



St. Mary's School
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Mrs. Karen Jones, Principal*

St. Mary's School
K - 8th Grade
Student/Parent Handbook
2023-2024

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SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Diocesan Superintendent

Dr. Susan Miller

Administration

Fr. Joseph Baker, Pastor/Superintendent

Mrs. Karen Jones, Principal

Faculty

Mrs. Carol Hepner, Preschool Director

Mrs. Danielle MacZura, Preschool Paraprofessional

Mrs. Taryn Tissiere, Preschool Paraprofessional

Ms. Sarah Schopp Kindergarten

Mrs. Anne Corrigan, Grade One

Mrs. Christy Jones, Paraprofessional

Mrs. Carol Duffy, Grade Two

Mrs. Marie Becker, Grade Three

Mrs. Ashley Folkerts, Grade Four

Mrs. Heidi Legner, Grade Five

Mrs. Amanda Lauritsen, Grade Six Homeroom, Junior High Math

Mrs. Jamie Woolford, Grade Six Homeroom, Junior High Faith Formation

Mrs. Denise Plenert, Grade Seven Homeroom, Junior High Science & Social Studies

Mr. Mick Peterson Grade Eight Homeroom, Junior High Lang. Arts & Literature

Mrs. Katy Sartoris, Art

Mrs. Ellen Yedinak, Kindergarten-Fifth Grade General Music, Junior High Chorus

Mrs. Sandy Erickson, Junior High Band

Mr. Adam Lawrence, Physical Education, Computers, and Athletic Director

Mrs. Patsy Delheimer, Special Education

Mrs. Kelly Krenz, Director of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Staff

Mrs. Jordi Cavanagh, Administrative Assistant

Mr. Mark Corrigan, Maintenance Director

Mr. Tory Farney, Custodian

Mrs. Danielle Gill, Director of Development

Mrs. Donna Gray, Business Manager

INTRODUCTION

Handbook Agreement

The purpose of this handbook is to present the policies and activities of St. Mary's School. This handbook is for Grades Kindergarten through 8th Grade. Parents of our Little Disciples Preschool should refer to the Little Disciples Preschool Handbook. The policy statements are necessarily general, and the administration reserves the right to make specific applications as circumstances arise. Parents are asked to review this handbook with their children and keep it for referential use during the school year.

At least one parent will be required to sign the following commitment at the beginning of each school year: "I (We) have read and agree to be governed by the school policies as stated in the St. Mary's School Student Handbook and to see that my (our) child(ren) follow these policies."

This commitment will be added to the parent signature sheet given to parents at registration in August.

While the administration of St. Mary's School wholeheartedly believes in the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, circumstances may arise in which St. Mary's School determines that changes are required in these guidelines and procedures. For this reason, St. Mary's School reserves the right, at any time, to modify, terminate, rescind or supplement any or all of the guidelines or procedures contained herein, and to take actions which may be contrary to guidelines, benefits, or procedures set forth in this Handbook. Parents and students will be promptly and properly notified of any amendments.

Diocese of Peoria Appeal and Review Policy

A review or appeal of any decision concerning policies, procedures, or other serious matters made by the competent authority of any of the schools of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria may be requested by any member of the Diocese under the following conditions only:

1. The decision violates or is in conflict with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church
2. The decision violates or is in conflict with an applicable Diocesan policy
3. The decision violates or is in conflict with a policy or procedure of the parish, the school, or other entity that takes precedence over the decision in question
4. The decision violates or is in conflict with an applicable federal, state, or local civil law *It is to be noted that dissatisfaction with a decision is not a sufficient condition for appeal.*

Statement of Process

The individual or group desiring the appeal or review must make the request known to the governing Pastor or Board of Pastors responsible for that school in the form of a letter. As a matter of record, a copy of that letter is to be forwarded to the Office of the Superintendent of Schools for the Catholic Diocese of Peoria and to the local Vicar.

This letter must clearly cover each of the following points:

1. The decision that is being questioned and which competent authority made it
2. The grounds for the appeal or the review with specific reference to one or more of the four conditions listed above
3. The proposed resolution

The governing Pastor or Board of Pastors, having received the request for appeal or review, is to respond in writing to those making the request within thirty (30) days of receiving the request. A copy of the response letter is to be forwarded to the Office of the Superintendent of Schools for the Catholic Diocese, and the local Vicar. In most cases, the decision of the governing Pastor or Board of Pastors

is final. However, those who have requested the appeal or review may further appeal to the local Vicar who has the authority to summarily dismiss the case or who may forward the appeal for review to the Office of Catholic Schools and the Vicar General of the Diocese of Peoria.

STATEMENTS

Catholic School Statement of Purpose

“From the first moment that a student sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illuminated by the light of faith and having its own unique characteristics, an environment permeated with the Gospel spirit of love and freedom....” *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, #25*

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Peoria are established to assist the Bishop and Pastors in the transmission of the faith to the young people of the diocese. We welcome non-Catholic students into our schools who wish to take advantage of the opportunities provided by Catholic education. Every school’s main goal must be to help each student develop a personal and ecclesial relationship with our Lord, Jesus Christ, who is “the Way, the Truth, and the Life” (John 14:6). The principles, practices, and beliefs of the Catholic Faith must be fully integrated throughout the school’s curricular service projects, co-curricular activities, and culture.

Students in our Catholic schools are reminded of their dignity as children of God through the study of Catholic Doctrine, frequent opportunities for personal and communal prayer, and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church. Together with parents, the primary educators of their children, our Catholic schools pursue academic and spiritual excellence by helping students to develop their intellectual abilities, foster wholesome friendships, practice discipleship, strengthen their daily prayer life, grow in virtue, and become leaders through serving others.

All personnel that work in our Catholic schools must have at heart the promotion of the educational mission of the Church, and live as visible role models of faith within the parish/school community. Catholic doctrinal, moral and social teaching is an integral part of each school. Therefore, all faculty, staff, administrative, and volunteer personnel must support the teachings of the Church, actively practice their faith in daily life, and be loyal to the Church’s Magisterium. Our Catholic school personnel share this educational mission and its various commitments and responsibilities with parents and the local Church communities.

“It is crucial that the policies and procedures of Catholic schools reflect that primary purpose and that the Catholicity of the school and its faithfulness to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church (Magisterium) are not compromised.”

Sister Mary Angela Shaughnessy, SCN, JD, PhD

School Philosophy

St. Mary’s School is a Catholic co-educational community where human culture and knowledge, illuminated by Faith, is shared. Here, students are helped to develop a sense of God, responsibility, direction, and mission.

Mission Statement

“As part of the evangelization mission of St. Mary’s Parish, St. Mary’s School is dedicated to teaching children to know, love, and serve God, to developing their spiritual, academic, social, and physical gifts, and to promoting responsible Catholic Christian citizenship.” (Commission on Education, 12/12/06)

Vision Statement

St. Mary's School is a religiously devout community committed to enriching the lives of students through knowing, loving, and serving God. The students will achieve academic success through creative teaching strategies, increased technology, and an up-to-date curriculum based upon the National Common Core Standards of Learning. The school will offer a wide range of extracurricular activities that support social interactions, physical development, and creative expressions. The students will also continue their commitment to the service of others within our community and surrounding areas. St. Mary's School will challenge each family to live faithfully through participation in weekly Mass, daily prayers, and the sacramental life of our universal Church.

Belief Statements

1. We believe parents are the primary educators of their children.
2. We believe we are blessed to support them in that pursuit.
3. We believe prayer and the resulting relationship with Jesus is foundational to education
4. We believe our mission is to form disciples of Christ.
5. We believe in loving our students in the ways that Christ taught us.
6. We believe in the importance of teaching community and serving the common good.
7. We believe in the arts and the beauty that comes from using them to praise God.
8. We believe students can only thrive when they feel safe. And Catholic schools provide a safe and loving environment.
9. We believe our faith allows us to persevere in times of crisis.
10. We believe in teaching Sacramental Awareness and this helps our students recognize that God's love and grace surrounds them.
11. We believe our students are the "greatest work of the Church."
12. We believe every human life is sacred because we are created in the image of God. And we believe we're obligated to teach this to our students.

Goals and Objectives

The faculty assumes the responsibility of assisting the parents, the child's prime and foremost educator, in educating the whole child while preserving each child's own individuality and uniqueness. The St. Mary's Faculty and Staff hope to do this by establishing the following goals and objectives:

- To assist in the development of moral values, spiritual values, ethical standards of conduct, and basic integrity. In order to do so, the St. Mary's faculty and staff will encourage parents and teachers to set good examples, provide religious instruction, and encourage upper class leadership.
- To help children to develop a respect for the rights and properties of others as individuals and as groups. Students will be taught the importance of consideration of others' courteous speech, polite manners, fair play, and respect for others property.
- To help students to develop a love and understanding of the Church of Christ and His teachings and to help them develop a spiritual life of prayer and worship. In order to do so, the St. Mary's School faculty will encourage attendance at Mass, provide celebrations for liturgical seasons, lead daily prayers, encourage sharing through missions, and provide opportunities for liturgical participation in class.
- To fundamentally educate students in all traditionally accepted curriculum areas.
- To provide educational programs that take into account individual differences, needs, and rates of learning. St. Mary's School will utilize diagnostic testing and continuous reevaluation, provide ability grouping and regrouping to meet individual needs, and sponsor field trips in order to attain this goal.

- To educate students of the importance of good health, cleanliness, and physical fitness. Teachers will use science units to teach students of the importance of practicing these fields. Additionally, physical education programs and extracurricular sports will be provided for students.
- To prepare students to live productively and harmoniously in the community, state, and nation.
- To provide students with educational opportunities that emphasize American heritage and the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship. Students will be taught social studies relative to the history of the United States, the processes of government, and the responsibilities of citizenship. Democratic methods will also be used in classroom management.
- To help students develop a deep appreciation and understanding of their lives through programs about Family Life, Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention, and Contagious Diseases in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

The faculty and staff of St. Mary's School believes that they can provide students with an excellent Catholic education in the best sense. St. Mary's staff also believes that success demands the finest efforts of the faculty, parents, and students working together with God's assistance.

ADMISSIONS

Admission Policies

In order to remain fair to St. Mary's parishioners and employees, while providing a Catholic education to as many Catholic students as possible, the following priority list will be used for enrollment to St. Mary's School if registration exceeds capacity:

1. Children whose parents are employees of St. Mary's Church or School.
2. Children whose siblings are already attending St. Mary's School & whose parents are practicing Catholic parishioners of St. Mary's Church.
3. Children of practicing Catholic parishioners of St. Mary's Church who are enrolling their first child.
4. Children of practicing Catholic families from parishes that have no school of their own.
5. Children of non-practicing Catholic families or children of non-Catholic families whose siblings already attend St. Mary's School.
6. Children of non-practicing Catholic families or children of non-Catholic families who are enrolling their first child.

Note: For the purposes of this document, the definition of practicing Catholic parishioners will be: a family with members baptized in the Catholic Faith who fulfill their Mass attendance obligations, are properly registered with the parish, support the parish according to their means, and are involved in parish activities as much as possible.

Criteria for Admission and Continued Enrollment

- Catholic schools are established primarily to help mold students in preparation for their lives as Catholic adults within a community inspired by faith; they are not havens for those who wish to escape problems relating to the achievement of social justice in the public sector.
- Age requirements for admission follow the guidelines of the Illinois School Code: Kindergarten - 5 years of age by September 1; Grade One - 6 years of age by September 1. The administrator will determine the academic and social requirements for admission as well as the appropriate class placement. Additionally, the administrator may deny a student admission if the student's academic, physical, or social needs cannot be met adequately at St. Mary's School. Kindergarten students are required to be prescreened by their local Special Services unit, and the results of those screenings may affect admission. St. Mary's School may perform additional screening to determine admission or placement.

