



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL
Sterling, IL
Parent/Student Handbook
2024-2025

ST. MARY'S SCHOOL STAFF 2024-2025

Very Rev. James R. Kennan, V.F.	Pastor
Father Carlos Monsalvo	Parochial Vicar
Melanie Selmi	Principal
Jeannie Ramos	Office Manager/Bookkeeper
Ashley Murphy	Secretary
Mary Blatz	PK3
Carrie Halverson	PK4
Raeann Reyes	PK Aide/Afternoon Daycare M/F
Lauren Holmes	Kindergarten
McKinzie Battles	First Grade
Cahley Rosengren	Second Grade
Amanda Knapp	Third Grade
Caitlin Mauren	Third Grade Math/Religion
Teresa Gingrich	Fourth Grade
Erica Meyer-Hanlon	Fifth Grade
Riley Pierce	KN-8 P.E & /Health/Athletic Director
Kristeen Zschesche	KN – 8 th Grade Art
Jennifer Thormeyer	KN - 8th Grade Computers
Taylor Baker	Science 6-8; Math 6-8
Jessica Mason	ELA; Social Studies 6-8
Maureen Fischbach	Religion 6-8
Tracey Simpson	Extending ELA/Vocabulary 6-8
Penny Milnes	RTI interventionist
Christina Howell	Librarian
Barb Cantu	Cafeteria Manager
Jessenia Trujillo	Cafeteria Assistant
Angel Bittner	Cafeteria Assistant
Travis Mowery	Maintenance

SCHOOL NUMBERS:

Phone: 815-625-2253

FAX: 815-625-8942

DIOCESAN AND STATE OF ILLINOIS RECOGNITION

St. Mary's School continues to be formally recognized by the Rockford Diocese and the Illinois State Board of Education. St. Mary's School was most recently granted recognition by both the Rockford Diocese and the Illinois State Board of Education in March 2023. Recognition is renewed every six years.

Formal recognition confirms that St. Mary's School maintains a sound program of instruction, governance, evaluation and building safety. St. Mary's School complies with both the Rockford Diocese and State of Illinois school requirements and recommendations for private schools. St. Mary's School offers a quality religious and academic curriculum including the necessary skills to live as responsible members of society and our faith community.

SAUK VALLEY DEANERY MISSION STATEMENT

In Jesus' name, we pray, we teach, learn and serve.

SAUK VALLEY DEANERY VISION STATEMENT

Students will grow in virtue, develop self-discipline, and become who God created them to be.

PHILOSOPHY

We are a Catholic School. Faith community at St. Mary's means working toward a common understanding and dependence on Jesus as a teacher, friend, and Lord. This leads us to accept, respect, and share with each other as a school community. By our Christian witness we hope to help our students experience Jesus, and to accept him as Lord and live by his teachings. The integration of religious truth and values with the rest of life is brought about in the Catholic School, not only by its unique curriculum, but more importantly, by the presence of teachers who express this integrated approach in their professional and private lives.

. . . . TO TEACH AS JESUS DID

The Catholic School system of St. Mary's offers a Christian message and faith atmosphere to the St. Mary Community.

Our education programs must develop the child of God, spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially, and intellectually.

That every child has a right to a Christian oriented curriculum, a Christian atmosphere for growth and the influence of Christian teachers.

That every child is an integral part of the system – therefore, every child needs to feel a responsibility to serve the school, and the school needs to serve the child. With parents, teachers, and community, together we will develop the full potential of each child.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

All education at St. Mary's School shall admit students of any religion, gender, race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students.

School programs will not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational and admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other programs.

All classes at St. Mary's School are taught in English. St. Mary's School does not discriminate against students with disabilities. St. Mary's School does not discriminate against individuals based on their status as immigrants. Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Rockford shall be in compliance with all relevant case law interpreting the Illinois School Code, including Plyler v Doe.

St. Mary's School supports an education system seeking to integrate the truths and values of the Roman Catholic faith with the rest of life, not only through its unique curriculum, but more importantly by the presence of teachers who express an integrated approach to learning and living, in their personal and professional lives, their goals, beliefs and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and, thereafter, make decisions with respect to employment consistent with those findings.

**THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF ST. MARY'S AND THE
DIOCESE OF ROCKFORD SCHOOL POLICIES:**

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

SMS offers after school care from 3:15pm-5:30pm Monday through Friday. Cost is \$8/day for the 1st child, \$4/day for the 2nd child, and \$3/day for the 3rd child. Enroll your children to set the schedule and then make payments in advance in the school office. Contact amurphy@smsterling.org for details.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Students K-8 should arrive at school NO EARLIER THAN 7:45am without special permission. Students in grades K-5 will report to the playground at 7:45am. Students will then line up and walk into the school with their teacher. Middle School students will enter the school at 7:45am.

Preschool students should arrive at school at 8am and enter through Door 4.

Kindergarten students will be dismissed at 2:55pm. Parents must pick up their kindergarten student(s) from the classroom teacher at door 1. All other students will be dismissed at 3:00pm using door 1 and door 2. Students must use the crosswalk when crossing the street.

ATTENDANCE

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Illinois revised statutes require “whoever has custody or control of any child between the ages of 7 and 16 shall cause such child to attend school the entire time it is in session during the regular school term”. Provisions in the law provide that non-public schools such as St. Mary’s School fulfill the provisions of this requirement.

An accurate accounting of the dates and number of days a student is absent or tardy during the school year will be kept in the School Office. **A student who misses 5 or more periods will be considered absent for the whole day.**

If a student is away from school on a school-sponsored activity (as an institute or retreat) they will be considered in attendance for school.

Students are to remain on school property from the time they arrive at school until they are dismissed.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused Absence - "Valid cause" for absence shall be illness, observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, family emergency, and shall include such other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the board of education in each district, or such other circumstances which cause reasonable concern.

Following is a partial list:

1. Illness verified by the parent/guardian – notification to the school office should be made by phone no later than 7:30am. Call 815-625-2253 Press for Menu #3 then Attendance Line #1. This option is available 24 hours a day. If a child is absent and the school has not received notification by 8:30am, the school secretary will call the parents/guardian.
2. Students should be fever free/symptom free for 24 hours (without medication) before returning to school. A fever is considered 100.4 as determined by WebMD.
3. Doctor/Dentist Appointments – **Appointments should not conflict with regular school hours** unless absolutely unavoidable. If unavoidable, the student should have verification from the Doctor/Dentist to submit to the office to receive admission to class when returning to school.
4. Funeral of a direct relative
5. Emergency-In these cases the school will determine what constitutes an emergency.

STUDENT ILLNESS

If a student becomes ill or is injured at school, the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick the student up. In emergency cases when no parent/guardian is available, persons listed on the Emergency Form will be notified.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Unexcused Absence - An unexcused absence is an absence that does not meet state or district guidelines as stated above. Unexcused absences also occur when the parent cannot produce any documentation that explains the absence or if the parent presents documentation that does not meet criteria for excused absences.

St. Mary's School will excuse a student for 5% of the school year. The following steps will take place once a child has been absent for over 5% of the school year.

1. Letter sent home to parents/guardians indicated the number of absences.
2. Intervention
 - a. All future absences after 5% will need to have a doctor's note to accompany the absence in order to be considered an excused absence.
 - b. Absences without a doctor's note will be considered truant.
 - c. After 2 truant days, the parents/guardians will be notified with a final warning letter.
 - d. After 3-4 days, a full truancy referral will be made.

TRUANCY

See also Truancy-Diocesan on pg 24

An absence without the knowledge and consent of the school is a truant absence. When truancy occurs, the following will be in effect:

1. The student's record will show the absence as truant.
2. Class work and homework will not be made up, and a zero for those assignments will be recorded in the grade record of the student.
3. The student will be required to make-up time missed before school.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

ST. MARY'S STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

St. Mary's students contribute to the overall well-being and success of our school by displaying the following attributes and expectations.

Religious

- Display reverence for the sacred especially during liturgies, prayer services and retreats
- Demonstrate knowledge of the traditions, teachings and practices of the Catholic Church

Integrity

- Display respect for self, others and property
- Assume responsibility for behavioral choices
- Present oneself as a student of St. Mary's in thoughts, actions and choices

Service- Oriented

- Act as a steward of the Earth
- Participate faithfully in school service projects on local and global levels

Educated

- Demonstrate knowledge in subject areas, work independently and collaboratively
- Express written thoughts clearly for a specific and varied audience
- Develop strategies and skills appropriate for grade level success
- Respectfully listen and participate in class discussions to further learning of all

Our behavior expectations are exhibited in our school-wide model of PEACE each and every day. We use this word when explaining to students our expectations and for positive reinforcement with quarterly PEACE awards and mini-PEACE awards when students are caught doing something peaceful around the school.

