ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK 2020-2021

Saint Mary's is a Roman Catholic educational community serving students from preschool through grade 12. We strive to develop spiritual growth, academic success, character, and integrity in all students. Guided by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and supported by families, we provide a quality Catholic education where students are challenged to reach their highest potential and are inspired to embrace a life of service for God and neighbor.

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To be printed, signed and returned with student on 1st day of school 21

RIGHT TO AMEND

All policies in the handbook apply to our afterschool program, early childhood program, and extracurricular activities. Though this handbook was created with great forethought and care, situations and issues will arise that were not anticipated or that for some reason our handbook does not delineate. The school administration is the final recourse for the settling of these instances. The administration also reserves the right to amend this handbook for just cause. Parents/guardians will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

Background

OUR SCHOOL'S PHILOSOPHY

Saint Mary's Parish School is a Catholic school whose fundamental purpose is the cultivation of each student's spiritual, intellectual, and physical life. We believe that this purpose is best achieved by an administration and faculty dedicated to the principles of Catholic education.

Because of our strong reliance upon family values, we are committed to the Church's apostolate to the family and recognize parents as the primary educators of young people in matters of faith and moral development. It is only with this strong family witness that our faculty can more fully develop the potential within each student. Ever mindful of the wide-ranging academic and social interests of our students, Saint Mary's points to the Gospel message as the source of guidance for each individual. It should be understood that attendance at Saint Mary's Parish School requires students to give daily witness to the Gospel message by a Christian manner of conduct, intelligent choices, and sound moral values.

OUR SCHOOL'S SPIRITUAL LIFE

Fostering the spiritual growth of each student is an essential part of our mission as an institute of Catholic education. We welcome students of all faiths into our community as our brothers and sisters.

We attend Mass with the parish community each month and a chapel with the Blessed Sacrament is located in the high school. The Eucharist is truly the source of our unity and the highest possible worship of God. The priests and deacons of the parish are engaged in the spiritual life of the school, assisting the staff in making God present to our students.

We begin each day with a prayer to foster an awareness of the presence of God in the lives of our students. We sponsor a retreat for grade 8 to allow for an extended spiritual experience. We plan seasonal activities, such as the May Crowning, Stations of the Cross, and Living Nativity to expose students to the significance of traditional devotions.

We engage in outreach efforts both within our community and outside of it. We sponsor drives and fundraisers, encouraging students to be fully engaged in works of charity and mercy. As students grow and become more independent, they are encouraged to participate in community service of their choosing outside of school.

The school assists in preparing students for the sacraments of reconciliation and first Eucharist in conjunction with the parish's Office of Religious Education. We also assist students who wish to become Catholic through the parish's RCIA program.

The spiritual program of the school spans all grades and extends to every classroom and activity. Jesus Christ is the reason for our existence as an educational institution and we take seriously our mission to assist our students and their families to grow spiritually.

OUR SCHOOL'S HISTORY

Under the leadership of our fourth pastor, Father James Donohue, Saint Mary's School opened in September of 1898 and was dedicated by the second bishop of Springfield, Thomas Daniel Beaven. There were 150 children enrolled in the school and they were taught by five Sisters of Saint Joseph. A high school was added to the school the following year when a student named Nellie Roache insisted that she wanted to remain at St. Mary's to finish her education. In 1903, she became our first graduate.

With increased enrollment and a demand for more space over the ensuing years, the third story of the present elementary school building was added in 1914. The 1930's and 1940's saw a tremendous growth in the school population and the classrooms were filled to capacity. While the nation witnessed the demise of so many Catholic schools during the late 1960's and 1970's, Saint Mary's continued to flourish.

In 1963, our ninth pastor, Monsignor George Shea, bought the Westfield Trade School which was next door to the elementary school and it became Saint Mary's High School. As a further sign of its commitment to Catholic education, a Kindergarten program was added in 1979. In 2007, a four-year-old pre-school program was added, followed by a three-year-old program in 2012.