- Illinois law requires that all students entering kindergarten and sixth grade must have a physical examination (See “Health Examinations and Immunizations”). This examination must be completed within one year prior to entry. Those students entering at any grade level from any other school district must also have a current health record on file. Physical forms from out of state must be reviewed by the school nurse. Only physicians licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches shall be responsible for the performance of the health (physical) examination and sign all report forms.
- A dental exam is required for all children in kindergarten, second, and sixth grades. The exam must be performed and signed by a licensed dentist, and proof of the exam must be presented to the school by May 15th of the school year. Waivers for the dental exam are available under certain circumstances. Consult the principal for further information.
- A vision exam performed by an optometrist or a physician who provides complete eye examinations will also be required for kindergarteners and must be completed by October 15. Failure to do so will result in a withholding of the child’s report until it has been completed.
- Prior to entering St. Mary’s School, every child shall present proof of immunity against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, mumps, Hepatitis B, and chicken pox. A screening for lead must also be presented.
- All school families are expected to pay tuition. Families needing financial assistance for tuition may complete a scholarship application.
- To ensure continued enrollment at St. Mary’s School, weekly attendance at Mass and regular reception of sacraments is expected for all Catholic students.
- Non-Catholic and Catholic students are expected to participate in the curriculum in its entirety. Since religion is a major subject at St. Mary’s School, the participation in certain religious activities is part of our program. All students are expected to participate.
- Once a child has been accepted into kindergarten at St. Mary’s School, that child may remain through Grade 8, except in the cases of expulsion or the school’s inability to meet the needs of the child.
- Students with special needs will be accepted if it is felt that St. Mary’s School, the student intervention services, and Pontiac District #429 can provide an appropriate education for the child. This decision will be made by the St. Mary’s School principal and pastor in consultation with the education staff members, including special educators.
- As a condition of continued enrollment, parents are expected to actively support the educational and extracurricular activities of their children, participate in the volunteer projects of TAPS, and to promote the mission and philosophy of St. Mary’s School.

Enrollment Procedure

Annual Enrollment

1. Kindergarten registration for current St. Mary’s families will be held in December each year.
2. Registration for all new K - 8 students will begin in January each year. Enrollment will be based on the priorities listed under admission policies. Within each category, priority will be based on the date when a completed registration form and fee were received.
3. All registration is to be completed online. Please refer to the **Fees** section of this handbook to determine the amount due at time of registration.

Transfers

1. Students transferring to St. Mary’s School will be eligible for immediate enrollment if present enrollment figures accommodate them. Families are encouraged to make transfers at a logical academic break.

2. Students transferring to St. Mary's School will be required to provide evidence of previous school experience. St. Mary's School reserves the right to accept the student, refuse admission, or allow admission on a probationary status whose length and terms will be determined by the administrator.

Transferring Students Who Wish to Re-Enter

Students who move to another city and wish to return to St. Mary's School may do so with the approval of the school administrator in addition to a review of the student's records. Students who leave St. Mary's and enter a public school in Pontiac may return to St. Mary's with the approval of the school administrator. Student's records must be reviewed, and parents will be interviewed and asked to give an explanation as to the reason they wish their child/children to return to St. Mary's School.

Class Size

St. Mary's School will limit the number of students in each class to a maximum of thirty (30) students for Grade 2 through Grade 8. Enrollment in kindergarten and Grade 1 will be limited to twenty-eight (28) each in order to accommodate retentions when necessary. Class size (including any retained students) is not to exceed thirty (30). If additional space becomes available, this policy will be reviewed. The Pastor reserves the right to make changes to this policy if warranted.

Transfer of Student Records

St. Mary's School School expediently provides the transfer of student records to a new school as soon as the records are requested by that school. One exception to this rule is when the transferring parents have outstanding tuition, book, or other fees. In such a case, only the current physical, as mandated by state law, will be sent to the new school until all fees have been satisfied.

Scholarships and Financial Assistance

The following scholarships are available to students entering grades K - 8. All scholarships are for one year only and are subject to availability of funds and application deadlines. Visit our website for the most current information.

Invest in Kids Act Tax Credit Scholarship

Illinois Tax Credit Scholarships are available to all income eligible St. Mary's School families. These scholarships can cover 50-100% of tuition and will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Applications will be accepted beginning in January for the following school year. For complete details and to submit an application, visit the Empower Illinois website.

John Lancaster Spalding Scholarship

Tuition assistance is available to Catholic families from the Diocese of Peoria John Lancaster Spalding Endowment Fund. Scholarship applications must be completed through Facts Grant & Aid online. The Diocese sets an application deadline in April each year to apply for assistance for the upcoming school year. The scholarship amount awarded is dependent on the needs of the family and the availability of funds each year. Award announcements will be made in June.

St. Blaise Scholarship

The St. Blaise Scholarship Fund was established in loving memory of St. Mary's student Blaze Masching, whose outgoing personality and enthusiastic passion for life are fondly remembered. His spirit will live on as this scholarship fund helps current and future generations of SMS students. The St. Blaise Scholarship Fund provides tuition assistance to those families who demonstrate need. Families must first apply for all other scholarships in order to be considered for the St. Blaise Scholarship. Current SMS families must apply by scholarship deadline.

Fees

A non-refundable, one-time registration fee of \$100 is charged for each new student. In addition, Facts Management charges an annual fee for account maintenance, \$22 for new students and \$11 for returning students. All fees are paid online through Facts Management.

The base rate tuition will be determined annually by the Parish Finance Council. The full cost of educating a student at St. Mary’s Catholic School is approximately \$7,390.00 annually. Every student, regardless of faith, is given a tuition subsidy by St. Mary’s Parish. Monthly contributions enable the school to keep tuition at an affordable rate. Tuition is paid through FACTS.

	12 payments Payable 7/2023 – 6/2024	10 payments Payable 8/2023 – 5/2024	Two payments Payable 8/2023 & 2/2024	One payment Payable 8/2023
*Parishioner				
One child	\$324.17/mon.	\$389.00/mon.	\$1,945.00 ea.	\$3,890.00
Two children	\$548.33/mon.	\$658.00/mon.	\$3,290.00 ea.	\$6,580.00
Three children	\$689.17/mon.	\$827.00/mon.	\$4,135.00 ea.	\$8,270.00
Four children	\$830.00/mon.	\$996.00/mon.	\$4,980.00 ea.	\$9,960.00
Non-parishioner				
One child	\$378.75/mon.	\$454.50/mon.	\$2,272.50 ea.	\$4,545.00
Two children	\$657.50/mon.	\$789.00/mon.	\$3,945.00 ea.	\$7,890.00
Three children	\$852.92/mon.	\$1,023.50/mon.	\$5,117.50 ea.	\$10,235.00
Four children	\$1,048.33/mon.	\$1,258.00/mon.	\$6,290.00 ea.	\$12,580.00

*Only families who are properly registered with the parish, fulfill their Mass attendance obligations, regularly support the parish according to their means, and are involved in parish activities as much as possible will be considered "active parishioners."

Payment Policies

Delinquent Accounts

The following actions, at a minimum, will be taken according to duration of outstanding balances:

- 30-days overdue: The parent/guardian will be contacted to set up a payment arrangement.
- 60-days overdue: The parent/guardian will be contacted by the principal to set up a payment arrangement and the matter may be referred to the pastor.
- 90-days overdue: The parent/guardian will be required to come to the school for a meeting with the principal and pastor. The student(s) will not be permitted to begin the next semester unless the matter has been resolved.

Other Fee Policies

- Any family who disables their FACTS account will be required to come to the school for a meeting with the principal to discuss payment arrangements.

- All payments returned for insufficient funds will incur a \$30 charge.
- Scholarship recipients must have a current account to apply for tuition assistance for the following year. Additionally, delinquent accounts may result in scholarship being revoked.
- Delinquent accounts may be reported to the Parish Finance Council for review.
- Students enrolled for part of a month will owe tuition for the entire month.

ACADEMICS AND CURRICULUM

Expectations

St. Mary's School maintains high academic expectations suitable to the individual abilities of each student. Parents are expected to support the academic endeavors of their children and encourage good study skills as well as responsible work habits.

Grading Scales

The Catholic Schools of the Peoria Diocese will use the following grading scale for Grades 3-8:

- A 94-100 Excellent
- B 86-93 Good
- C 76-85 Average
- D 68-75 Poor
- F Below 68 Failing
- I Incomplete

For the purpose of determining grade-point averages, the following point system will be used:

A+ 4.3 (100)	A 4.0 (96-99)	A- 3.7 (94-95)
B+ 3.3 (92-93)	B 3.0 (88-91)	B- 2.7 (86-87)
C+ 2.3 (84-85)	C 2.0 (78-83)	C- 1.7 (76-77)
D+ 1.3 (74-75)	D 1.0 (70-73)	D- 0.7 (68-69)
F 0.0 (Below 68)		

Grades for students in PTHS Algebra course will be added 3.5% points to their calculated average from the high school.

The academic marking code for kindergarten and Grades 1 and 2 will be::

- S+ Exceeds basic requirements
- S Satisfactory progress: consistent with ability
- S- Having difficulty meeting basic requirements
- U Unsatisfactory

The following/Effort Codes will be used for Kindergarten – 2nd Grade learner behaviors:

- + Exceeds basic requirements
- Blank Meets basic requirements
- NI The student needs increased practice/reinforcement

Honor Roll

The honor roll will be computed as follows:

- HIGH HONOR: 3.5 grade-point average or above, with no C grades
- HONOR - 2.7 TO 3.4 grade-point average, with no C grades and an S or above in both

Those subjects used to compute the grade-point average include math, english, spelling, reading, social studies, science, religion, art, P.E., music, band, chorus, and computers/keyboarding. Grades in spelling, art, P.E., music, band, chorus, and computers/keyboarding will be weighted at .5 due to meeting less than 3 days per week. Students in Grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 with the above criteria will be eligible for the honor/high honor rolls.

Band/Chorus

A band program is offered to students in Grades 4 through 8. Classes and private lessons are taught by the school band instructor. Some instruments are available through the school, but most are rented or bought by the parents. The band performs occasionally throughout the year and at the Christmas program as well the Fine Arts Night held at the school in the spring. Chorus is offered to students in Grades 5 through Grade 8. The chorus performs occasionally throughout the year and at the Christmas program as well as Fine Arts Night held in the spring.

Textbooks

All texts, with the exception of the consumable workbooks, are rented. All books carried to and from school in a book bag. If a book is lost, damaged, or destroyed, it must be replaced by the individual.

Homework

Each teacher will make a special effort to correlate all home assignments with the lessons already presented in school. Each child from Grade 4 through Grade 8 is required to have a notebook to be used as an assignment book. Parents are asked to make sure that homework is completed on time.

Late Work for Grades 5-8

Students are expected to timely complete their assignments. The first day that an assignment is late, (i.e. turned in after the announced due date and time), the student's grade will be lowered by 10%. For the second day that the assignment is late, the student's grade will be lowered by 20%. If the assignment is three or more days late, then the student's grade will be lowered by 50%. If the assignment is not turned in by the end of the unit or chapter, then the student will receive a "zero" for that assignment.

Mandatory Study Sessions

The grades and academic performance of the students of St. Mary's are important to the administration and staff of the school, and as a result, additional support will be provided to those students who are struggling in a course. The grades of all students in grades 5 through 8 shall be computed on Friday or the last day of the school week through FACTS. Any student who has a D average in any course shall be required to complete two (2) study sessions (Monday and Tuesday) during the following week. Any student who has an F average in any course shall be required to complete four (4) study sessions (Monday through Thursday) during the following week. Notification will be provided to any student required to participate in the study sessions on Friday or the last day of the school week. Study sessions will occur during the lunch recess. The location of the study session will be announced to the students. Any student required to complete study sessions shall bring the necessary study materials to the study session. If the reason that a student is receiving a D or F is because of incomplete or missing assignments, it is expected that the student will complete such assignments in these study sessions. These sessions shall take priority over any other obligation or meeting that the student may have

during this time. Further, the sessions shall be exclusively for those students who have a D or F average in any class. In the event that a student is sick one or more (s) shall be made up in the week that the student is sick if possible. If this is not possible, then said days shall be made up during the following week.