P- Polite

E-Effort

A- Attitude

C- Compassion

E- Excellence

BULLYING POLICY #5170

Any action, word or behavior which harasses, intimidates or causes physical, emotional or psychological harm to another student or students is strictly prohibited, whether the action, word, or

behavior is based on a person's characteristic(s) or other matter. This prohibited conduct also extends to the use of technology ("cyberbullying") as a tool to harass or cause harm.

Bullying is prohibited during any school-sponsored education program or activity; while in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities; or through the transmission of information from a computer, a computer network, or other similar electronic device equipment. However, this policy is not limited to conduct that occurs on the premises of the Diocese school or during school hours or activities.

"Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including made in person, in writing or electronically ("cyber bullying"), directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- (1) placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student or student's person or property;
- (2) causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
- (3) substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
- (4) substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying make take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. Examples of "cyber bullying" include but are not limited to the use of email, web sites, text messaging, posting or sending electronic photos or videos on social media or "Apps" (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat, etc.) to harass or intimidate. These lists are meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Reporting the conduct:

Any School employee who is made aware of conduct which violates this policy, or who receives a report of bullying, shall promptly report this information to the School Administrator and, in the administrator's absence, to the administrator's designee, assistant principal, or dean of students. Any parent/guardian who has information that bullying involving a student(s) of the School is occurring shall promptly notify the school of this information.

Notifying the parents/guardian:

Within 24 hours of the School being made aware of a reported bullying incident, the school administrator shall notify the parents/guardian of each of the students reportedly involved. The School administrator shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent/guardian using all contact information available to the school or which the school within that 24 hours can reasonably obtain.

Investigating:

The School administrator shall investigate the matter, may involve a school support personnel or others as deemed appropriate, and will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days of the date of the report is received by the School. However, information may be discovered during the investigation which extends the investigation beyond 10 school days.

Students who violate this policy will generally be subject to the discipline policy of the student's school, but where the nature or extent of the conduct warrants, violators of the policy may be subject to suspension and/or expulsion.

The School administrator or designee will provide to the parents/guardians of the students who are parties in the investigation (parties are the student(s) reported to be the target of the conduct, and the student(s) reported to be committing the conduct) information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the school administrator or designee to discuss the investigation, the investigation findings, and actions or interventions taken to address bullying, adhering to privacy rules and laws. To the extent appropriate, the School will identify to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the involved students - or community-based resources, if available, to assist the involved student(s). The School may require the parent/guardian of the involved student(s) to participate in community-based resources for the involved student(s).

Procedure:

The policy is to be distributed annually by each diocesan School to the school's students, their parents/guardian, and school employees, and to new employees when they are hired. If the School has a website accessible to the public, the policy is to be posted there as well. If the School posts policies, rules, or standards of conduct in the School, it is to be posted there as well.

Revised 8/2023

FIGHTING

Any student of St. Mary's School will not be permitted to fight in school. The students are instructed to use coping skills which are taught at home and in school on a regular basis. Walk away when provoked by another student to fight. Notify a teacher in authority to assist you. Notify the teacher in authority immediately.

Please let your child know that FIGHTING is never the answer at school. We appreciate parents informing us anytime you see or hear that a child is being harassed or provoked. We can assist children immediately to know they are loved, valued, and will be listened to during difficult situations.

Procedure:

- Suspension (In-School or Out-of-School): The administrator shall immediately notify the parents or legal guardian of the student of the suspension, the reason, and the length.
- The school is required to provide the parent or legal guardian a written notification of the suspension, the reason, the length, as well as the right to a review of the suspension.
- If the parent or legal guardian states he or she wants to appeal the suspension, the principal and the pastor will review the cases of an elementary school.
- The parent or legal guardian may provide a written statement to the pastor, and then the suspension will be reviewed.
- The school administrator must promptly notify the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools of the suspension, the reason, and length of the suspension.

GANG AND GANG-RELATED ACTIVITIES

St. Mary's School is a gang-free environment. Gangs, as defined in this policy, include individuals who associate primarily for criminal, or disruptive activities prohibited by law and/or the school's rules and regulations. Gangs, gang-related activities and secret societies are not acceptable on school premises or at school-related activities and students are prohibited from participating in any such activity. Their presence interferes materially and substantially with the education process and maintenance of appropriate discipline. It also fosters antisocial behaviors, attitudes and practices, which may endanger the health, safety, and welfare of all students. Activities prohibited by this policy, but are not limited to the following:

1. Soliciting and/or recruiting others for membership.
2. Participating in and/or inciting physical violence.
3. Extorting or soliciting money and/or services, requesting any person to pay for protection or the payment of dues.
4. Coercing, harassing, and/or otherwise intimidating, threatening or causing harm to any person or thing.
5. Wearing, possessing, using, displaying in any manner, distributing, selling any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol sign, or other item commonly associated with membership in or affiliation with a gang secret society.
6. Using any verbal or non-verbal communications (gestures, handshakes, etc.) suggesting or showing membership in or affiliation with a gang or secret society.
7. Engaging in any activity, where such is intended to promote, or further the interest of any gang, gang activity, or secret society including, but not limited to distributing literature, drawing or displaying gang-related symbols on any surface or teaching others to represent or act like a member of a gang or secret society.
8. **Any other activity which violates any law, policy, rule, or regulation of the school or the Catholic Diocese of Rockford when such act or activity taken to further the interests of a gang or secret society. Violation of this policy may result in a 1-3 day out of school suspension or expulsion.**

DIOCESAN POLICY ON PARENTAL COOPERATION

As members of the community of St. Mary's School, we each have a moral and ethical obligation to foster and promote Catholic values that our faith represents. The cooperation of parents is especially vital. While we recognize that issues may arise during the course of the school year that will be of concern to parents, the manner in which parents address their concerns through their personal conduct must be consistent with these values, whether at St. Mary's School and/or during any St. Mary's School related function. The failure to meet these conduct expectations shall be addressed with this policy.

While many different types of conduct by parents are unacceptable under this policy, the following are examples of conduct that will not be tolerated:

1. Disrespect to any person at St. Mary's School related functions.
2. Raising of voice, foul language, or name calling directed at any staff member, teacher, child, coach, volunteer, other parents, administrator, religious or clergy member.
3. Any physical assault.
4. Any other activity considered by St. Mary's School administration to be a threat or disrespectful to another, disruptive to St. Mary's School and/or inconsistent with the Catholic values that St. Mary's School strives to uphold.

This is a non-exhaustive list of conduct that violates this policy. St. Mary's School reserves the right, in its discretion, to determine when a violation of this policy has occurred.

Any violation of this policy, as determined by St. Mary's School may result in corrective action, up to and including exclusion from St. Mary's School events.

A parent who violates this policy may be warned regarding the unacceptable behavior and St. Mary's School will endeavor to provide warning to the parent prior to taking more severe action. However, depending on the involved parent's record of conduct and/or the severity of the misconduct in question, parents are not guaranteed that advance warning will be given prior to being excluded from future St. Mary's School events. The presence of aggravating factors (including the presence of children during the conduct in question, severity of the behavior, or a pattern or record of unacceptable behavior, etc.) shall be considered.

The decision of the Principal or Athletic Director regarding the application of this policy may be appealed to the Pastor. The decision of the Pastor is final.

BIRTHDAY TREATS

Parents of students in Grades PreK – 5th should contact the teacher to set up a convenient time for the class to share birthday treats. Students in Grades 6th – 8th should distribute their birthday treats during the lunch period (pop is not allowed). There should be enough treats for the student's entire class.

Students may dress down on the day they celebrate their birthday at school. Dress should be school appropriate. Please no hoodies, holes in jeans, or leggings worn as pants.

BOOKS

CARE OF RENTED BOOKS

A fine is charged at the end of the year if usage of books results in damage greater than normal. There will be a charge for lost books. **Hard bound books must be covered.** School supply lists will include the number and sizes of covers needed.

CAFETERIA/LUNCH

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria is the school dining room and students are to remain in the cafeteria during the entire lunch period. Each student's conduct should be courteous and cooperative. A seating chart may be used in the cafeteria if necessary. Places should be left cleared and clean. Students are encouraged to give thanks to God before and after meals. **All eating and drinking is to be confined to the cafeteria.** Fast food (McDonald's, Subway, etc) is not to be brought in; nor is food to be ordered out during the lunch period. **No food or drink should be taken from or consumed outside the cafeteria, before or after lunch.** Only milk or water may be consumed during lunch. We ask that parents do not visit students during the lunch period.

LUNCH PROGRAM

A hot lunch is available to students for \$3.00/day including milk for students. Students are not to bring pop, tea, energy drinks, kool aid or juice for lunch. Students that have a milk allergy must have a note from their doctor and they will be allowed to bring juice/lactose free milk.

