We will limit the number of students in the bathroom at one time. Frequent sanitation of bathrooms with attention to high-touch surfaces will be done, and bathroom cleaning schedules have been prepared by our contracted cleaning company.

## **SECTION II: ACADEMIC AND PROGRAMMATIC INFORMATION ACADEMICS & ELEARNING**

All SMCS students will begin the 2020-2021 academic year on campus in August with the expectation that specific health and safety procedures will be implemented and followed. In the event that a student tests COVID-positive or is placed under quarantine but is well enough to participate in lessons, accommodations will be made available to that student to continue their learning from home for the two-week quarantine.

Saint Mary Catholic School is ready and prepared to move to an eLearning instructional model if mandated by the state again. In the event of OCHD, state, and/or federal officials advising a closure or quarantine, students will continue with their teacher on a remote learning model blending daily synchronous instruction with asynchronous instruction.

We have strengthened our distance curriculum to include numerous virtual supports and online learning platforms in the eventuality that online learning is necessary. We have purchased dozens of student devices, both iPads and laptops, to assist in all learning at SMCS. Professional development will also be given to teachers to equip them in using technology in new and exciting ways.

Saint Mary Catholic School will work to ensure that classes will be delivered rigorously and consistently, whether on campus or by eLearning.

Expectations of students in completing all academic requirements are the same whether classes are delivered on campus or if we have to move to eLearning later in the school year.

Special services will be provided to all qualifying students whether the student is attending school or if we move to eLearning.

Our Catholic identity is woven within the lessons that are delivered by our mission-driven teachers. No matter what model of instruction we may find ourselves operating within, we will continue to practice our faith daily. We will gather when feasible with social distancing measures enforced. If virtual learning becomes required, spiritual development will continue to be at the core of our instruction.

Knowing the importance of Holy Mass, sacramental preparation, daily prayer and living our faith, together we will continue to walk as disciples of Jesus.

### **Academic Changes for the First Semester:**

- There will be no Band, Choir, or Color Guard for the first semester. We will reassess in December for the second semester.
- Art, Computer Science, Music, Physical Education, Spanish, and Library Skills classes will all be offered with health protocols in place. Our Media Specialist,

Mrs. Neiger, has had professional development on procedures for checking in and out books, and the selection of books, and has these procedures in place. All students will wear masks to Art class.

- We have purchased a new class set of iPads and two new class sets of laptops for our elementary students.

#### Guidance Counseling/Mental Health:

Our school counselor, Mrs. Andrews, has systems in place to address the social-emotional well-being of our students. We have purchased a year license to a telehealth platform in the case of eLearning and/or students are at home quarantined. Mrs. Andrews will assist teachers and parents in identifying students experiencing mental health issues and offer the necessary support and guidance to help them.

#### **ELearning**

In the event of OCHD, state, and/or federal officials advising a closure or quarantine, students will continue with their teacher on a remote learning model blending daily synchronous instruction with asynchronous instruction. *Students will be expected to attend synchronous lessons presented by their teachers during eLearning.* All procedures, teacher and student expectations from our **Instructional Continuity Plan** will be followed.

*Saint Mary Catholic School has a long history of providing exceptional Catholic education in a school community that has a culture of family, love of Christ and each other. We look forward to continuing that education in the school year to come. If you have any other questions about the coming school year, we invite you to contact Mrs. Akins. We are so looking forward to the new school year!*