Testing

Diocesan mandated MAP tests will be administered 3 times a year (Fall, Winter, Spring) to students in Grades K-8. Students from all schools which feed into Pontiac Township High School take the PSAT during their 8th grade year. Students in Grades 3-8 will also take the Diocesan mandated ARK test (Religion) Teacher-made tests or curriculum tests will be given periodically to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each child.

Religion Program

Religion is the prime subject taught at St. Mary's School and is incorporated in the curriculum of every subject area. Moreover, it is practiced in many activities both within and beyond the classroom. Parents are expected to maintain strong Catholic values within their homes in order to reinforce the practice of the Catholic faith. As practicing Catholics, parents should see that their families, children included, attend Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday. Additionally, they should attend Mass on all holy days of obligation and see to it that the family actively supports and participates in the parish community.

The entire student body attends Mass on all Thursdays of each month. On a rotating basis, classes prepare the weekly Thursday Liturgy. Parents are welcome to join the students in these liturgies. Students have the opportunity of attending confession on Fridays on a rotating class schedule. Additionally, student retreats are provided for the Confirmation class as well as the 8th grade class during years when Confirmation is not held.

Service

An integral part of a St. Mary's School education is service to others. All grade levels incorporate service projects in their yearly curriculum, and all Confirmation candidates have a service component in their preparation activities. Some examples of service projects performed by students include singing and serving for parish funerals; picking up litter; working at parish and community functions; setting up and taking down lunchroom tables and chairs; participating in the St. Jude Math-a-Thon; and many other activities.

Non-Promotion of Students

When considering non-promotion, the emotional, social, physical, and academic development of the child will be taken into consideration. Teachers will be expected to have one or more conferences with the parents as soon as non-promotion is being considered. The final decision regarding retention will rest with the principal.

In a situation where performance is not up to promotion standards and retention is not considered to be an option, a student may be "placed in," rather than "promoted to," the next grade level. It may then be suggested that parents obtain tutoring during the summer and/or that the student attend summer school with District #429. If that option is available, the student may attend summer school, and the placement may be reviewed at the end of the first quarter of the following school year. Students who fail two or more subjects in the core curriculum (math, science, English, social studies, religion, reading, spelling) may not be promoted to the next grade, but may be placed in the next grade.

ATTENDANCE

Policies

In order to comply with provisions of the compulsory school attendance law of the State of Illinois, a pupil who has reached the age of seven years and is under the age of seventeen must attend school every day that school is in session unless excused by proper school authority.

Absences

In case of an absence, parents are to notify the school office by 8:30 a.m. For the safety of our students, if parents have not notified the school when a child is absent, the office staff will make an attempt to contact the parents at home and/or at work. If no phone contact has been made, the child must bring a note from the parent explaining the absence. If no word is received from the parent concerning the reason for the child's absence, the absence will be considered unexcused. When children are absent from school due to illnesses, they are not allowed to attend extracurricular school functions in the evening. Violations of this rule will result in the absence being considered unexcused, with all grades for the day counting as zeroes (0). Any student absent for three or more consecutive days must present a note from a physician stating the reason for the absence.

Exceptions for special events (funerals, illnesses), such as the Christmas program and sacrament activities, may be granted by the principal. Students will be allowed to participate in and attend any school activities on a non-school day following an absence if the absence was excused or pre-arranged.

Parents are not encouraged to remove their children from school for reasons other than illnesses. In cases where parents choose to remove their children from school for reasons other than illnesses, it shall be the responsibility of parents to:

1. Contact the child(ren)'s teacher(s) and the school principal several days in advance to inform them of what days will be missed.
2. Meet with the child(ren)'s teacher(s) to discuss makeup work for all of the days that will be missed and when the work will be due. **Teachers are not obligated to have work ready prior to the student's absence.**

Failure to complete and return the make-up assignments by the due date can result in a failing grade. A pupil who has been absent for one-half of the quarter shall not receive grades. Instead, the words "PROLONGED ABSENCE" will be inserted in the grade column for that period on the report card. Any pupil who is absent for twenty-five (25) days or more during the entire school year could automatically be considered for retention. Each case will be decided individually. Students who are absent over a period of time should request and complete all missed homework assignments. Additionally, students should contact the teachers to find out which assignments were missed. It is the responsibility of the students to contact their teachers and complete the missing assignments within a given amount of time. Generally, students have the same number of days to make up the work as the number of days absent.

When it is absolutely necessary for a child to be excused from school for medical or dental appointments, a note must be sent to the teacher 24 hours in advance except in the case of an emergency. This note is then sent to the principal. For the safety of the children, parents are asked to come to the school office to sign out their child. No student will be permitted to leave the building without a parent or an authorized adult. In the latter case, parents must send a signed note to the

office with the name of the person who will be picking up the child. In the instance of a doctor or dental appointment, a student will not be counted absent if (a) the school has received prior notice and (b) the child has been present for at least half of the morning or afternoon session in which the appointment occurs. A child who has had a fever should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Students who have a fever will be sent home. Parents should make sure that students who have been vomiting have been able to eat with no problems before returning to school. Additionally, if an antibiotic is needed, the child should be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

Arrival Procedures

Students are not to be on St. Mary's property until 7:30 a.m. Parents are to drop off children at the MPR doors in the morning. Doors will be unlocked at that time. Parents are asked to strictly adhere to this policy for the sake of the safety of the children and the liability of the school. Grades PreK-8 should report to the MPR when they arrive at school. The following school hours are observed:

School Hours:

Morning Session: 8:00 am to 11:30 am
Afternoon Session: 12:20 pm to 3:00 pm

Lunch and Recess Times:

K-4th Recess: 11:40 am-12:05 pm
K-8th Lunch: 12:05 pm-12:35 pm
5th-8th Recess: 12:25 pm-12:40 pm

Any child who is not in his/her classroom at 8:10 a.m. or at 12:25 p.m. will be considered tardy and must report to the office upon arrival. If a child is tardy, a parent must come into the office to sign in their child. For every five tardy times for any reason (including doctor or dentist appointments) within one school quarter, the child will be issued one half-day absence. Continued instances of tardiness will result in parents having to meet with the pastor and principal. Parents are urged to have children at school by 8:00 a.m. so that they may participate in community prayer. Once a child has entered the school for the day, the child may not leave the school grounds without permission of the principal.

Return to Classroom

A student who needs to return to his or her classroom after school dismisses must first report to the school office and obtain permission to return to his or her classroom.

Weather Closings

Sudden weather changes during the winter may make it necessary to close school. If weather problems should arise prior to or during the school day, an announcement will be made on the local radio station WJEZ-FM (98.9) and through FACTS alert system via text, email, and voicemail. Generally, whatever is announced for Pontiac Grade School District #429 and Pontiac Township High School #90 will also apply to St. Mary's School. If school is canceled during the day, children will be given an opportunity to call their parents to make arrangements. Parents are encouraged to have a family plan for such occurrences. Because conditions may vary depending on location, parents are free to pick up their children if school is not canceled but conditions in their home area necessitate early dismissal.

If school is canceled for bad weather, all evening school-sponsored events are automatically canceled. This includes, but is not limited to practices and games.

The principal will make the determination if the school closing will result in a remote learning day or a snow day.

DISCIPLINE

Overview

St. Mary's School strives to assist students in using self-discipline and Christian behavior in every aspect of their lives. All students and employees of the school are expected to treat every person with dignity and respect. Any student who engages in conduct that is detrimental to the reputation of the school and/or inconsistent with the mission, philosophy, or teachings of the Catholic Church may be subject to disciplinary action including suspension or expulsion. Teachers and administrators are responsible for maintaining a safe and peaceful environment in which learning, communication, and development of faith may take place. Additionally, teachers and administrators have the authority to act in place of the parents in maintaining discipline during the school day and at school-related events. Any acts of disobedience or misconduct may be disciplined by withholding privileges (e.g., recess), or by issuing detentions, suspensions, or terminations of enrollment. Discipline is granted depending on the age of the student and the circumstances, frequency, and severity of the offense. However, major emphasis of the discipline will be on learning from the mistake. A student may be asked to write a behavior plan to correct the problem.

The following are considered serious misbehaviors and will usually result in the student being given detentions or sent to the principal for more serious punishment:

- Disruptive behavior in the classroom, on or near school property, or at school-related functions
- Cheating on any academic work
- Possession of, use of, or distribution of alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, marijuana, or any other substance or weapon that is unlawful for a student to possess, use, or distribute (See also "Alcohol and Illegal Drugs" and "Weapon Possession Policy")
- Fighting or assaulting any person
- Theft, intentional damage, or destruction of the property of others
- Other acts which directly or indirectly jeopardize the physical or psychological health, safety, and welfare of oneself and others at school
- Insubordination to school personnel
- Verbal abuse or use of profanity, obscenity, or obscene gestures
- Intimidating or attempting to intimidate school personnel, staff, or students (See also "Harassment Policy")
- Use of school computers to obtain, copy, and/or disseminate inappropriate materials, including, but not limited to, pornographic, violent, or hate-inspiring topics
- Any activity that is considered by the administration to interfere with the best interests of the school, its mission, and/or its students and faculty/staff

It should be noted that this list is not all-inclusive and other behaviors may be considered

Corporal Punishment

It is the policy of the Diocesan Office of Catholic Education and this school that NO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT be administered by the principal or teachers.

Harassment/Bullying

Every student and employee of St. Mary's School should have the reasonable expectation of working and interacting in an environment where they receive respect and are surrounded by Christian values. Harassment of any type—verbal, physical, visual, sexual—is in opposition to the mission of St. Mary's School and will not be tolerated. The term "harassment" includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, or

any other form of verbal, graphic, or physical contact which reflects adversely on an individual's race, color, sex, religion, national origin, citizenship, age, marital status, veteran status, or mental, physical, or academic handicap. Harassment of any person on school grounds or at any school-related function is not acceptable. Additionally, harassment by any employee while acting as a representative of this institution is not acceptable. Any individual judged to harass another will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Bullying, the repeated behavior involving a deliberate, conscious intent to hurt, threaten, frighten, or humiliate someone, will not be tolerated. Bullying may include physical and/or verbal intimidation or assault; extortion or taking belongings; oral or written threats; outrageous teasing, mocking, taunting, putdowns, or name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; suggestive comments; false accusations; and/or social isolation. All members of the school have a responsibility to recognize bullying and take actions when they are aware of it happening. Classes will be instructed in anti-bullying strategies, and all faculty and staff shall treat any report of bullying seriously and take action. Students should be assured that they have acted correctly in reporting bullying. St. Mary's School follows Diocesan Policies D-147 Bullying and C-401 Harassment C-402. Copies of these policies can be found at cdop.org.

Policy for Grades K - 5

Any acts of disobedience or misconduct may be disciplined by withholding privileges (e.g., recess) or by issuing detentions. Discipline is granted depending on the age of the student and the circumstances, frequency, and severity of the offense. However, the major emphasis of the discipline will be on learning from the mistake. A student may be asked to write a behavior plan to correct the problem.

Policy for Grades 6 - 8

When necessary, teachers, faculty and staff shall impose consequences for unwanted behavior.

The following approach shall be utilized except in situations of serious misbehavior:

1. Warning – a verbal warning is given, followed up with contact with the parent.
2. 30 Minute Detention – issued by faculty or staff in the form of a Detention Notice. This Notice must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned the school day immediately following the day of issuance. Failure to return the Notice on the school day immediately following the day of issuance may result in second 30 Minute Detention. Failure to return the Notice within two days immediately following the day of issuance may result in a meeting with parents.

A detention may be issued by a teacher who has previously issued a warning to that student for the same or another unwanted behavior. If the behavior is serious or excessive, the teacher is not required to issue a warning and may immediately issue a detention. Additionally, serious or excessive unwanted behavior may result in a student missing extracurricular activities and/or a meeting with the parents.

Serious or excessive unwanted behavior may result in a student missing extracurricular activities and/or meeting with teachers, the parents, and principal.

Detention Rules:

- Detentions shall be served on any day in the week following the issuance of the detention.
- The detention shall be at the discretion of the teacher/staff member and will be supervised by the teacher assigning the detention.
- If a student receives more than one detention in a week, then he or she shall meet with the Principal and their parents to discuss the problem.
- A detention shall take priority over all school activities. No student shall be permitted to skip or delay a detention as a result of any extracurricular activity or other after-school activity.