CLASS POLICIES

CLASS SIZE POLICY 6130

Pre-K-Kindergarten: Preschool for 3 and 4 year olds is based on a staff/child ratio of 1 to 10 and a maximum group size of 20 students per classroom. Kindergarten is based on a staff/child ratio of 1 to 20 and a maximum of 30 students per classroom.

Grades 1-8; 35 is the maximum number of students per classroom.

It is recommended that an instructional aide assist the classroom teacher when the class size in primary grades exceeds 25 students. Local School Commissions may recommend different limits provided the decision does not place the school in jeopardy of a deficit budget.

Exceptions are granted at the discretion of the principal.

RETENTION

Parents are notified in early spring if there is any doubt concerning promotion. All teachers involved with the student will use a retention scale to assist in decision making. The school will hold a meeting regarding retention with the teacher and principal.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PROMOTION

To be promoted, a student must maintain a minimum cumulative G.P.A. of 1.0 (70%). The requirements to pass a class for the quarter is to achieve at least a 1.0 G.P.A. (70%).

The G.P.A. will be averaged with any preceding quarters(s) of the current school year as a cumulative figure. An average quarter(s) cumulative G.P.A. of less than 1.0 (70%) per quarter may result in notification in writing to the parent/guardian that the student may not be promoted to the next grade level. This may be done at the end of any quarter or any time it becomes apparent that the promotion is in jeopardy. A Probationary Promotion may be considered at the discretion of the principal and the faculty.

Graduation requirements ~ Students must pass the State of Illinois and Federal Constitution tests.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a necessary part of a student's education. It enables the student to do individual work, apply what he/she has learned, and prepare for the next day's lessons. Homework is part of the school program, and will be given on a regular basis, at the discretion of the teacher. If you feel your student is spending too much time on homework, please make an appointment with that teacher. If a student is absent, homework will not be sent home until the second consecutive day of absence.

The student is responsible for contacting the teacher, when they return to school and ensuring that all work is made up in a reasonable time. The length of time allowed for make-up work to be completed should be in proportion, but not necessarily equal to the number of days absent. If work is turned in more than two (2) weeks after the due date, credit may not be given.

COMMUNICATION

PARENT/SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Parents/Guardians are the primary educators of their children and have the first responsibility for their religious and academic formation. Since a child's education is a 24 hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week matter, it is important that parents/guardians work together with the school. For this reason teachers or parents may schedule conferences. **Parents/Guardians are asked to contact the teacher via FACTS email** when there is a problem/concern regarding a particular class or activity. The teacher will contact the parent and set up a meeting if necessary. If the problem is not resolved, the principal should be contacted.

Important information will be sent home on Wednesdays with EACH child.

TELEPHONE CALLS/CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Parents/Guardians are not to call students out of class during the school day. This also applies to calling teachers. Messages should be left with the office and will be given to students and teachers. **If electronic devices (cell phones, iPods, mp3 players, hand held games, smart watches, etc.) are brought to school, they will be collected at 8:00am from students in Grades KN-8, and then returned at the end of the day.**

EDUCATION COMMISSION

The Education Commission, an advisory committee, is composed of parents, priests, and community members from St. Mary's and Sacred Heart Parishes.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

INVESTIGATIONS REGARDING STUDENT SOCIAL NETWORKING

An elementary school or high school may not request or require a student to provide a password or other related account information in order to gain access to the student's account or profile on a social networking website.

However, an elementary school or high school may conduct an investigation, and may require a student to cooperate in the investigation, if there is specific information about activity on the student's account on a social networking website that violates a school disciplinary rule or policy. In the course of an investigation, an elementary school or high school may require the student to share the content that is reported, in order to make a factual determination.

A student's failure to cooperate in such an investigation may lead to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Elementary and secondary schools are required under the law to notify its students and parents of this policy, by publishing it in the school's disciplinary rules, policies, or handbook, or communicating it by similar means.

Right to Privacy in the School Setting Act (105 ILCS 75/1, et al.) EFFECTIVE 12/5/18

DISCIPLINE

The following steps will be taken when students are behaving in a way that is unacceptable to our student behavior expectations.

K-5

Each classroom teacher will follow a classroom management plan individualized to their classroom.

Middle School

1. Students will be responsible for taking their assignment notebook to each class period. The assignment notebook will serve as a communication tool between parents and students.
2. Students are expected to leave pages in their notebooks and refrain from tearing them out.
3. Students will be given approximately 2 verbal warnings per class period for unacceptable behavior.
4. Upon receiving a 3rd verbal warning in a class, the teacher will make a BEHAVIOR notation in the assignment notebook. (example: B6)
 - a. Students will have a lunch/recess detention following the behavior notation.
 - b. Students must get the BEHAVIOR notation signed by their parents before the next school day.
 - c. If the student does not have the BEHAVIOR notation signed the next day, a 2nd lunch/recess detention will follow.
 - d. If the student fails to have the BEHAVIOR notation signed by the 3rd day, the student will be given an office referral and a MORNING/AFTERNOON detention will follow.

A document containing more specific information in regards to middle school expectations will be given to families at back to school night. A condensed version of this information will be provided on a label inside of the assignment notebook.

The above procedures will be used concerning behaviors considered inappropriate for St. Mary's School students.

If a discipline problem is more serious in nature, the teacher may choose to write an office referral and send the student immediately to the principal's office. The principal will discuss the problem and possible solutions with the student and teacher. The parents will be sent a note informing them of the disciplinary action taken.

Students who repeatedly will not conform to the school expectations may be suspended from the classroom or school situation at the discretion of the principal. Parents will be given an opportunity to have a conference with the classroom teacher and principal to discuss the suspension. Dismissal may follow two suspensions.

SEQUENTIAL DISCIPLINE PROCESS

St. Mary's School reserves the right to establish and enforce reasonable standards of behavior for all students involved in educational and recreational activities whether during regular school hours, on school premises, in connection with school activities or otherwise. In the event of a violation of these standards, the school reserves the right to invoke appropriate disciplinary steps, including but not limited to detentions, suspensions (in school and out of school) and expulsion. The level of discipline appropriate for a violation shall be determined on a case by case basis at the school's discretion, based on a review of a variety of factors

including, but not limited to, the severity of the misconduct, the student's academic and behavioral record and other similar criteria. The following is a non-exhaustive list of infractions for which students may be disciplined up to and including expulsion:

1. Violation of the school's policy on gangs and gang-related activities.
2. Violation of the school's policy on drugs and alcohol
3. Violation of the school's policy on weapons.
4. Violation of the school's rules and regulations.
5. Any other conduct considered by the school to be contrary to the best interest of the school, its faculty, and/or the school's mission.

The following behaviors will be considered inappropriate and may be cause for disciplinary action to be taken in the form of detention, suspension or expulsion.

Office Managed Behaviors - Chronic Behaviors

The following are worthy of an Office Referral.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defiance = tantrum• Racial taunting• Physical aggression (intent)• Hitting, pushing, shoving, biting with intent to do harm.• Skipping class, hiding in other rooms or restrooms• Leaving school grounds without permission• Vandalism/abuse of school property• Major theft (items of high value)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Threat, bullying, intimidation• Verbal /written threats of aggression against another person• Crude/inappropriate behavior (sexual remarks)• Violation of Diocesan Policy<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possession or distribution of profane material• Possession of weapons or drugs• Possession of knives, lighters, matches, alcohol, drugs, etc.• Possession of medication w/out authorization
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Serious cases may take the following steps.

Office Referral

Morning/afternoon detention

Suspension

May be in-school or out-of-school for 1-3 days.

****Forgery of parent/guardian signature will result in automatic 1-3 day out of school suspension****

Expulsion

If previous steps are not a deterrent to inappropriate behavior, expulsion may be considered. For some specific or serious violations, expulsion may be considered without inclusion of all the steps.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS

*Corporal Punishment of students by staff members is not permitted. A teacher may remove a student from the classroom for disruptive behavior. A student may be given detention or other discipline, suspended (either in-school or out-of-school), or expelled depending on the conduct.

A teacher, other certified employee, and any other person, whether or not a certified employee, providing a related service for, or with respect to, a student, may use reasonable force as needed to maintain safety for other students, school personnel or other persons, or for the purpose of self-defense or the defense of property.

Suspension may not last more than 10 school days. A student commits an expellable offense is to be suspended pending an expulsion hearing that must take place within those 10 days of suspension.

A suspension or expulsion prohibits a student from attending school, from attending and/or participating in all school activities, and from being present on school grounds during the period of suspension or expulsion. Code #5165 7/2020

DRESS CODE

UNIFORM CODE

The purpose of the uniform code is to provide an atmosphere of learning free of distraction, characterized by modesty, that enhances the student's self-image and eliminates unnecessary competition among students.

GIRLS – Plaid jumpers (Kn-5 only), skirts or skorts worn with a uniform top. Girls may also wear navy slacks or navy shorts.

Order CLASSIC NAVY PLAID TOP OF KNEE skort, box pleat skirt, or jumper.

Lagron-Miller 1-800-322-8116 or lagron-miller.com

Lands End 1-800-469-2222 or landsend.com

Lands End Preferred School Number **900096066**

BOYS – Navy pants or shorts with a uniform top.

TOPS - White, navy, light blue, or gray short or long sleeved polo/collared shirts. Grades 6-8 must have the school logo on it. Tops with the school logo may be purchased through JJM or Lands End. Other grades may also have the school logo if they choose. Kn-5 tops should be plain and without designs if they are not purchased from JJM Printing. Tops must be tucked in at all times.

PANTS/SLACKS/SHORTS – Navy only. No denim, cargo, or athletic pants. If pants have belt loops a belt must be worn. Belts should be plain navy, black or brown. Shorts can be worn in August, September, October, April, May & June.

Shorts must be to the top of the knee.

LEGGINGS – May be worn under a skirt/skort or jumper. Legging color should be navy, black, gray or white. Yoga leggings and sweatpants are not allowed to be worn as pants.

SWEATER/SWEATSHIRT – Plain navy, gray or white sweaters may be worn. No hoods or zippers on sweaters. Uniform sweatshirts can be purchased from JJM Printing or Lands End with the St. Mary's Sterling school logo on the left shoulder only. Students are required to wear a uniform shirt underneath sweaters and sweatshirts. Spiritwear hoodies are only allowed on Fridays and are not considered part of the school uniform.

SOCKS – Must be worn at all times in either navy, white, gray or black. Girls may wear tights in navy, gray or white. Friday is “*Crazy Sock Day*” and students can wear any crazy socks with the school uniform!

SHOES – Shoes with white/light/non-marking soles. Black soles are not allowed. Sneakers are encouraged. Shoes should be as plain as possible, no lights, cartoon characters etc. No sandals, flip flops, moccasins, crocs, open backed or open toes shoes are allowed. Boots may be worn to school if weather conditions warrant, but must be changed into uniform shoes once inside the building.

ACCESSORIES – Due to safety concerns only small post earrings worn in the lobe of the ear only. No dangling earrings. Boys with pierced ears are not to wear earrings while on school grounds during the school day, at any school sponsored event or when representing the school for any occasion. Only necklaces/bracelets with crosses or religious medals may be worn. Wrist watches are acceptable. Smartwatches are not permitted. Any other jewelry is prohibited. Hats are not to be worn in the building.

MAKE-UP – Make-up, artificial nails or overly long nails, are not allowed. Body markings and tattoos, whether permanent or temporary, are not allowed. Girls may wear nail polish if well maintained.

HAIRSTYLES – Hair should be worn off the face and out of the eyes and should be well groomed. No unnatural hair color, bleached hair, hair extensions, wraps, mullets, fauxhawks, side-shaves or fad-style haircuts are allowed. Simple hair accessories may be worn. Hair for boys must be above the shirt collar. All Rockford Diocesan Schools will not prohibit hairstyles historically associated with race, ethnicity, or hair texture, such as braids, locks, and twists.

SPIRIT WEAR EXPECTATIONS - Students may wear spiritwear with uniform bottoms on Fridays. Spiritwear must be St. Mary's Sterling or Newman Central Catholic High School. Spiritwear hoodies are allowed on Spiritwear Fridays, however, students will not be allowed to wear the hood up during the school day. Shirts must be worn tucked into the uniform bottoms. Spirit wear hoodies are acceptable on Fridays ONLY. No other hoodies will be allowed unless the child has a dress down pass.

ATHLETIC SPIRITWEAR EXPECTATIONS- On game days for grades 5-8, students may wear their current athletic uniform top with uniform bottoms. Student MUST have a shirt under jerseys. Basketball jerseys may only be worn with a uniform polo underneath.

DRESS DOWN DAY EXPECTATIONS - Below is a list of acceptable dress code items on a dress down day. ***Dress-down passes may only be redeemed on Fridays or when special announcements are made.**

ACCEPTABLE- YES!

- hoodies
- jeans (no holes, rips, or tears)
- chino style/cargo shorts-must reach the middle knuckle on the middle finger when hands are at the student's side.
- joggers/sweatpants
- school-acceptable language and images on clothing

UNACCEPTABLE-NO!

- jeans with holes, rips, or tears
- crop tops/short shirts showing stomach
- short shorts- must reach the middle knuckle on the middle finger when hands are at the student's side
- pajamas
- leggings/yoga pants
- athletic shorts, skorts or skirts
- slippers
- fake nails
- sandals, flip flops, moccasins, crocs, open backed or open toes shoes

DRESS CODE DISCIPLINE

1. Students are responsible for knowing and complying with the dress code. Parents have the primary responsibility to see that their child is in compliance.
2. Dress Code will be enforced during the 1st period of each school day.
3. Repeat violations will be a reason for discipline.
 - a. Blue warnings about dress code violations will be given out at any time.
 - b. If dress code compliance becomes a chronic problem, the SMS staff may enforce a plan for consequences.
4. The principal may allow variations of the dress code on specific days and will make the final determination regarding dress and grooming not specifically covered by the dress code.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL: **ST. MARY’S/DIOCESAN POLICY**

Students are prohibited from using or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at school or at any school related function. Included with the prohibition set forth in this policy are the following:

- Use, possession, manufacture, distribution, dispensation or sale of drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol on school premises or with respect to school related activities.
- Storing in a locker, desk, automobile or other repository on school premises or in connection with any school related activity any drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol;
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises or in connection with any school related activities.

The school reserves the right to require a student to undergo testing for the use of alcohol and/or drugs when a reasonable suspicion of such use exists. A “reasonable suspicion” of drug and/or alcohol use may be based upon the observation of the student’s behavior, information received regarding alleged alcohol, drug use and/or indications giving rise to a suspicion of a violation of this Policy. A student’s failure to cooperate in testing required by this Policy or other violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from school.

FACTS - STUDENT **INFORMATION SYSTEM**

FACTS Family Portal is a private and secure parents’ portal that will allow parents to view academic information specific to their children while protecting their children’s information from others. You may view your child’s grades, attendance, homework, and conduct, as well as other useful information. You can also communicate with teachers and other school information. You can also communicate with teachers and other school staff online whenever necessary.

www.factsmgmt.com

District Code: STMS-IL

Click: Create New Family Portal Account

FAITH'S LAW

CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES #4009

Pursuant to Illinois' Faith's Law requirements, the Diocese of Rockford 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 Rockford, 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 who 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 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 and 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 School Parents and Families. 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 prompting 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.

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.

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 dialogue; 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 a minor (Illinois' *Faith's Law*, Public Act 102-0676, (105 ILCS 5/22-85.5)

III. Expectations of School Employees

The Diocese restates here the Diocese's expectations of all its employees, including employees who work at parish elementary schools and Diocesan high schools in the Diocese of Rockford.

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

These expectations are set forth in detail in the following:

Diocese's *Code for the Pastoral Use of Technology and Social Media*;

Diocese's *Code of Pastoral Conduct*; the Diocese's *Guidelines for Youth and Those Working with Youth Employee, Volunteer, and Youth Participant General Guidelines and Boundaries Expectations*;

Diocese's *Norms for the Prohibition of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Sexual Misconduct with Adults; Education, Prevention, Prevention, Assistance to Persons making a Report, Investigation, and Procedures for Determination of Fitness for Ministry Employment; Illinois DCFS Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status Form*;

and the following trainings:

Virtus Protecting God's Children;

Illinois DCFS's *Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse: Training for Mandated Reporters*; and State of Illinois' *Prohibition of Sexual Harassment training*.

IV. Employee training related to child abuse and educator ethics

The Diocese restates here the Diocese's requirement that its employees, including employees who work at parish elementary schools and Diocesan high schools in the Diocese of Rockford, 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 of suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect 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.

This requirement is contained in the following:

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;

Illinois DCFS Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status form;

and the following trainings:

Virtus Protecting God's Children;

Illinois DCFS's Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse; Training for Mandated Reporters; and Sexual Harassment Training.

V. Employees training related to child abuse and educator ethics

The Diocese requires its employees to 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.

Effective 7/1/2023

GRADES

NOTIFICATIONS OF GRADES

Report cards will be available every nine weeks on FACTS. Any variance from this procedure must be approved by the principal and communicated to parents, students and teachers in a written form at the beginning of the grading period. Grades are posted on FACTS by every Monday. Parents are asked to monitor their child's progress there. Parents are notified by email when an assignment is missing. If homework is not handed in when due, there will be a 10% deduction after 1 day and 50% deduction after day 2 and a -0- after day three. The FACTS site allows parents and students 24/7 access to grades. A FACTS posting, indicating an F in a 5 day per week class, or any combination of 2 or more or less than 5 days per week classes is considered the same as an Ineligibility Notice. The Period of Ineligibility is from the following Sunday to the next Saturday, of the next regular school week.