- If a student fails to serve a detention, then that student shall serve detention the following day.
- Excused absences from school on the day of the detention shall result in the detention being served in the following week.
- Students serving detention are expected to bring appropriate study materials to detention.
- Students serving detention shall not be permitted to talk or communicate with other students during the detention period.

Parent Communication Regarding Discipline

A parent or guardian may request a conference with the teacher/faculty member issuing a Notice of Concern or Detention Notice. Said conference may not occur any sooner than forty-eight (48) hours after the Notice is issued. The request for such a conference must be made by sending an email to the teacher/faculty member within forty-eight (48) hours of the Notice being issued. The email shall contain a brief explanation as to why the parent or guardian believes that the conference is needed. The initial conference may not include the principal unless requested by the teacher/faculty member. After the initial conference, the parent or guardian may request a further conference with both the teacher/faculty member and the principal. Said request must be made within twenty-four (24) hours after the initial meeting with the teacher/faculty member by emailing both the teacher/faculty member and the principal in the same email. (Note: All such conferences shall be conducted in a cooperative and productive manner. The teacher/faculty member may immediately terminate a conference if the parent or guardian becomes disrespectful, confrontational, or threatening. Parents/guardians must remember that teachers and faculty members should be given latitude and respect in their decision making.)

Suspension

When other forms of discipline have failed and/or when the nature of the misbehavior warrants, the principal may issue an in-school suspension, an out-of-school suspension, or, in consultation with the pastor, a termination of enrollment.

In-School Suspension

During an in-school suspension, the student will spend the entire day in supervised isolation from his or her class and will not be allowed to leave the area except for necessary restroom periods as the principal permits. The student must complete work assigned by the classroom teacher(s), and will receive credit for the work completed. On the morning of the in-school suspension, the student will report directly to the principal with his or her books and lunch. If the student desires a hot lunch, a lunch will be obtained and will be eaten in the assigned area. Any student who leaves the suspension during the day without permission or breaks any other rules during the suspension will be given additional suspensions pending a parent conference.

Out-of-School Suspension

When it is deemed that a student's behavior in school is having a negative effect on the quality of education available to the rest of the class, or when that behavior is potentially harmful to the student or to others, an out-of-school suspension may be issued. The primary purpose of this type of suspension is to give the student, parents, and the school the time needed for resolving the problem. All work will receive a grade of 50%. Parents will be responsible for the student during an out-of-school suspension.

Expulsion

Termination of enrollment is the removal of a student from school for the remainder of the school year. The principal, with the pastor's approval, has the authority to terminate the enrollment of a student.

Pupil Status During Suspension or Termination of Enrollment

Students who have been suspended or whose enrollment has been terminated are not permitted to participate in or attend any school-sponsored activities either at school or away from school during the period of the suspension or termination. In addition, students who require this type of discipline may not be included in future field trips since it would not be fair to ask teachers or parents to accept liability for the student's behavior. Students suspended or whose enrollment has been terminated have the right to state their defense in an informal hearing. This hearing is a conference held with the student, parent(s) or guardian(s), involved faculty members, principal, and pastor.

INTERVENTION

Student Intervention

When a student is experiencing exceptional difficulties in academics, behavior, or social relationships and ordinary teacher interventions have not worked, teachers may refer students in their classes to have extra instruction or interventions with our resource teachers. A letter will be sent home to parents advising them of this recommendation and their permission for their child to be seen outside of the homeroom class setting. Interventions may be individual help or in a small group setting.

Counseling

Although St. Mary's School does not employ a guidance counselor, the services of a school psychologist and a school social worker are sometimes available through Pontiac School District #429. Parish priests are available for family or individual counseling in matters of faith, and the school principal and classroom teachers may also provide information about outside guidance resources.

HEALTH

Diocesan Student Wellness Plan (Policy D-151)

St. Mary's School will be committed to providing a learning environment that supports and promotes wellness, good nutrition, and an active lifestyle and recognizes the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity, and the capacity of students to develop and learn. The entire school environment shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence students' beliefs and habits and promote health and wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity. In addition, school staff shall be encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. It is the policy of the St. Mary's School that:

1. We will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity and reduce childhood obesity.
2. All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to participate in physical activities on a regular basis.
3. Qualified food service providers will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of the students; will accommodate the religious requirements of the students; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for the students to eat.
4. To the extent practical, St. Mary's School will participate in available federal school meal programs.
5. Foods and beverages sold and/or served as part of the school meal programs will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
6. St. Mary's School will engage students, parents, teachers, food service providers, health professionals, and interested community members in monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the St. Mary's School Student Wellness Plan. Catholic Diocese of Peoria Policy Adopted: 5/06 St. Mary's School Policy Adopted: 8/22/06

Health Examinations and Immunizations (Diocesan Policy D-152)

• Health Exam Required. Each student in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Peoria shall have a health examination within one year prior to entering pre-school; prior to entering kindergarten or the first

grade; and upon entering the sixth and ninth grades; and upon entering a school pursuant to a transfer, regardless of the child's grade level.

- Immunizations Required. Each Catholic school student shall receive such immunizations against preventable communicable diseases as are required by the Illinois School Code and the Communicable Disease Prevention Act, at the time those immunizations are required to be received, unless one of the exceptions listed below is satisfied.
- Proof of Health Exam and Immunizations Required. A child's parent/legal guardian must supply proof of both the health exam and the required immunizations no later than the beginning of the school year. Where proof is not submitted, the school will notify the parent/legal guardian that he or she has until October 15th of the current school year in which to have the child examined and receive the immunizations, and present proof of the same.
- Noncompliance with this Policy. Failure to provide proof of required health exams and immunizations shall result in the child being excluded from school until the parent/legal guardian presents proof of the exams and the immunizations, and the parent/legal guardian is deemed in violation of the Illinois School Code during the period of noncompliance.
- Objections to Examinations and/or Immunizations. A parent/legal guardian who objects to his/her child being examined and/or immunized is eligible to be exempt from exams and/or immunizations only as follows:

1. Medical Objection. Any medical objection to an immunization must be presented by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches indicating the reasons, and signed by the physician on the certificate of child health examination and placed on file in the child's permanent record. Should the condition of the child later permit immunization, this requirement will then have to be met.
2. Religious Objection. An objection based on religious grounds shall be presented to the school by the parent/legal guardian in writing signed by the parent/legal guardian, detailing the grounds for the objection. The objection must set forth the specific religious belief that conflicts with the examination and/or immunization. General philosophical or moral reluctance to allow examinations, immunizations, and/or screening shall not provide a sufficient basis for a religious exception to the requirement of exams and immunizations. Each objection will be addressed on a case by case basis.

NOTE: In the event the objection to a vaccine is based on the vaccine containing aborted fetal cell lines, the school should inform the parent/guardian that the objection must be able to state that an alternative vaccine is not readily available to the parent/guardian's child. The school shall inform the objecting parent/legal guardian of measles outbreak control exclusion procedures in accordance with the Department's rules, Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 ILL. Adm. Code 690) at the time the parent/legal guardian presents the objection. 665.510

- Determination of Objection to Examination and/or Immunization. The school is to forward all objections to the Diocese, to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, for determination of whether the written statement constitutes a valid religious objection.
- List of Non-Immunized Students. An accurate list shall be maintained at every school of those who have not presented proof of immunity against diphtheria, pertussis (to age 6), tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, rubella, mumps, Haemophilus influenzae type b, hepatitis B, or Varicella. CDOP Policy

Diseases/Conditions requiring exclusion from school

- Chickenpox – Until 6 days after the start of the rash or when sores have dried/crusted.
- Covid – will follow current health department guidelines.
- Shingles – Only if sores cannot be covered by clothing or a dressing. If not, exclude until sores have crusted and are dry.

- Rash with Fever Or Joint Pain – Until diagnosed not to be measles or rubella.
- Measles – Until 5 days after the rash starts.
- Rubella – Until 6 days after the rash starts.
- Mumps – Until 9 days after glands begin to swell.
- Diarrhea – If 3 or more episodes of loose stools in the previous 24 hours, or if accompanied by fever, until diarrhea resolves.
- Vomiting – If 2 or more (verified) episodes of vomiting during the previous 24 hours, or if a fever is present; until vomiting is resolved or is determined to be due to noninfectious conditions.
- Hepatitis A – For 1 week after jaundice appears or as directed by the health department, especially when no symptoms are present.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough) – Until 5 days of antibiotic therapy.
- Impetigo (A skin infection, usually on face, with crusty golden oozing crusts) – Until 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and no draining lesions present.
- Active Tuberculosis (TB) – Until the local health department approves return to school.
- Strep Throat (Or other streptococcal infection) – Until 24 hours of initial antibiotic completed AND no fever present.
- Scabies/Head Lice/Body Lice – Until 24 hours after treatment has begun. Bring proof of treatment and have head rechecked before reentering the classroom; recheck head in 7 to 10 days.
- Pinkeye (Purulent Conjunctivitis) – Until 24 hours after treatment has begun.

Lice, Conjunctivitis, and other communicable diseases

It is normal during the course of the school year for outbreaks of head lice, conjunctivitis (“pink eye”), or other communicable problems to occur. In the event that these problems occur, parents are urged to contact the school immediately so that precautions may be taken. Anyone can contract these problems, and they are not a reflection on the cleanliness of the child or the home. The most important factor about these communicable problems is how they are treated once their presence is known.

In the case of head lice, parents must immediately use one of the over-the-counter shampoos or rinses to kill the lice and then remove any nits found. They must also disinfect all bedding, stuffed animals, coats, hats, etc. that were used by the child. The child should be kept at home until all nits have been removed. When the child returns to school, he/she should report to the principal for examination. The box from the shampoo or rinse that was used should also be brought to the principal. When a report of head lice is received, other children in the class are usually checked. In the case of conjunctivitis (“pink eye”), or other communicable rashes or infections, parents must obtain a prescription from their physician, and the child must be on medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Frequent hand washing and avoidance of the infected area are advised.

Accidents and Illnesses

It is of absolute importance that emergency contact information for each child is current. If a child becomes ill or is the victim of an accident during the school day, the office will contact the parent or person indicated as an emergency contact. No child will ever be sent home or to an empty house without the parent's knowledge and permission.

Medication at School

If it becomes necessary for a student to take medication (prescription or non-prescription) during the school day, the parent and doctor must complete a medication form found in the school office. Only authorized school forms will be accepted. In addition, if the prescription medicine is to be administered, the medicine needs to be sent to school in a current prescription vial with the directions

for dosage on the label. Non-prescription medicines must be in their original containers. For the protection of the students and staff, no exceptions to this policy will be considered. If a child is on medication and the parent wishes to come to school to administer the medication, he/she may do so. If, however, the parent wishes that a school personnel supervise the child taking any medicine, the above rules must be followed. All medication must be kept in the school office with the possible exception of an inhaler or an Epi-Pen. Any prescription medications found in a student's possession during the school day will be considered in violation of the school policies concerning drug abuse. Parents will be responsible for retrieving the unused medicine from the school at the end of the treatment schedule. Medicine not claimed by the parents will be discarded. If a child has a medical problem, parents are expected to inform the school so that personnel can be prepared to assist the child in an emergency.

UNIFORM DRESS CODE

The students of St. Mary's Catholic School in Pontiac have the honor of wearing a uniform to school. The uniform is an outward sign to the community that signifies how highly valued education is to the parents and students of our school. Students should wear the uniform with pride and respect for the long tradition of Catholic education at St. Mary's. If, due to an emergency, it is necessary for a child to come to school without the entire uniform, the child should bring a note from home as to the reason he/she is unable to wear the entire uniform.

St. Mary's School has a uniform dress code to establish a business-like atmosphere in the classroom. It is mandatory that parents support this dress code. They should see that children leave their homes well-groomed and in uniform. There is a correlation between the pride students take in their appearance and the pride they take in their schoolwork and in their school.