GRADING SCALE 4th-8th WITH GPA EQUIVALENT

A+	99-100	GPA: 4.3
A	95-98	GPA: 4.0
A-	93-94	GPA: 3.7
B+	91-92	GPA: 3.3
B	87-90	GPA: 3.0
B-	85-86	GPA: 2.7
C+	83-84	GPA: 2.3
C	79-82	GPA: 2.0
C-	77-78	GPA: 1.7
D+	75-76	GPA: 1.3
D	72-74	GPA: 1.0
D-	70-71	GPA: 0.7
F	69 and below	GPA: 0.0

GRADING SCALE K-3

4	90-100
3	80-89
2	70-69
1	59 and below

HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment of any type – verbal, physical, visual – is opposed to the mission of the school and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Harassment of any person on school grounds or by an 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.

A student who feels that he or she has been subjected to harassment must notify a parent and a St. Mary's staff member. The matter must also be reported to the principal and an investigation of the

incident will take place. In the case of a substantiated case of harassment, the appropriate course of disciplinary action will be dictated by the particular circumstances of the situation. If a student does not make a report to a St. Mary's staff member, no action can be taken.

LOCKERS

LOCKERS

Each student is assigned a locker. Students are expected to use their own lockers, keep them neat and **locked at all times. Lockers may be inspected at any time**, and are to be kept free of inappropriate materials. No food or drink of any type should be in the lockers except that which will be consumed in the cafeteria, and only in the cafeteria. Writing on and/or applying permanent appliques is not allowed.

There will be no decorations on the outside of lockers. Fines will be assessed at the end of the year if necessary for any damage. Lockers should be shut gently and never kicked closed. A locker that fails to open or close should be reported immediately to a teacher for repair. Any damage not reported will be the student's liability. Students who have a continuing problem with opening lockers due to untidiness may be required to spend a short time cleaning and organizing their locker prior to leaving for the day.

LOST AND FOUND

Any article found by students or staff members will be placed on the "Lost and Found" table in the hallway going to the gym. If it is an expensive item (phone, glasses, jewelry) it will be in the main office.

MEDICAL/HEALTH

MEDICATIONS

Children taking medication should do so at home, before and after school hours. When this is not possible, the following guidelines should be followed:

1. The parent/guardian shall provide the school with the physician's orders/prescription detailing the name of the drug, dosage, and the time interval in which the medication is to be taken.
2. The student's parent/guardian shall provide the school with a written request authorizing the administration of the prescribed medication at school. Special forms are in the office to be filled out.
3. Medication shall be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy, and the pharmacy phone number shall be indicated on the container. OTC medication, such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Advil, Benadryl, cough syrup, etc. must be brought in original containers, with dosing instructions clearly labeled.
4. The school shall provide a locked space for storage of the medication.
5. Students are not permitted to keep medication on their person, in the classrooms, in their book bags, or in their lockers.
6. **Inhalers are an exception with a letter of authorization on file in the office.**

7. A student may possess and use a topical sunscreen product while on school property or at a school sponsored-sponsored event or activity without a physician's note or prescription if the product is approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration.

HEALTH

Following is a list of health requirements for the 2024-25 school year:

Kindergarten:

- 1) Physical exam and immunizations;
- 2) Eye exam by Optometrist or Ophthalmologist;
- 3) Dental exam (within the last 6 months).

2nd Grade:

- 1) Dental Exam

6th Grade:

- 1) Physical exam and immunization.
- 2) Dental exam

Students are considered in non-compliance with immunizations if the school does not have completed records by October 15th of the current school year. Students will **NOT** be able to attend school until the immunizations are completed.

AIDS POLICY

As a true Catholic School, our faith community consists of individuals from many walks of life-with people from diverse economic, ethnic, racial, and medical backgrounds. It is our mission to minister to those with special needs including those who suffer from the physical, psychological, and emotional maladies.

Students with AIDS/HIV enrolled or seeking enrollment at St. Mary's School will be treated in accordance with State Guidelines and Church teachings.

In cooperation with medical authorities and the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, appropriate confidentiality will be maintained and each case will be handled according to established Diocesan policies, keeping in mind the rights and needs of the student and those of the other students at St. Mary's School.

RECESS POLICIES

- When temperatures are at a "feels like" temperature of 20 degrees and below, children are allowed to remain inside. Children should be dressed appropriately for all weather conditions.

- When the bell rings after recess, children are to stop playing, go to assigned areas for their grade and wait for instructions to enter the building. Upon entering the building, they should go directly to their rooms in a quiet orderly manner.

RECORDS

The student's school records, both permanent and temporary, are kept in the school office. These records are maintained in accordance with the Family/Education Right and Privacy Act of 1974. Permanent student records contain basic identifying information and academic records. Parents/guardians have the right to control access to, and release of a minor student's records. No minor student's records may be released unless authorized by the parent or guardian.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

Students will be released to parents/guardians. If someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking up the student, **the school office must be notified.** Students must be signed out by a parent/guardian or designated individual in the office.

TRANSPORTATION

BUS BEHAVIOR POLICY

1. The bus driver is in full charge of the bus and riders at all times, and may make necessary rules for the safety and welfare of riders. Students are responsible to him/her while riding the bus.
2. Students should not move about while the bus is in motion.
3. Students must not carry on unnecessary conversation with the driver.
4. Students should not throw waste paper on the floor of the bus or scratch the paint or make the seats.
5. Pupils should never extend their arms or heads out of the bus windows.
- 6.

TRANSPORTATION

All cars must let students off on either 6th Street, the Church parking lot, or the Staff Parking lot in the morning. Cross only at crosswalks or at the corners. For safety purposes, cars exiting the main school parking lot must **TURN RIGHT ONLY.** Do not park in the bus lane at the south door, as the area is reserved for loading and unloading of buses only.

TRUANCY

Diocese of Rockford- Truancy Policy 5134

School attendance is compulsory in the State of Illinois. The responsibility of compliance with the law belongs to the parents, but the school is obliged to keep an accurate record of daily attendance. The record is placed in the student's permanent file at the end of each school year.

The principal will investigate and involve the parent/guardian if

- there is a suspicion that a student is truant;
- a student returns to school with no excuse or one that might not be valid;
- a student continues to be absent with no apparent reason.

Often extraordinary circumstances are involved and the principal, parent and counselor should work together to remedy the situation.

When all efforts to persuade the student to regular attendance fails, and the student's absences for non-medical or non-family emergency reasons exceeds more than five percent (5%) of the total student attendance days in the school year, written notice shall be sent to the parent/guardian stating that the matter is being turned over to the truancy department of the Regional Office of Education. Additionally, the school may drop the student from enrollment. (Reviewed June 2002; revised December 1, 2014)

TUITION & ASSISTANCE

TUITION 2024-25

	Contributing Catholic	All Others
One Child	\$3,875	\$4,675
Two Children	\$6,280	\$7,080
Three Children	\$8,128	\$9,490

1. Tuition for St. Mary's Parish/Sacred Heart Parish students beginning the school year 2024-25 is outlined in the chart above. Because the local parishes support our school financially, you must be a **registered, active** member of one of these parishes to qualify for the base tuition (see Parish Subsidy Section for details).
2. Persons of other faiths pay according to the above chart.
3. Provisions for an annual adjustment in tuition to keep pace with inflation and rising costs may be arranged.

4. There will be a non-refundable \$100 registration fee per family to be paid at the time of registration. (\$125 if paid AFTER April 9th)
5. Book Fees: For the school year, each student pays a \$200.00 book fee. (\$225 per student if paid AFTER April 9th). BOOK FEES are to be paid in full at the time of registration.
6. Fundraising: Because tuition covers only a small portion of the cost to educate a child, **your support is necessary**. In order to supplement the tuition paid, all families are required to work fundraisers throughout the school year or families may choose to pay a \$1,200 fee (referred to as a “buy-out”) if they would prefer to forgo the fundraising responsibility. Each family must sign an Educational Investment Form committing to work fundraisers and pay *tuition*.
8. Tuition agreed to on the Educational Investment Form must be paid by June 15th of the ending current school year. If tuition is not paid in full, **registration will not be accepted for the next school year.**
9. Financial Assistance Forms are available at our website smsterling.org. Applications are to be filled out and submitted directly to the tuition assistance service along with an \$40.00 fee. **Do not return an application to the school office.**

ST. MARY’S SCHOOL PARISH SUBSIDY POLICY

As you may know, St. Mary and Sacred Heart Parishes subsidize the tuition of every Catholic student at St. Mary’s School. The subsidy is granted to students whose families are *registered, active, and supportive members* of the parish community.

By *registered*, we mean that they are formally registered through the parish office.