Boys' Uniform

- Navy blue or khaki cotton, polyester, or corduroy pants (no jeans, cargo pants, hip hugger pants, or sweatpants are permitted)
- Belts must be worn if pants have belt loops.
- White or navy blue (long or short-sleeved) polo shirts. Turtlenecks or mock turtlenecks may also be worn. Shirts should be tucked in at all times. No T-shirts or shirts with emblems are allowed.
- Solid navy blue, khaki, black, or white socks must be worn with pants and shorts.; they may have a logo on them. No patterned socks allowed.
- A plain navy cardigan or school-designated crew neck sweatshirt may be worn over the uniform if desired. Hoodies may not be worn in the classroom as part of the uniform

Girls' Uniform

- A navy blue or khaki scooter style skirt (with built-in shorts) OR a solid navy blue or khaki jumper (with shorts underneath). Skirts and jumpers should be of modest length (no shorter than two inches above the knee). Girls may wear solid navy or black leggings under skirts in cold weather.
- Girls also have the option of wearing navy blue or khaki slacks with a belt (no jeans, cargo pants, jeggings/leggings, or sweatpants are permitted).
- Belts must be worn if pants have belt loops.
- White or navy blue (long or short-sleeved) knit polo shirts. Turtlenecks or mock turtlenecks may also be worn. Shirts should be tucked in at all times. No T-shirts or shirts with emblems are allowed.
- Solid navy blue, khaki, black, or white socks must be worn with skirts, jumpers, Capri pants, and shorts; they may have a logo on them. In place of socks, girls may also wear solid navy, khaki, black, or white knee socks or tights. No patterned socks allowed.
- A plain navy cardigan or school-designated crew neck sweatshirt may be worn over the uniform. Hoodies may not be worn in the classroom as part of the uniform.

Hot Weather Dress

During the Fall and Spring, both boys and girls have the option of wearing navy blue or khaki walking shorts (no cargo shorts) with their uniform shirts. Times will be at the discretion of the principal. The shorts must be no higher than three inches above the top of the knee on both boys and girls. Girls may also choose to wear uniform-style Capri pants in navy blue or khaki. If the shorts have a belt loop, a belt must be worn. White, khaki, black, or navy socks must be worn.

Physical Education Uniform

Students in Grades 4 through 8 will wear a P.E. uniform consisting of light blue T-shirts, plain navy gym shorts, white or navy socks, and tennis shoes. No emblems should be worn on clothing. **P. E. shorts should be no shorter than three inches above the knee.**

Additional Dress Code Requirements

- Shoes: For safety's sake, no flip-flops or sandals are allowed. These rules apply on field trips and casual days. In colder months, snow boots should not be worn during the school day except for recess. Dress/casual boots (Ugg style) may not be worn with shorts.
- Hair: Hair is not to cover the eyebrows of students. Moreover, boys are not to have their hair long enough to touch their collar, nor are they to have their hair longer than midway's length on the ear. Hair coloring and unnatural or attention-seeking hairstyles are not allowed. The principal will make the final decision if a hairstyle is not satisfactory.
- Make-up: The use of age-appropriate or natural make-up during the school day or to school events is acceptable, but not encouraged.
- Jewelry: Tasteful jewelry will be allowed. Long, dangling earrings or noisy or excessive jewelry should not be worn. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.
- Body Piercing and Tattoos: No body piercing or tattoos are allowed. The principal may make decisions regarding other "fads" as problems occur.

(Diocesan Policy D-155)

In accordance with Illinois Public Act 102-0360 (SB817), no diocesan school shall prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists. Students who disrupt the educational process or compromise standards of health and safety will be asked to modify their appearance. Revised: 8/2022

Casual Clothes Days

For an announced casual clothes day, students may wear jeans, sweatshirts, sweatpants, T-shirts, and so on. Shorts and capri pants are only allowed when announced by the principal. For the sake of modesty, any shorts, including those worn for P.E. and/or as part of the uniform, should be no shorter than three inches above the knee. Emblems supporting drug or alcohol use or containing obscenities or material in poor taste are never allowed. Bike shorts, jeggings/leggings, or other immodest articles of clothing are not allowed. T-shirts must be worn under tank tops.

Compliance with Uniform Policy

Teachers are to monitor student dress to see that it is in accordance with the dress code described in this handbook. If a student's dress does not conform to the code, the following actions will be taken:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Written Warning
3. Contact with parent by email or phone call
4. Conference with parent and child (at this point it is considered insubordination and detentions will follow)

LUNCH AND RECESS

Children may bring a cold lunch to eat at St. Mary's, or order a hot lunch from Central School . If a child eats elsewhere, the school requests the parent must come into the office to sign the child out for the lunch period. In these cases, parents must assume the entire responsibility for the safety and the conduct of their children. Those who bring lunch from home will eat in the multi-purpose room. They are not to leave the school grounds without permission from the principal. Students may purchase milk or orange drink each day that lunch is served.

Prices

Well-balanced meals are served daily at the Central School cafeteria for those who wish to eat a hot lunch. All lunch money is to be paid in Facts Management.

Lunch prices for 2023-2024: Grades K-8: \$3.20 Adults: \$4.00 Milk: \$.35

Lunch Money is paid online through Facts Management. This is a prepay account and should not have a negative balance.

MPR Rules

Since the lunch hour is short and there are many students to serve, the school asks that children talk quietly while they eat and do not leave their seats without permission from a supervisor. Our objective is to maintain a quiet, cheerful lunchroom with an atmosphere conducive to polite behavior and healthy eating. The children are in the lunchroom for approximately twenty (20) minutes. Students are asked to abide by the following rules in the lunchroom:

- There should be no running in the lunchroom.
- There should be no throwing of food, paper, etc.
- Students should talk quietly until dismissed.
- Students must stay in their seats unless they receive permission from a supervisor.
- Students may use the restroom with permission, but no more than two students will be allowed at a time.
- Students may not get up to discard garbage until their table is dismissed.
- Balls, jump ropes, etc. must be stored on the stage during lunch
- All students are required to show respect for each other and for all supervisors and staff.

Parental Lunch Duty

Parents may volunteer to help with lunch duty. We ask parents to contact the office if they are able to supervise during the lunch hours.

Lunch times are: K-4th 12:05-12:35 pm and 5th-8th 12:05-12:25 pm

Recess times are: K-4th 11:40 am-12:05 pm and 5th-8th Grades 12:25-12:40 pm

Playground Rules

The following playground rules are to be followed:

- No food (including candy and gum) or drinks should be taken onto the playground.
- A supervisor must oversee the retrieval of balls from the street.

- Students should not return to the building unless they have permission from a supervisor or they have an injury. Supervisors should report any serious injuries to the office immediately.
- Only approved playground balls or Nerf balls may be used on the playground.
- Rough play, unacceptable language, obscene gestures, and un-Christian behavior are not allowed.
- Supervisors should report to the principal any students who consistently misbehave on the playground.
- All students are required to show respect for each other and for all supervisors and staff.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

Birthday Treats

Students are allowed to bring birthday treats for their classmates. If parents have any questions about the best time or the best type of treats, they should contact their child's teacher. Students with summer birthdays are welcome to choose a date during the school year on which to celebrate their birthday with their classmates.

Dances

Dances at St. Mary's School are for students in Grades 5 through 8. The following are points to be observed:

1. Four adult chaperones who have completed the Safe Environment Program must be present.
2. Appropriate dress must be worn.
3. Once a student leaves the gym, he/she may not return to the dance.
4. An admission fee will be optional, depending on the purpose of the dance.
- 5.. Parents will be informed of the time the dance will begin and end.
6. Cell phones are not permitted at school dances. If brought, they must be left with the advisor and will be returned at the conclusion of the dance.

Electronic Devices (Cell Phone/Smart Watches)

Students with cell phones or other electronic devices must have them off and in book bags during school hours from time of arrival to 3:00 p.m. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. If a student is caught using a cell phone or other electronic device during the school day, the item will be confiscated, and parents will be contacted regarding the problem. The phone or electronic device will be held until picked up by a parent.

The following discipline shall be used for violations of this policy:

- A. Cell Phone Rings While in Bookbag: The first occurrence in any quarter shall result in a verbal warning to the student. The second occurrence and each additional occurrence in any quarter shall result in a detention as provided in the Discipline section of this Handbook.
- B. Use of Phone or Possession on Student's Person During School Hours: Each and every occurrence shall result in a detention as provided in the Discipline section of this Handbook.

Field Trips

On occasion, teachers may request that their class be allowed to travel away from the school for educational purposes. Field trips are a privilege, not a right, of each student. Participation in a school or class field trip may be denied if a student is not meeting academic or behavior standards. Various forms mandated by the Diocese are required to be completed by parents in order for students to participate. In consideration for a child's allowance to make a trip, parents agree to release, secure, and hold harmless the Diocese, parish, school, and their employees and agents, and the volunteers assisting the school or parish, from any and all liability for injuries, damages, medical expenses, or any other loss to the child or family (including attorneys' fees) arising from or related to the child's participation in the activity.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Access to the School Building

All doors will be locked during the school day. Access to the main building will be through the security system installed on the Main Street door near the office and on the old gym doors. All parents and visitors must check in at the school office upon entering the building. The inside art room door will also be locked throughout the day. Teachers, coaches, staff, and organization head officers will receive key fobs for the security system as needed. These are not to be transferred for use by any other person. Coaches are to turn in their keys at the end of their season. The school grounds are reserved for the use of school or parish sponsored activities. Any other use must be approved by the pastor.

Access to School Records

“Education record” means records, files, documents, and other materials which contain information directly related to a student and which are maintained by the school or by a person acting on behalf of the school. It does not include the records of instructional, supervisory, and administrative personnel which are in the sole possession of the maker and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a substitute. Parents or legal guardians of a St. Mary’s School student, may request access to the education records of their children within a reasonable period of time not to exceed 45 days after the request has been made. Parents have the right to a hearing by the school to challenge the content of their child’s education records. This may be done in order to ensure that the records are not inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the rights of the child, and to provide an opportunity for the correction or deletion of such records.

St. Mary’s School will maintain a record in each student’s file of all individuals, agencies, or organizations which have requested or obtained access to the student’s education records. The record will also specifically indicate the legitimate interest that each person, agency, or organization has in obtaining this information. This record of access will only be available to parents, the principal, the staff assigned to prepare and maintain the records, and the educational or governmental agencies authorized to audit the record-keeping system.

Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Any student who possesses, uses, distributes, or is under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs on school property or at a school-related function will be subject to the following actions:

1. FIRST OFFENSE - a two-day suspension from school with appropriate help being recommended to the student and family.
2. SECOND OFFENSE - school expulsion may be used with appropriate help being recommended to the student and family.

Any student who brings look-alike drugs or alcoholic substances on school property to school related functions may be subject to these punishments as well. The principal will have recourse to other actions based upon the specific circumstances of each case.

Asbestos Management Plan

Asbestos in non-friable form exists in St. Mary’s School. It is inspected every six months by school personnel. Parents have the right to examine the Asbestos Management Plan on file in the school office.

Authority

The immediate direction of the school and its instructional program is delegated to the principal. Whenever a problem arises concerning a child, the FIRST person to be contacted is the classroom teacher. If the difficulty persists or cannot be handled at this level, it should be presented to the principal. St. Mary's School follows the conflict-resolution policies of the Diocese of Peoria. In the event that a problem cannot be solved through the principal, please contact the school office for a copy of the conflict-resolution policy to be followed.

Confidentiality

The faculty and staff of St. Mary's School are mandated to maintain the confidentiality of personal, academic, health, and financial records. Parents, the custodial parent, or the legal guardian will be involved in any decisions to share information with District #429 or the Livingston County Special Services Unit in the event that their child requires special services. Teachers and administrators will keep confidential information entrusted to them as long as no one's life, health, and/or safety is at stake. Moreover, confidential information is entrusted with teachers and administrators as mandated by law and Diocesan policies in regard to the "Safe Environment" program.

Use of Student Information and Pictures

St. Mary's School takes photographs and makes video/audio recordings of students in school activities. Photographs and recordings may be shared via (including but not limited to): school & church bulletins and newsletters, publications, advertising materials, school yearbook, local & Diocesan newspapers, school & church website, social media, and school & church YouTube channels. In the registration packet, parents are asked to declare if their child's photo, video, and/or name can be shared.