By *active*, we mean that they regularly attend Mass and practice their faith.

By *supportive*, we mean they exercise responsible stewardship in support of their parish; that is, they are contributing members, sharing their time, talents, and their financial support through regular use of the Sunday envelopes.

We hope you remain involved and regularly attend Mass and events.

VACATIONS

VACATIONS DURING THE SCHOOL TERM ARE STRONGLY DISCOURAGED:

We recommend you look ahead to our given breaks and schedule your trips accordingly. If you decide to take your children on a vacation during the regular term, you **MUST** notify the Principal **at least one week in advance** of your vacation. Schoolwork will be made up when the student returns. Any tests that are missed are to be made up within one week, at the teacher’s convenience. Teachers are not required to provide assignments in advance, but may do so if Lesson timing is known.

VISITORS

We always welcome parents/guardians and guests, however, for the safety and welfare of our students and staff, parents/guardians and guests should go directly to the office and register

as a visitor. Under no circumstances should parents/guardians or guests be in the building without the knowledge of the office. All parents/guardians and guests will be issued a **VISITOR'S PASS** that should be worn and visible at all times. If a conference with a teacher is needed, it must be arranged in advance by contacting the office, as previously outlined in the parent/teacher communications section.

VOLUNTEERS

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Anyone who plans on being in contact with students at St. Mary's School must sign safe environment papers, have an FBI background check and view the video Protecting God's children. Anyone who is a room parent, helper, coach, or plans on attending field trips is required by the Diocese of Rockford to complete the Safe Environment guidelines.

VIRTUS- For New Families

If you are NEW to our school, and plan on coming into the building for field trips or class parties, please take a moment to follow these steps to get set up on the Diocese of Rockford-Virtus System for Safe Employees and Volunteers.

www.virtus.org
first-time registrant
enter the password for the diocese 2train!

OR

or by accessing the safe environment website...

www.rockforddiocese.org
click on safe environment
click on the blue employee/volunteer button in the upper right corner
click on the teal button at the top that applies to their role for step by step directions

WEAPONS-POSSESSION OF

It is a violation of the school's policy for a student to possess a weapon on school premises or at any time in connection with school related activities. Included within the prohibition of this policy is the possession, sale, distribution, manufacture, receipt, seeking the sale or trade or use of any firearm, knife, martial arts device or other object which, in the school's discretion, may reasonably be considered to constitute a weapon. **Violation of this Policy may result, in the school's discretion, in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the school.**

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

If weather conditions dictate the closing of school, the announcement will be made in 2 ways. First, we will send out an all-family email through FACTS. Second, we will send out a TEXT ALERT message. This text alert message will go to all phones that have registered to receive texts from St. Mary's. If you are not yet registered, and have questions, please call the office.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are held at unspecified times. Each room has a poster displayed in a conspicuous place designating the exit for students occupying that room. When the fire alarm sounds, students are to move quickly, quietly, and orderly to their designated exits. They should not take coats or school supplies with them. The first person to arrive at each door is to hold it open for those making their exit through the door. Once outside, students should move away from the building to prevent blocking the space just outside the exits and permit room for those following to get out of the building. Classes should stay together so teachers may determine whether their students have all evacuated the building. On re-entering the building, students return promptly to classes.

SEVERE WEATHER & SHELTER-IN-PLACE DRILLS 6/2020

Severe weather & shelter-in-place drills will be held once a year in March in conjunction with the statewide drill conducted in Illinois. Information on what to do and where to go will be posted in the classrooms. Students should move immediately and quietly to the designated area. Classes should stay together so the teacher can insure all students have evacuated to the designated area (basement). During the drill students should be especially quiet to ensure that they hear instructions and information that may be important to their safety. When returning to class, students should return promptly to their classrooms.

APPENDIX A - PRESCHOOL AT ST. MARY'S

REGISTRATION

In order to be registered for preschool, you will need the following:

1. A certified copy of your child's birth certificate
 - a. This is from the city clerk's office (not the hospital)
 - b. **REGISTRATION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED WITHOUT THIS**
2. A copy of your child's baptismal certificate
3. Completed Registration Form
4. Completed Investment Form
5. Completed Direct Payment Form
6. \$100 registration fee
7. Physical Form completed and turned in before the first day of school. All immunizations must be up-to-date. Students are considered in non-compliance with immunizations if the school does not have completed records by October 15th of the current school year. Students will **NOT** be able to attend school until the immunizations are completed.

The St. Mary's Preschool program is based on Christian principles and developing early childhood education skills. We work on developing the values of loving, giving, honesty, thankfulness, compassion, respect and kindness through interaction in our classroom and participation in community service projects such as food collection and toy collection at Christmas. We learn about the life of Jesus through Bible stories and related art projects. We also learn: Sign of the Cross; Angel of God, and Grace before Meals. Students must be potty-trained to attend preschool.

GETTING READY FOR KINDERGARTEN – As parents, you are the first and most important teachers God has given your child. The amount of knowledge and skills your child has learned through you in the last 5 years is incredible. The following is a list of a few things that would help your child make an easy transition to Kindergarten. Please bear in mind; these are **NOT** requirements for entering Kindergarten, only suggestions to help make a smoother adjustment.

- Print own first name (first letter uppercase, others lower)
- Hold pencil correctly
- Can zip or button own coat
- Recognize some letters
- Recognize colors
- Cut with scissors
- Tend to own bathroom needs

APPENDIX B- FUNDRAISING

Fundraising events are held throughout the school year.

If you wish to “buyout” of fundraising for the year, the cost is \$1,200 per family. This can be added to your monthly tuition withdrawal.

Fundraising Commitment Sign-up takes place in August at a special meeting.

APPENDIX C - EXTRACURRICULAR CLUBS, SPORTS & ORGANIZATIONS

There are many extra-curricular activities for you and your child at St. Mary’s School. Following is a list of many of the offerings. This list is intended to give you general information, but is not detailed or complete. Some of the contacts will change through time, so please keep an eye on the Wednesday Selmi’s Spotlight for more specific information.

ST. MARY’S HOME & SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

St. Mary’s Home & School Association’s mission is to enrich our children’s education in a dynamic environment by providing rewarding experiences in an atmosphere supportive of Christian values. By introducing programs that complement the current curriculum, as well as those that explore outside interests, the association enhances the educational partnership that exists between home and school. This is a parent organization.

CLUBS: Starting in 5th grade, SMS has after school clubs including: Scholastic Bowl, Math Club, and Math Counts. Information on these activities is presented throughout the school year.

SPORTS:

Athletic Director is Riley Pierce. Coaches change from year-to-year, as they are volunteers and normally parents of children that participate. Any and all are welcome to help out. You can contact her through the office or at rpierce@smsterling.org.

Coaches will be using the Heja app for communication with administration and parents.

A co-op for team sports involves St. Mary’s and St. Andrew schools. Team sports begin in 5th grade and include: boys/girls Cross Country (Aug/Sep), girls Volleyball (Sep/Oct); boys Basketball (Oct/Jan), girls Basketball (Jan/Mar), and track for boys and girls (Apr/May).

An organizational meeting is held prior to the start of each sport. Information and requirements are given out then. Each sport does require a current physical and a participation fee.

APPENDIX D - POLICY #6200
DIOCESE OF ROCKFORD
Elementary School Athletic Programs
Philosophy, Goals, Rules and Regulations

Reviewed and Revised January 2014

ARTICLE I – BELIEFS

The athletic programs of the Elementary Schools of the Diocese of Rockford are founded on these beliefs:

- the existence of God
- the dignity and worth of the human person
- the collegiality of people
- the right of God's people to mature in society and in the Church
- the responsibility of parents in transmitting these beliefs to their children

ARTICLE II – PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

The athletic programs of the elementary schools of the Diocese of Rockford exist to promote spiritual, moral, social, and physical development of students guided by the teachings of the Catholic Church. Such programs shall serve the following purposes:

- develop a healthy response to God and society
- show the goodness of God alive in our world
- deepen self-knowledge
- promote growth in social skills and moral development
- promote physical development and increase potential for improvement in sports
- experience God-given talents with fellow athletes
- develop within each student a philosophy of teamwork and fair play
- develop common goals
- create a spirit of camaraderie
- recognize personal responsibility based on truth and justice
- afford athletes the opportunity to participate and earn the respect and companionship of their peers
- discover and improve individual skills in each person
- promote self-confidence and poise as team members
- promote excellence through participation and learning while competing with other teams
- teach good fundamentals, team spirit, and sportsmanship
- promote understanding and knowledge in healthy living and sound physical development
- improve the ability to respond to the needs of others

ARTICLE III – ADMINISTRATION

In accord with Rockford Diocesan Policy 6200 “All elementary and high school athletic programs associated with Catholic schools in the Diocese of Rockford shall be under the jurisdiction of the local school principal. The athletic director will be accountable to the principal”. The Superintendents Council of the Diocese shall serve as the Board of Directors for the diocesan elementary school athletics. This Council shall make decisions on matters that are not resolved by the local school principal and/or the local conference of Catholic schools. All local policies must comply with and complement diocesan policies. All deanery and/or local league policies must be submitted to the Catholic Education Office annually for review.