Crisis Plan

St. Mary's School has a crisis plan which was developed in conjunction with local police agencies and Pontiac School District #429. The plan outlines emergency situations and contingencies and is reviewed and updated annually.

Custody Issues

In cases where the custody of a child resides with only one parent or is shared by separated or divorced parents, a copy of the custody agreement or court order should be placed in the child's school records so that school officials are aware of the arrangement. In cases where a child is not allowed to be picked up from school by one of the parents, a written statement signed and dated by the custodial parent must be presented to the school principal.

Diocesan Policies

St. Mary's School follows Diocesan Policies D-147 Bullying, C-401 Harassment, C-402 Sexual Abuse Allegations, and C-407 Code of Pastoral Conduct. Copies of these policies can be found at cdop.org.

Faith's Law and Code of Conduct

The second legislation, Public Act 102-0702, will take effect on July 1, 2023. It focuses on the prevention of "sexual misconduct" as defined in the first part of the legislation (Public Act 102-0676) by school employees, substitute employees, and employees of contractors. Specifically, the Act adds employment history reviews as part of the hiring and vetting process, requires notices to be provided to parents/guardians and the applicable student when there's an alleged act of sexual misconduct, and makes other changes to the process schools must follow when handling allegations of sexual misconduct. Public Act 102-0702 also adds that if a district superintendent has any reasonable cause to believe a license holder has committed an act of sexual misconduct, the superintendent must report

this information to the state superintendent of education and the applicable regional superintendent of schools. Further, the state superintendent can initiate the process to revoke or suspend a license, endorsement, or approval issued under Article 21B for reasons including sexual misconduct. The ultimate goals of Public Act 102-0702 are to give parents/guardians notice regarding allegations of sexual misconduct that involve their student; equip schools across Illinois with better information regarding the employment history of an applicant or employee of a contractor; give schools the resources necessary to make well-informed decisions about who they are employing/contracting with; and protect students from acts of sexual misconduct by school employees, substitute employees, and employees of contractors.

School Employee Code of Professional Conduct - Diocesan Policy C-411

Pursuant to Illinois's Faith's Law requirements, the Diocese of Peoria adopts this Code of Professional Conduct for School Employees. Each of the provisions below is contained in existing policies and rules of the Diocese of Peoria, but are restated as a Code of Conduct for School Employees to comply with the law. Each school is required pursuant to Faith's Law to post this Code of Professional Conduct for School Employees on the school's website and to publish this document in the school's parent/family/student handbook, if the school has one.

I. Educator Code of Conduct

Pursuant to recent Illinois law, the Diocese adopts the relevant portions of the Illinois Educator Code of Conduct, as follows, which applies to school employees who are certified or working toward certification or whose certification has been waived:

Principle 1: Responsibility to Students. Educators are committed to creating, promoting, and implementing a learning environment that enables students to achieve their highest academic potential, and to succeed as a responsible member of society. They are committed to embodying standards of professionalism in the learning environment; respecting the inherent dignity and worth of each student by assuring that the learning environment is characterized by respect for each student; maintaining a professional relationship with students at all times; providing a curriculum based on high expectations for students; and fostering in each student the development of attributes that will enhance skills and knowledge necessary to be a contributing member of society.

Principle 2: Responsibility to Self. Educators are committed to establishing high professional standards and striving to meet these standards through their performance. They are committed to assuming responsibility and accountability for their performance and striving to demonstrate proficiency and currency in both content knowledge and professional practice; developing and implementing personal and professional goals with attention to professional standards through a process of self-assessment and professional development; representing their professional credentials and qualifications accurately; and using sound professional judgment.

Principle 3: Responsibility to Colleagues and the Profession. Educators are committed to collaborating with school and Diocesan colleagues and other professionals in the interest of student learning and to meet state educational standards; working together to create a respectful, professional and supportive school climate for educators to maintain their individual professional integrity; seeking out and engaging in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession; encouraging promising candidates to enter the education profession; and supporting the preparation, induction, mentoring and professional development of educators.

Principle 4: Responsibility to School Parents and Families. Educators are committed to collaborating, striving to build trust, and respecting confidentiality with school parents and

families striving to develop and maintain professional relationships with school parents and families; and promoting collaboration and supporting student learning through communication with parents and families.

Principle 5: Responsibility to the ISBE. Educators are committed to supporting the Administrative and School Codes as applicable to Catholic schools, state and federal laws and regulations as applicable to Catholic schools, and the Illinois State Board of Education's standards for highly qualified educators, as applicable to Catholic schools. They are committed to providing accurate communication to the Illinois State Board of Education concerning all certification matters; maintaining appropriate certification for employment; and complying with the state and federal codes, laws, and regulations that apply to Catholic schools.

Any employee who sexually harasses a student, willfully or negligently fails to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), engages in grooming as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25, engages in grooming behaviors, violates boundaries for appropriate school employee- student conduct, engages in sexual misconduct as defined in 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5, or otherwise violates an employee conduct standard will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. The Catholic Diocese of Peoria and its associated schools have no tolerance for any unprofessional conduct.

II. Sexual misconduct

The Diocese's Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults: Education, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry/Employment, prohibits sexual abuse of minors by its employees, clergy members, and volunteers. Pursuant to Faith's Law, the Diocese has amended its Norms to add additional description of acts constituting sexual abuse of a minor:

I. Sexual misconduct, defined by Faith's Law as any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity directed toward or with a minor for the purpose of establishing a romantic or sexual relationship with the minor, including but not limited to a sexual or romantic invitation; dating or soliciting a date; engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog; making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a minor; self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature; and/or a sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the minor (Illinois' Faith's Law, Public Act 102- 0676, (105 ILCS 5/22-85.5).

II. Grooming behavior, defined by Faith's Law and the Illinois Criminal Code as knowingly using a computer online service, internet service, local bulletin board service, or any other device capable of electronic data storage or transmission, or performs an act in person or by conduct through a third party, or uses written communication to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, or attempt to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, a child, or another person believed by the person to be a child, to commit any sex offense as defined in Section 2 of the Sex Offender Registration Act, to distribute photographs depicting the sex organs of the child, or to otherwise engage in any unlawful sexual conduct with a child or with another person believed by the person to be a child.

III. Expectations of School Employees

School employees are expected to maintain professional relationships and boundaries, recognizing the age and the developmental levels of the students with whom they interact.

1. Employees are strictly prohibited from using any form of communication with students (e-mails, letters, notes, text messages, phone calls, conversations) that includes any subject

matter that would be deemed unprofessional and/or inappropriate between an employee and student.

2. Employees are not permitted to transport students in the employee's privately owned vehicle, unless the employee has obtained the prior permission of the Principal to do so.

3. Employees are not permitted to take or possess a photo or video of a student on their private devices that would be construed as inappropriate.

4. Employees are expected to maintain a professional relationship in all interactions, both in and out of school.

IV. School employees are mandated reporters

The Diocese restates here the Diocese's requirement that its employees, including employees who work at diocesan elementary schools and high schools, shall report suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Pursuant to the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, (325 ILCS 5/4), school employees are required to make a report suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services by calling the hotline number at 1-800- 25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873) whenever the employee has reasonable cause to believe that a child known to the employee in the employee's professional or official capacity may be abused or neglected.

V. Employee training related to child abuse and educator ethics

The Diocese requires its employees be trained annually in their obligations as mandated reporters and every three years to be trained in preventing, detecting and responding properly to sexual harassment. The trainings are entitled *DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters*; and the *State of Illinois' Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training*. Those requirements are set forth in the *Diocese's Employee Handbook* and in the *Diocese's Safe Environment Requirements for Clergy, Adult/Teen Employees and Volunteers* whose role involves direct contact with minors. The Diocese will require its school employee educators to receive training in educator ethics. When those resources are completed, they will be shared with educators.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

All use of the Internet shall be consistent with St. Mary's goal of promoting educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. This authorization does not attempt to state all required or prescribed behavior by users.

St. Mary's School supports the use of computers and the Internet in its instructional program. This will allow the school to facilitate access to information, research, collaboration, and interpersonal communications. The use of computer hardware and software shall be consistent with the Catholic identity of our school, reinforce the curriculum, and reflect the varied instructional needs and learning styles of our students. Students and staff are expected to act in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the moral principles of the Catholic Church. Students and staff will also act according to the accepted rules of network etiquette as well as federal and state law.

The availability of electronic information to students and staff does not imply endorsement of the content by St. Mary's School. St. Mary's School does not guarantee the accuracy of information received on the Internet. Additionally, St. Mary's School shall not be responsible for any information that is retrieved via the Internet or information that may be lost, damaged, or unavailable when using its computers. To the greatest extent possible, users of the Internet will be protected from harassment as well as unwanted or unsolicited communication. Any user who

receives threatening or unwelcoming communications should immediately bring them to the attention of a teacher or administrator. Users shall not reveal personal addresses or telephone numbers to other users on the network or the Internet.

Terms and Conditions

1. **Acceptable Use:** Access to the Internet must be for the purpose of education or research and must be consistent with the educational objectives of St. Mary's School.
2. **Privileges:** The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges.
3. **Unacceptable Use:** A student is responsible for actions and activities involving the Internet network. Some examples of unacceptable uses are:

- a. Using the Internet for any illegal activity, including violation of copyright or other contracts This includes the transmission of any material in violation of a US or state regulation.
- b. Unauthorized downloading of software.
- c. Downloading copyrighted material for other than personal use.
- d. Wastefully using resources, such as file space.
- e. Gaining unauthorized access to resources or entities.
- f. Invading the privacy of individuals.
- g. Using another user's account and password.
- h. Possessing material authorized or created by another without his/her consent.
- i. Posting anonymous messages.
- j. Accessing, submitting, posting, publishing, or displaying any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, gang-related, or illegal material.
- k. Gaining access to chat rooms.
- l. Using any computer without permission of a teacher.
- m. Accessing the Internet without permission of a teacher.
- n. Using e-mail without permission of a teacher.

4. **Network Etiquette:** You are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Be polite; do not become abusive in messages to others.
- b. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities, or use any other inappropriate language.
- c. Do not reveal the personal addresses or telephone numbers of students or colleagues.
- d. Recognize that email is not private. Those who operate the system have access to all mail. Messages relating to, or in support of, illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- e. Do not use the network in any way that would disrupt its use by other users.
- f. Consider all communications and network information to be private property.

5. **Compensation:** The user agrees to compensate St. Mary's School for any losses, costs, or damages. These include, but are not limited to reasonable attorney fees, incurred by St. Mary's School, or arising out of any violation of these procedures.

6. **Vandalism:** Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges and other disciplinary action. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the Internet, or the computer lab. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

7. **Telephone Charges:** St. Mary's School assumes no responsibility for any unauthorized charges or fees, including telephone charges, long-distance charges, per-minute surcharges, and/or equipment or line charges.

Consequences for Inappropriate Use

The user shall be responsible for deliberate damages to equipment, systems, and software. Illegal use of the network, intentional deletion or damage to other's files, copyright violations, or theft of services is punishable. These violations will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary actions, and/or a report to the appropriate legal authorities for possible prosecution. Signatures at the end of this document are legally binding and indicate that the parties who have signed have read the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance. All parents, students, teachers, and staff will be required to sign-off on this policy. The computer teacher will review the policy with each class at the beginning of each school year.

Safe Environment Program

In cooperation with The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Diocese of Peoria has mandated that all priests, teachers, staff members, coaches/sponsors, and volunteers, including chaperones, who work in any way with children in our school must meet three requirements:

- Have an account with CMG Connect <https://peoria.cmgconnect.org/>
- Undergo a criminal background check (fingerprinting)
- Have a Department of Children and Family Services background check (CANT form) These mandates must be met before working with students.

Smoke Free Environment

The use of tobacco by any school personnel, student, or other person is prohibited within the St. Mary's School building on school grounds when students are present.