MANAGEMENT OF CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY IN YOUTH SPORTS-POLICY 5175

The State of Illinois enacted a law effective July 1, 2011, requiring IHSA member schools to adopt a policy regarding student athlete concussions and head injuries that is in compliance with the protocols, policies, and by-laws of the IHSA. The School and its coaches shall continue to adhere to the IHSA Protocol for Implementation of NFHS Sports Playing Rule for Concussions and the IHSA Return to Play Policy, as they are now and may hereafter be amended. This Diocesan Policy applies to elementary schools and high schools.

Definition - A concussion is caused by a blow or motion to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. The risk of catastrophic injuries or death is significant when a concussion or head injury is not properly evaluated and managed. Concussions are a type of brain injury that can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Concussions can occur in any organized or unorganized sport or recreational activity and can result from a fall or from players colliding with each other, the ground, or with obstacles. Concussions occur with or without loss of consciousness, but the vast majority of concussions occur without loss of consciousness.

Removal from Practice and Game if Suspected Injury - When a student exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or other head injury, such as a loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems, or when a coach otherwise suspects a student has suffered a concussion or other head injury, the student shall be removed at that time from participation in a practice or game or other competition.

No Return to Practice or the Game without Physician Clearance - A student who has been removed from an interscholastic contest for a possible concussion or head injury shall not be permitted to return to that contest unless cleared to do so by a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois or a certified athletic trainer. If not cleared to return to that contest, a student shall not be permitted to return to play or practice until the student has provided the School with written clearance from a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois.

ARTICLE IV – ATHLETIC PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Section 1. A candidate for an athletic team may not practice or play in a game until he/she has filed with the school a certificate of physical fitness issued by a licensed medical doctor for the current school year and proof of insurance waiver signed by the parent/guardian. As of July 1, 2011 all student athletes in the State of Illinois must comply with mandated school policies regarding concussions and head injuries. This applies to students in both elementary and high schools. Principals, coaches and athletic directors should refer to Diocesan Policy 5175 for details of this mandatory policy. Also, see attached Concussion Information and Parent Release Form that must be distributed to every parent.

Section 2. Lower grade (through 6th) programs shall have as their primary emphasis instruction and participation. Upper grade (7th and 8th) shall emphasize instruction, participation, and competition. At the lower grades (through 6th) in order to emphasize instruction and participation, playing time in a given contest is to be equitable among all athletes on a team.

Section 3. Coaches and athletic directors must cooperate in teaching methods, styles of play, etc. so as to provide the best opportunity for athletes to develop proficiency and character.

Section 4. It shall be the responsibility of the host school to lead those assembled in a public prayer and recitation of the pledge of allegiance or playing/singing of the national anthem.

Section 5. It is mandatory that all team members who are listed in the official scorebook for each contest get playing time. Playing time at the lower grades (through 6th) is defined in Section 2 of this article above. In the upper grades (7th and 8th) every member listed in the book must enter and play in the game/match/contest before it ends. Likewise, it is mandatory that all team members who are listed in the official scorebook sit out a portion of each contest. Exception: When the number of team members is equal to the number of athletes necessary to field a team. The head coach of each team is responsible for implementing this rule.

Section 6. Host schools are responsible for having a designated person in charge of the game facility at all times. Such person will notify visiting coaches of his/her role. The individual in charge of paying game officials must pay them by check only. Cash payments of officials are NOT allowed.

Section 7. Each school shall establish, implement and communicate scholastic eligibility requirements for its students. Such scholastic eligibility requirements are to be included in the school's handbook which is distributed to families each year.

- Section 8. Each school shall establish, implement and communicate conduct eligibility requirements for its students. Such conduct eligibility requirements are to be included in the school's handbook which is distributed to families each year.
- Section 9. Religious activities take precedence over all athletic activities.
- Section 10. Any Invitational Tournament sponsored by a Diocesan school must follow Diocesan rules and regulations. (See Article VII, Section 4). Diocesan schools that participate in contests/tournaments with non-Diocesan schools or sponsored by non-Diocesan schools must compete in such contest following these Diocesan rules and regulations.
- Section 11. A properly equipped first aid kit must be available to coaches at all practices and contests. Every school gymnasium must have a properly functioning A.E.D. (Automatic External Defibrillator) unit in or near the gym. All adults who oversee athletics (i.e. coaches, athletic directors, principals, etc.) must be adequately trained to utilize the A.E.D. in an emergency.
- Section 12. Club teams, AAU teams, etc. (those operating independently from school/parish teams) must not be sanctioned by the elementary schools. In addition, to minimize confusion, such teams are not to be allowed to practice or play games in Diocesan elementary school facilities. Also, as a reflection of the philosophy and purpose of the Rockford Diocesan Elementary Athletic Policy, the Catholic Education Office recommends that participation on school teams take precedence over club, travel, or A.A.U. teams.
- Section 13. Consequences for violations of these Diocesan Rule and Regulations are to be developed and determined at the local level by the school principal. However, at a minimum, for violations of Article IV, Section 5; Article V-Requirements for Coaches and Athletic Directors; and Article VII-Limitations and Specifics, the school in violation shall be required to forfeit the contest in which the violation occurred and the head coach of the school in violation shall be suspended for the following contest.
- Section 14. "Slaughter Rule" – If a team is ahead by 25 points at the end of the 3rd quarter (for all regular seasons and tournament games) the clock will continue to run through the entire 4th quarter. Neither team will run a full court press. The team with the higher score will remove as many starters as possible. Official time outs will continue.

ARTICLE V – REQUIREMENTS FOR COACHES AND ATHLETIC DIRECTORS

- Section 1. Head coaches must be at least 21 years of age. An assistant coach may be under 21 provided an adult is at every game and practice when the head coach is unavailable. There must be a minimum of 2 adults at every practice and game.
- Section 2. At least one adult female must be in attendance at all girls' team practices and contests. At least one adult male must be in attendance at all boys' team practices and contests.
- Section 3. All coaches or other adults involved in student supervision must complete all diocesan requirements – Protecting God's Children training, criminal background checks, sexual misconduct norms receipt, Social Media Pastoral Conduct acknowledgement receipt, blood borne pathogens training,, and any other requirements that currently or in the future may exist or be implemented.

Section 4. Coaches shall display good sportsmanship to instill in each student a sense of responsibility for being good examples to one another. Coaches are always positive in coaching and encouraging a good attitude towards officials. Sportsmanship covers not running up the score on another team. Obscene language and behavior will not be tolerated. Coaches are not to incite the fans toward opposing coaches, players or officials. Athletic Directors are instructed to caution coaches and remind them of their responsibilities and accountability in this regard.

Section 5. All coaches will answer directly to their Athletic Director who will in turn answer to his/her principal. The local school principal is responsible for implementing the requirements for coaches and for determining and applying appropriate consequences for any violations that may occur.

Section 6. Diocesan rules governing sportsmanship and coaches shall apply in all cases.

ARTICLE VI – SPECTATOR GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

Section 1. All spectators are expected to exhibit acceptable conduct at all times and may be removed by the game officials or authorized personnel of the host school.

- a) Fans are expected to be courteous and respectful of the host school facility and those in authority.
- b) Obscene language and behavior will not be tolerated.
- c) Kicking and stomping on bleachers is unacceptable.
- d) Local host rules regarding food and drink in gyms will be observed.

Section 2. All student spectators must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

Section 3. Diocesan rules governing sportsmanship and spectators shall apply in all cases.

ARTICLE VII – SPORT LIMITATIONS AND SPECIFICS

The Diocese enacts the following sport limitations and specifics:

Section 1. If a school has many students at a particular grade level, there are to be multiple teams at that level so as to encourage greater participation. There is to be no cutting of players in the athletic program.

Section 2. Any contests and practices scheduled on Sundays shall begin at 1:00pm or after.

Section 3. Playing/Practice Time for Diocesan Schools: Each school team shall have a maximum of four days of practices/contests in a given week – Sunday through Saturday. Practice time shall be limited to no more than 90 minutes per session.

Section 4. Diocesan athletic rules provide guidelines as to limitations on the number of contests (every interscholastic competition/scrimmage shall be considered a contest):

Football

The total number of regular season contests may not exceed nine.

Soccer

The total number of regular season matches may not exceed seventeen.

Volleyball (7th and 8th Grade Levels)

The total number of regular season contests may not exceed:

- a) Twenty-one matches and no tournaments; or
- b) Nineteen matches plus one tournament; or
- c) Eighteen matches plus two tournaments; or
- d) Sixteen matches plus three tournaments; or
- e) Fifteen matches plus four tournaments

No volleyball team shall play in more than five different matches during any given tournament.

Volleyball (5th and 6th Grade Levels)

The total number of regular season contests may not exceed:

- a) Eighteen matches and no tournaments; or
- b) Sixteen matches plus one tournament; or
- c) Fourteen matches plus two tournaments.

No volleyball team shall play in more than five different matches during any given tournament.

Basketball (7th and 8th Grade Levels)

The total number of regular season contests may not exceed:

- a) Twenty-one games and no tournaments; or
- b) Nineteen games plus one tournament; or
- c) Eighteen games plus two tournaments; or
- d) Sixteen games plus three tournaments.

No team shall play in more than five different games during any given tournament.

Basketball (5th and 6th Grade Levels)

The total number of regular season contests may not exceed:

- a) Eighteen games and no tournaments; or
- b) Sixteen games plus one tournament; or
- c) Fourteen games plus two tournaments.

No basketball team shall play in more than five different games during any given tournament.

Track & Field and Cross Country

Established school teams should engage in at least three interscholastic contests, however, for the purpose of these rules and regulations, no diocesan school team shall compete in more than eight interscholastic meets/contests.

APPENDIX E DIOCESE OF ROCKFORD STUDENT WELLNESS POLICY

Belief Statement

The Diocese of Rockford is committed to providing a learning environment that supports and promotes wellness, good nutrition, and an active lifestyle as well as 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 as well as promote health and wellness, good nutrition and regular physical activity. In addition, the school staff shall be encouraged to model healthy eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

Intent

The purpose of this **Student Wellness** Policy is to ensure a total school environment that promotes and supports student health and wellness, helps to reduce childhood obesity and meets the requirements of the **Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004**, including:

- Goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school based activities designed to promote student wellness;
- Nutrition guidelines for all foods available during the school day;
- A plan for measuring implementation including designating one or more persons charged with operational responsibility.
- The involvement of parents, students, local school food service providers, the education commission, school administrators, and the public in developing this policy.

Rationale

The link between nutrition and learning is well documented. Healthy eating patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating is clearly linked to reduced risk of the development of many chronic diseases.

Schools and school communities have a responsibility to help students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to establish and maintain lifelong healthy eating patterns. Well-planned and well-implemented wellness programs have shown to positively influence children's health.

Schools also have a responsibility to help students establish and maintain lifelong habits of being physically active. According to the United State Surgeon General, regular physical activity is one of the most important things people can do to maintain and improve their physical health, mental health, and overall well-being. Regular physical activity reduced the risk of premature death in general and of heart disease, high blood pressure, colon cancer, and diabetes.

Goals for Nutrition Education

- Students in preschool through grade 12 receive sequential and interdisciplinary nutrition education. The program shall be designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to adopt healthy eating behaviors. Special emphasis should be placed on nutrition education in preschool through the primary grades as eating habits are established at a young age.
- The nutrition education program shall include enjoyable interactive activities such as contests, promotions, taste testing, field trips, school gardens, or other like activities.
- Schools shall work with parents to assist in providing a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children, which may include information to help incorporate healthy eating and physical activity.

Goals for Physical Activity

- Students in preschool through grade 12 shall participate in regularly scheduled formal and informal physical activity programs. Special emphasis should be placed on promoting an active lifestyle in preschool through the primary grades as health habits are established at a young age. Reasonable accommodations shall be made for students with disabilities and/or other limitations.
- Elementary schools shall provide a daily, supervised recess period for all students.
- Students shall be provided opportunities for physical activities through a range of school programs such as intramurals, interscholastic athletics, physical activity clubs, or other similar activities.

Goals for Other School-Based Activities Designed to Promote Student Wellness

Consistent School Activities and Environment - Healthy Eating

- It is recommended that food providers share information about the nutritional content of school meals and/or individually sold foods with students, family, and school staff.
- School meals shall be served in a clean, safe, pleasant setting with adequate time provided for students to eat.
- All food service personnel shall have adequate pre-service training and participate in activities or programs that provide strategies for providing tasty, appealing and healthy school meals; nutrition education strategies including coordination of classroom and cafeteria activities; and effective promotional techniques to encourage healthy eating habits.
- Students, parents, school staff and community members bringing foods and beverages to school for parties/celebrations/meetings shall be encouraged to provide healthful options. (Attachment A provides suggestions.)
- Schools shall make efforts to promote food and beverage choices consistent with the current *Dietary Guidelines for Americans and Food Guidance System (My Pyramid)* such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy food and whole grain products.

- All foods and beverages provided by the school shall comply with federal, state, and local food safety and sanitation regulations.
- Access to any area involved in storage, preparation or service of food on the school campus shall be limited to authorized personnel.

Consistent School Activities and Environment - Physical Activity

- Schools are encouraged to limit extended periods of inactivity. When activities such as mandatory testing make it necessary for students to be inactive for long periods of time, it is recommended that schools give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.
- Physical activity facilities and equipment on school grounds shall be safe.
- Schools are encouraged to work with the community to create a safe and supportive environment for students walking or biking to school.

Food or Physical activity as a Punishment

- School personnel shall not withhold food or beverages from students as a punishment.
- School personnel shall not withhold participation in recess or physical education class as a punishment.

Nutrition Guidelines For All Foods And Beverages Available on School Campuses During The School Day

- Food providers shall offer a variety of age-appropriate, appealing food and beverage choices and employ food preparation, purchasing and meal planning practices consistent with current ***Dietary Guidelines for Americans*** (e.g. provide a variety of fruit and vegetable choices; serve low-fat and fat-free dairy products; ensure that whole grain products are served).
- All foods and beverages sold individually (apart from the reimbursable school meal) shall be well regulated and consistent with the nutritional goals of this policy. This includes:
 - a la carte offerings in the food service program
 - food and beverage choices in vending machines, snack bars, school stores; and
 - foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities.
- Every effort shall be made to provide nutritious and appealing foods and beverages, such as fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy foods and whole grain products, wherever and whenever food is sold or otherwise offered at school.

Guidelines for School Meals

- School meals served shall be consistent with the recommendations of the ***Dietary Guidelines for Americans*** and/or shall meet, at a minimum, the nutrition requirements and regulations for the ***National School Lunch Program*** and/or ***School Breakfast Program***.

Measuring Implementation & Community Involvement

The diocesan superintendent or designee shall be charged with the operational responsibility for ensuring that each school meets the wellness policy requirements.

The principal of each campus shall be responsible for implementation of the ***Wellness Policy***.

Individual schools shall involve parents, students, representatives of the local school food authority, the education commission (if applicable), school administrators, and the public to implement and continue development of the ***Wellness Policy***. Their involvement shall include review of and listing on the ***Individual School Wellness Checklist***.

The diocesan superintendent, based upon feedback from individual schools, may revise the ***Wellness Policy*** as appropriate.

Healthful Food and Beverage Options for School Functions *

At any school function (parties, celebrations, meetings, etc.) healthful food options should be made available to promote students, staff, and community wellness. Examples of nutritious food and beverages that are consistent with the ***Dietary Guidelines for Americans*** are listed below.

- Raw vegetable sticks/slices with low-fat dressing or yogurt dip
- Fresh fruit wedges - cantaloupe, honey dew, watermelon, pineapple, oranges, tangelos, etc.
- Sliced fruit - nectarines, peaches, kiwi, star fruit, plums, pears, mangos, apples, etc.
- Fruit salad
- Cereal and low-fat milk
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- Frozen fruit pops with fruit juice or fruit as the first ingredient
- Dried fruits - raisins, cranberries, apples, apricots
- Single serving applesauce or canned fruit in juice
- Peanut Butter with apple wedges or celery sticks (be aware of classroom allergies)
- Fruit smoothies made with fat-free or low-fat milk
- Trail mix (be aware of classroom allergies)
- Lean meats and reduced fat cheese sandwiches (use light or reduced fat mayonnaise in chicken/tuna salads)
- Party mix (variety of cereals, nuts, pretzels, etc.) (be aware of classroom allergies)
- Pretzels or reduced fat crackers
- Baked chips with salsa or low-fat dip (ranch, onion, bean, etc.)
- Low-fat muffins (small or mini), granola bars and cookies (graham crackers, fig bars)
- Mini bagels with whipped light or fat-free crème cheese
- Pasta Salad
- Fat-free or low-fat flavored yogurt and fruit parfaits
- Fat-free or low-fat pudding cups
- Fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products (string cheese, single serving cottage cheese, cheese cubes)

- Flavored soy milk fortified with calcium
- Pure ice cold water

Updated June 2024

*This list is not all-inclusive and is meant only to provide parents and school staff with guidance for healthier food and beverage choices.