Tobacco is defined as cigarette, cigar, or tobacco in any other form, including smokeless tobacco that is intended to be placed in the mouth without being smoked.

Weapons

St. Mary's School is mandated to follow Diocesan Policy D-150, entitled "Possession or Use of Weapons or Look Alike Weapons in School." The policy is as follows:

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Peoria teach and uphold the sanctity of human life. Virtues such as respect for others, peacemaking, and self-discipline are foundations of Catholic education. Furthermore, a safe academic and social environment is essential for learning and Christian formation. The possession or use of weapons not only disrupts the school's learning environment, it fundamentally violates the sanctity of human life by threatening the very health and safety of teachers and students. Therefore, diocesan schools have zero tolerance towards weapons. It is strictly forbidden for any student to possess, use, attempt to use, manufacture, distribute, purchase, trade or sell (or seek the sale or trade of) any weapon on school premises or at any school-related activity or function, including but not limited to travel to and from school and/or school-related functions. Possession means having a weapon on one's person or in an area subject to the student's control such as desks, lockers, backpacks, and vehicles. Any student possessing, using, attempting to use, manufacturing, distributing, purchasing, trading or selling (or seeking the sale or trade of) weapons at school or any school-related function shall, at the discretion of the pastor and principal, be subject to immediate expulsion.

Weapons are defined as any object, device, or instrument that has been designed, created, adapted or used for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, and/or inflicting physical injury (including but not limited to anything which resembles such items). Weapons include:

- Any firearm or ammunition (pistols, rifles, shotguns)
- Airguns, pellet guns, BB guns, blowguns, slingshots, etc.

- Look-alikes, stun guns, toy guns or other toy weapons, and replicas of weapons · Any knife or blade including switch blades, pocket knives, stilettos, swords, daggers, box cutters, razor blades, etc.
- Any club or club like object including billies, bats, blackjacks, and other bludgeons · Metal knuckles, fused rings, or objects designed to produce similar effects · Martial arts devices including nunchakus, klackers, kung fu sticks, batons, chains, etc. · Projectiles including shurikens and similar pointed starlike objects, arrows, darts, etc. · Mace, tear gas, pepper spray or other propellants
- Explosive devices including fireworks, firecrackers, poppers, cap devices, etc. ·

Poisons

- Armbands, bracelets, etc. that have spikes, points, or studs
- Objects which have been modified to act as or resemble a weapon
- Any article (laser pointers, belts, combs, pencils, scissors, etc.) used to intimidate, threaten, and/or inflict bodily injury

Any student found to be in possession of a weapon shall be immediately suspended from school. The weapon will be confiscated and police officials contacted. Upon notification of the student's parents and administrative review, the student shall be expelled from school. In cases where there are substantial mitigating circumstances, the pastor may impose a suspension rather than an expulsion after consultation with the Superintendent of Schools (especially with students in Grades K-3).

In the event that a student finds a weapon at school or a school-related function, the student shall immediately notify a teacher, coach, or administrator about the weapon's location. In such cases, the student shall not be regarded as possessing a weapon. Teachers or students who require a facsimile of a weapon for a legitimate school/class project must first obtain approval from the principal prior to bringing the item into the school.

Diocesan schools reserve the right to dismiss any student at any time whatsoever for conduct, whether inside or outside of school, that is detrimental to the reputation of the school and/or the continued well-being and safety of students. Catholic Diocese of Peoria Policy, Adopted 4/04

A complete copy of the Diocesan policy and its administrative regulations is available at cdop.org.

PARENTS AND CHAPERONES

Parental Involvement

To obtain an outstanding Catholic education for each of our students, the school must have the support of all parents. When a parent renders service, a parent renders support. This relays a message to the child that education is teamwork, with the team being comprised of the parents, the child, and the school. There is a wealth of educational research that shows a strong positive correlation between students' success in the classroom and the degree of involvement of the parents in school activities.

Close communication should exist between the parents and teachers. Parents should monitor graded school work that is sent home and contact their child's teacher when they have questions. Teachers are urged to alert parents of problems quickly so that school and home can work together to solve them.

Parents are also encouraged to participate in the Teacher-Parent Organization/Boosters (TAPS), which sponsors fundraising, social activities and all extracurricular activities for St. Mary's students. Students directly benefit from the activities of this organization.

In addition, many opportunities exist for volunteers who might help with special projects in the classroom or help with lunch duty supervision. Please contact the school office if you are willing to help with lunch.

Roles and Expectations of Chaperones (Diocesan Policy C-122)

All activities for minors, or where significant numbers of minors will be present without parents, require chaperones. The sponsor of the activity has the responsibility for recognizing this need and for arranging the presence of a reasonable number of adults to act as chaperones throughout the duration of the event. An event shall not take place in the absence of adequate numbers of chaperones. Parents or teachers are preferred chaperones. Individuals under the age of 21 years cannot fulfill the role of chaperone as required by this policy. Chaperones shall be given, at a minimum, the following information before they commit to chaperone an event:

1. A description of the event
2. The expected number of minors to be present
3. The hours the chaperone will commit to be present and act as chaperone
4. The responsibilities and expectations of a chaperone at the event
5. The expected number of other chaperones.

- If an individual commits to act as a chaperone at an event, he or she should be given a number to contact prior to the event if he or she should have any additional questions or if circumstances arise that make attendance impossible. If there is a cancellation by a chaperone, a replacement shall be found within a reasonable time by the event's sponsor.

- Prior to the commencement of the event, the sponsor shall identify to the chaperones an adult to whom the chaperone will be responsible. This person shall give the chaperones guidance as to the facilities, shall assign the chaperones to appropriate posts and duties, and shall visit with the chaperones occasionally during the event to provide temporary breaks, answer questions, and provide any assistance required. This person shall also advise the chaperones as to the following:

1. Where and to whom to report any problems or concerns
2. Any anticipated problems relating to their post or the event.

Catholic Diocese of Peoria Policy Adopted: 9/01, Revised: 1/03; 9/07

ATHLETICS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The St. Mary's School extracurricular program is devoted to the overall enrichment of our students' spiritual, moral, academic, physical, and social development. Its purpose is to increase each student's self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect through participation in a variety of activities and to help each student to apply Christian principles in all aspects of their lives.

This program recognizes certain requirements of students, coaches/sponsors, and parents to achieve these goals. Without participation and cooperation of all three parties, this program would not exist. Each student, their parents, and coaches/sponsors in the St. Mary's School extracurricular program must understand that their participation is a privilege. This privilege is earned through certain academic requirements of players/participants as well as exhibiting exemplary character during, as well as outside of, a competition.

This extracurricular program will strive toward excellence in every activity through an underlying philosophy of teamwork, good sportsmanship, and character. These are the driving principles that govern all extracurricular activities at St. Mary's. As per Diocesan and school policy, all games or activities should begin and end with a team prayer, and coaches/sponsors are encouraged to begin each practice with a prayer.

The rules and requirements of this handbook are designed to give all coaches/sponsors the necessary information to have a successful experience with their students. Any changes in this handbook by the administration will be promptly communicated to all involved parties. The "Diocese of Peoria Athletic Handbook for Elementary Schools" takes precedence over all local handbooks in the event of a conflict. The following rules and regulations will govern the program:

Participation

St. Mary's School students will be allowed to participate in the following available sports if all rules and regulations are met:

- Boys Baseball: Grades 6-8*
- Boys Basketball: Grades 5-8*
- Girls Basketball: Grades 5-8*
- Girls Cheerleading: Grades 6-8*
- Girls Softball: Grades 6-8*
- Girls Volleyball: Grades 5-8*
- Golf Grades: 6-8 (one day in the Fall, there is NO coach)*

Depending on the number of students playing, participation may be offered to students in lower grades. Numbers will be evaluated for each sport every year.

St. Mary's students may also participate in track and field and cross country with the Pontiac Junior High School students. This option is offered for boys and girls in Grades 5-8.

The following extracurricular activities are also available:

- Scholastic Bowl Team: Grades 5-8
- Speech Team: Grades 5-8
- Student Council: Grades 5-8

Players will be members of the team and will get some playing time throughout the year (the exact amount of time to be determined by the coaches). Coaches are expected to practice with all team members.

If at all possible, players of St. Mary's School sports teams will play at their own grade level. If there is a shortage of students as determined by the coach and athletic directors, the principal and athletic director(s), in consultation with the coach, will make any decisions to move students up to the next level. This decision will be made at the beginning of the season. As a general rule, extra players will not be added to a team's roster for the state tournament series. If an emergency situation arises, such as an injury, a flu epidemic, ineligibility, etc., and a player is brought up for the state tournament series, he/she will not play unless there are not enough upper grade players to field a team. As a general rule, students who are moved up to a higher level will stay with that team for the whole season, including tournaments. In other words, athletes are not able to return to lower level teams for tournaments. However, exceptions may be made by the principal and athletic director(s) if special circumstances warrant. Students and their parents have the choice of not moving up. In case of temporary lack of numbers due to illness, injuries, or ineligibility, a coach may bring a player up for one game but must notify the principal and/or an athletic director. In accordance with IESA rules, 6th grade players who are playing on a 7th grade team must follow all IESA rules including counting quarters/games played during the designated season toward their season quarters/games total.

Academic Eligibility

All students participating in competitive and/or IESA-sponsored events must meet the eligibility rules of St. Mary's School in order to compete and/or participate in contests. The following rules will govern eligibility at St. Mary's School:

- Eligibility will be determined through Facts on Fridays or the last morning of the school week. Eligibility will be computed for the first time at the conclusion of the week one of the grading period taking into consideration if there are less than three grades in the gradebook.
- The office will send a letter home with the child on Friday informing the parents of the child's ineligibility. Only students who have a D or F average in one or more subjects will receive a letter. Only F averages make a student ineligible. Parents and coaches will be informed of D average grades so that the student can be encouraged to raise the grade before ineligibility occurs.
- The student must return the letter, signed by a parent, on the following Monday (or the first day of the school week) at 8am. Students who fail to return the letter will be given a one day grace period. A ten minute detention with the teacher will be given each day thereafter.
- A list of those who are ineligible will be left in the office for each coach on the last day of the school week.
- Eligibility will run from Monday through Sunday.
- If a student is ineligible, the player cannot play or practice but must be present for games or events. The player must sit with the team but will not dress in uniform. The player's presence at practices will be determined by the coach.
- Eligibility is cumulative for the nine-week grading period. At the beginning of a nine week period, only a few grades in a subject area may determine whether a student is eligible. Therefore, students should take extra care in completing work.
- If a student is ineligible for three weeks in a season, the player is off the team for the season except that students showing significant improvement may be permitted to continue to participate as determined jointly by the principal and teachers.
- In case of serious misconduct, the principal may suspend a student from games and practices immediately. Parents and coaches will be notified.

Admission Fees

Charges for admission to all events will be as follows (unless otherwise required by IESA):

- Adults: \$3.00
- High School Students/Senior Citizens: \$2.00
- K-8 Students: Free
- Preschool Age: Free

Athlete Forms and Certificates

All athletes, including cheerleaders, must turn in sports physicals, insurance statements, and emergency forms and must provide copies of their birth certificates. These items must be on file in the school office before the first practice.

Athlete Insurance

Any St. Mary's School student who intends to participate in the sports program will be required to be insured either through a family policy or through the student insurance offered at registration in the fall.

Athlete Attendance

Any player at school during the day and not in attendance at a scheduled practice or game must inform the coach prior to the practice or game and present an excuse signed by the parent upon

return. Any player must be in attendance at school by 10:30 a.m. to play in a game on that day. An exception is an excused absence pre-arranged with the principal. Students participating in practices or events may not be in the building without an adult supervisor present.

A coach will determine whether an absence from a game or practice is excused or unexcused. Unexcused absences may be punishable as follows:

- First unexcused absence - suspended from the next game.
 - Second unexcused absence - suspended from the next two games.
 - Third unexcused absence - dismissed from the team.
- (Note: Suspended students may still practice with the team.)

Athlete Medical Excuses

A doctor's medical excuse from PE is automatically an excuse from athletic practice and games unless the doctor specifies that the student may participate. The excuse is in effect until a release from the doctor is received by the school.

Athletic Uniforms

The school, through the athletic department, will provide uniforms for school athletic teams and cheerleaders. The uniform will consist of a basic top and bottom. All other items must be purchased by the participant. All uniforms must be returned at the conclusion of the season. Coaches are responsible for inventorying uniforms and storing them in the athletic closet. Uniforms not returned will result in student report cards being withheld. Families will be billed for uniforms not returned by the end of the school year.

Coaches may choose to order personalized jerseys when approved by TAPS. Parents will pay for said jerseys that students will keep at the conclusion of the season. Income-eligible families who are receiving tuition assistance can contact the Principal and request that TAPS pay for their child's personalized jersey. The names of students receiving scholarships are confidential and will not be given to coaches or TAPS Officers.

Coaching Decisions

Coaches/Sponsors are assigned to their positions because of their expertise in that area. They are in charge of decisions regarding strategy, playing time, and so on as long as their decisions follow the guidelines of this handbook and the "Diocese of Peoria Athletic Handbook for Elementary Schools." Players/participants should not be placed in the position of making team decisions regarding these issues.

Code of Conduct for Coaches and Sponsors

- No form of corporal punishment may be used, including but not limited to hitting, pushing, pinching, and so on.
- No form of harassment may be used, including but not limited to name-calling, improper touching, verbal abuse, leaving someone out of an activity, and so on.
- Coaches/sponsors should use only positive reinforcement teaching methods and recognize that coaching is teaching.
- Coaches/sponsors should teach their students to use only legitimate and ethical strategies in competition.
- Coaches/sponsors should remind their students that academic work comes first and extracurricular activities come second.
- Coaches/sponsors should make sure that obscene language and other offenses against honesty and decency are not allowed at any time during their activity.

- Coaches/sponsors should help players/participants to understand that they are all members of a team working toward a common goal.
- Coaches/sponsors are required to conduct themselves, and their program, in a manner consistent with Christian values and leadership. Abusive behavior and/or profane language will not be tolerated.
- If a coach/sponsor chooses to take disciplinary measures towards members of his/her team or activity, the measures should not be excessive or degrading and should follow the discipline policies of St. Mary's School.
- Coaches/sponsors shall not be permitted to be "friends" with their athletes/participants on any form of social media.

Complementary Admission to Home Games

To encourage their interest in the school athletic program, the following categories of personnel will be granted free admission to home games: St. Mary's Parish priests; the administrator, faculty, staff and their spouses; athletic director(s) and spouses; concession stand chairpersons and their spouses; coaches and their spouses; administrators, coaches, and athletic directors from other schools; and all St. Mary's students.

Concession Service Policy

All parents of children that are involved in extracurricular activities (including sports, cheerleading, Student Council, Scholastic Bowl Team, Speech Team) are required as part of their parental duty to serve at the concession counter during ball games. A parent may also be assigned to assist with supervision, scorekeeping, timing, etc. as necessary.

One named head coach and one named assistant coach per sport and their families are exempt from serving concessions during any event at any age level during the season that they are coaching. They may, however, volunteer to work concessions during that season if they wish. Coaches and their families will be required to work concessions in the off season when they are not coaching during a particular sport at the time.

As part of TAPS fundraisers, St. Mary's hosts multiple tournaments. All tournaments require additional help, and any parent whose child is involved in an extracurricular activity (other than a coach & family who is coaching during that specific season) can be scheduled to work concessions during tournaments Kevin Casson Memorial, Volleyball Extravaganza, Livingston County Tournaments, or any IESA Regional or Sectional games.

Drinking, Smoking, and Use of Illegal Drugs by Athletes

1. FIRST OFFENSE - Suspension from the team for the remainder of the season.
2. SECOND OFFENSE - Ineligible for sports for the rest of the school year. These rules are in effect from the beginning of the school year to the end of the school year. Reports must be eye-witness accounts by a St. Mary's employee (including faculty, staff, custodians, coaches, and athletic directors). Reports from law enforcement officers will also be accepted. The principal may also use other sanctions based on the circumstances of each case.

IESA

All coaches/sponsors and athletes must follow the rules set forth in the IESA Handbook. The Handbook may be found at <http://www.iesa.org/documents/handbook/IESA-Handbook.pdf>

Keys

Coaches/Sponsors and their assistants will be issued a key fob for the security system located on the Main Street and outer gym doors. They will also receive a key to the athletic storage closet and outer office. Keys are never to be copied or given to unauthorized users.

Medical Provisions

A first-aid kit must accompany every athletic team to away events. First-aid supplies will be available in the school for home games. Coaches/sponsors will also carry emergency medical forms to all events. All athletic coaches are required to attend the first-aid presentation arranged by the athletic director(s) at the beginning of each school year. Some students with asthma or other breathing problems need to have their inhalers near at all times. Older students may carry this on their person for non-athletic events, but athletes should put inhalers in the hands of the coach during play so that it is not left unattended. For serious injuries, medical information on the emergency medical forms should be followed, including calling 911 if an ambulance is needed. If a student is excused from P.E. for a medical reason, he or she is automatically excused from athletics. Any exception to this rule would be by doctor's orders only and in consultation with the principal.

Pep Assemblies

Pep assemblies for athletic events will follow these guidelines:

*Sectional Championship – 15 minute pep assembly at the end of the school day

*State Tournament:

~20 minute pep assembly for the first State game

~20 minute pep assembly for 1st/2nd or 3rd/4th place games

(No pep assemblies will be held for games between the first game and the finals.)

~Team members may wear jerseys with uniform bottoms on pep assembly days. All other students will be in uniform.

Playing Time

Coaches/sponsors are expected to instruct and practice with all participants, not just those who are starters on a team or in an activity. All players/participants will be members of the team and will get some playing time throughout the season (the exact amount of time to be determined by the coaches/sponsors).

Practice Schedules

The athletic director(s) is responsible for setting up athletic practice schedules for St. Mary's teams. To hold a practice that is not on the schedule, coaches should contact the school office to check the calendar. Additional practices should then be written on the main calendar located on the counter of the school office. Please note in the Diocesan policies that practices, games and tournaments will be limited to five days per week.

Sunday Games and Practices

In accordance with Diocesan policy, no games or practices, including tournaments or open gyms may be scheduled or played on Sundays. In addition, no practice, games, tournaments and open gyms may be scheduled or played on Holy Days of Obligation, Holy Thursday, and Good Friday. Practices, games and tournaments will be limited to five days per week, per team. Practices should not exceed one and a half (1.5) hours per day. Parish events and school events, (such as seasonal programs, fairs, and concerts) will take precedence over practice, games, and tournaments.

Removal of Coaches or Sponsors

Should circumstances arise that warrant the removal of a coach/sponsor, the following procedure will be utilized: (1)the principal and athletic director(s) will review the facts regarding the grounds

for dismissal, (2) if, upon review, the circumstances warrant further action, the matter will be brought before the pastor. The pastor will make the final decision.

Rules and Regulations

All the rules and regulations contained in the by-laws of the *Illinois Elementary School Association Handbook* will be followed by all students who participate in the athletic program. In addition to these rules and regulations, the policies of St. Mary's School and the rules of individual coaches (as approved by the administrator) shall be followed.

Safe Environment Program

All coaches/sponsors and volunteers who work with students of the Catholic Diocese of Peoria must participate in the Safe Environment program. *Four* requirements of the program are (1) a criminal background check through *live scan* fingerprinting, (2) a background check by the Department of Children and Family Services conducted by filing a CANT form with the school, (3) attending the Safe Environment program (formerly known as the Protecting God's Children program), a workshop on detecting abuse in children which is offered throughout the year at St. Mary's Parish and throughout the diocese, and undergoing drug testing when they begin coaching and being on a random drug testing list thereafter. TAPS will pay for drug testing for one head coach and one assistant coach for each sport. Additional assistants will be required to pay for all coaching fees.

Selection and Assignment of Coaches

The athletic director (s) and principal are responsible for obtaining coaches for all extracurricular activities at St. Mary's School. Coaches/sponsors will complete an application and final assignments will be made by the athletic director and principal. Teachers applying for coaching positions will be given consideration before volunteers. As much as possible, coaches will be assigned to only one head position at the seventh and eighth grade levels so that students have the benefit of a variety of experiences and viewpoints.

Sportsmanship

Coaches/sponsors and students are expected to display good sportsmanship in all situations both as winners and as losers. This means that all participants will be respectful to each other, to opponents, to officials, to fans, and to property at all times. Players/participants and coaches/sponsors will be expected to shake hands with opponents after competitive events and to remain in place for award ceremonies. All St. Mary's School students are expected to conduct themselves according to Christian values and the policies found in the St. Mary's School Student/Parent Handbook at all times. All coaches/sponsors will receive a copy of the Student/Parent Handbook. Coaches/sponsors are responsible for monitoring and correcting behavior whenever students are under their supervision. The discipline policies of St. Mary's School must be followed during all extracurricular activities. Some disciplinary measures that are appropriate to coaches/sponsors are verbal warnings, time on the bench or out of the activity, being denied playing time in a scheduled event, and being referred to the principal for consultation. In cases of severe behavior problems, the student may be suspended from or dropped from the sport or activity. Before that point is reached, coaches/sponsors should have talked with the principal.

All behavior management on the part of the coach/sponsor must be rendered in a calm and respectful manner, even though the behavior of the student may be disrespectful. The coach/sponsor is a role-model for rational behavior.

Student Attendance at Games

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 5 must be accompanied by an adult in order to attend athletic events. Parents or guardians are asked to monitor their own children during these events.

Student Council

St. Mary's School provides experience in student government to students in Grades 5 through 8. Anyone in grades 5-8 may join the Council once appropriate paperwork is completed. The representatives of the council plan a year of activities to enhance student life at St. Mary's School. They also participate in leadership activities offered through the Illinois Association of Junior High Student Councils.

Supervision During Practices, Games, or Evens

Coaches/Sponsors are responsible for having their players/participants supervised at all times. Coaches/sponsors should arrive at least 15 minutes before the students are told to be there and must stay until all students have been picked up. **Students participating in practices or events may not be in the building without an adult supervisor present.** In the case of athletics, male coaches of girls' teams should arrange to have a female adult available to supervise in the locker room; female coaches of boys' teams should arrange to have a male adult available to supervise in the locker room.

Team Rules

Coaches/Sponsors with written team rules shall submit a copy of their specific team rules to the principal or athletic director prior to the parent meeting and before the rules are given to students.

Technical Fouls and Game Ejections

Head coaches must notify the principal within 24 hours if a coach or student is given a technical foul or is ejected from a game. A coach who receives a technical foul may continue to coach in that game only if there is no assistant or second coach to handle the remainder of the game. Contingent upon the reason for the technical foul, the Principal may impose sanctions on the coach, including sitting out one or more games or dismissing the coach.

If a student-athlete commits two technical fouls related to unsportsmanlike conduct in a season, he or she will not be allowed to participate in the sport for the remainder of the season. St. Mary's School has a good reputation for sportsmanship, and incidents which endanger that reputation will not be tolerated.

Training for Coaches

Effective with the 2009-10 school year, IESA has directed that all members of a school's athletic coaching staff that do not hold a valid teaching certificate must have successfully completed an approved coaching education program. IESA encourages all schools to require this training beginning in 2008-2009. The training is for both head and assistant coaches. An ASEP/IESA Coaching Essentials Course will be available online starting in August, 2008. The cost of the course will be reimbursed by the TAPS and the course takes an average of 3 hours to complete.

Use of Supplements in Athletics

In order to minimize health and safety risks to student athletes, maintain ethical standards, and reduce liability risks, school personnel and coaches should never supply, recommend, or permit the use of any

drug, medication, or food supplement solely for performance enhancing purposes. Diocesan Policy C-310, Adopted: 3/2004

Weather Related Cancellations or Changes

Coaches/Sponsors are encouraged to keep in close contact with the school and/or the athletic director(s) when inclement weather exists or seems imminent. Every effort will be given to issue cancellations or changes in a timely manner. Broadcast messages by phone, text, and/or email will be used to communicate changes.