In the fall of 2013, Saint Mary's Parish School was born as the elementary and high schools merged under one administration. Recognizing the geographical diversity of the high school students, Saint Mary's High School became a diocesan school in 2019 while the elementary school continued under parish administration.

For over 115 years, the school has produced outstanding students who have brought tremendous pride and glory to our school in every field of endeavor. Graduates from our school have succeeded in public service, industry, business, education, medicine, and politics. Saint Mary's Parish and School have provided the Church with 22 priests and 38 religious sisters.

Though small in size, Saint Mary's is magnanimous in spirit. The current administration and faculty seek to uphold that fine tradition and spirit which is Saint Mary's. Saint Mary's can further boast that it is the only campus in the Diocese of Springfield to have a school that educates students from early pre-school through high school.

Admissions

Saint Mary's Parish School accepts students of all faiths and does not discriminate based on race or nation of origin. All are welcome to attend our school. Saint Mary's does, however, have the option to deny enrollment based on academic and conduct history.

FINANCIAL AID AND TUITION

Early Childhood	$6,350.00
Grades K-8	$5,375.00

Diocesan aid is available to eligible families. Apply online at online.factsmgt.com. The application deadline for FACTS is published in January. If you are not a Catholic and are in need of financial assistance, there are programs that are offered through Saint Mary's Parish School.

Saint Mary's need-based financial aid is available. For an application, please contact the main office. In order to be considered eligible for financial aid, this form must be completed before the start of the school year.

Saint Mary's scholarships, including Pastor/Principal Scholarships, may be offered. Please contact the main office for more information.

Parish vouchers are offered by individual parishes to supplement the tuition of practicing Catholics in their faith community. Please contact your pastor or Saint Mary's Parish School for more information. The amount of the voucher varies from parish to parish.

In order to qualify for financial aid, all financial accounts must be current***. Students that owe a balance will not be allowed to begin a new school year without agreed-upon payment arrangements being made with the administration at Saint Mary's Parish School. The School Board voted that at the start of each quarter, if a child's tuition is not current the child will not be allowed to return.*** If you have any questions regarding tuition, financial assistance, and/or payment options, please contact our business manager.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Early Childhood: parents/guardians of preschool-aged students register for the program.

Kindergarten: parents/guardians of kindergarten-aged students must complete the Kindergarten Screening Test for admission.

Elementary & Middle School: parents/guardians of elementary and middle school students are invited to make an appointment to meet with the principal.

Students and parents/guardians waive all rights of legal action for non-supervision on the part of Saint Mary's Parish School or its agents for students who enter or remain on school grounds or in the building in a non-supervised situation outside the curricular activities scheduled by the school (see student arrival and dismissal guidelines).

In addition, Saint Mary's Parish School and its agents are granted parent/guardian permission to seek emergency medical attention for their child if in their judgment such attention is warranted and the parent/guardian is not immediately available to grant such permission.

COMMUNICATION

If you have a question regarding your child, please follow the procedure below:

1. Contact the classroom or subject teacher. This is the person who works most closely with your child and should always be contacted first for concerns about social well being, academics, and discipline.
2. If you need further assistance, you may contact the principal. Before calling you back or meeting with you, the principal will always confer with the teacher.
3. Teachers also have the right to request a meeting with parents. In some cases the teacher may meet with the parents on his/her own or with our guidance counselor or principal in an effort to help solve the problem.

Please be advised that it is essential to follow the proper contact chain so that we can best address your concerns in the timeliest manner.

In order to create the best educational atmosphere for all children, good communication is important. Speaking to the main office will usually solve any questions concerning schedules, lunch, busing, attendance, and other business questions.

The main office is also the way to initiate communication with both the principal and teachers. Teachers should be contacted only at the school, not at their home ***or on social media***. Please call the school to make an appointment, as the principal and teachers are usually not available to meet at a moment's notice. The administration and faculty will make every attempt to respond to phone calls and emails within 24 hours.

You must report to the main office of the building upon your arrival. Parents are not allowed to enter a classroom without the permission of the principal or main office professionals.

FACTS web-based classroom portal (Grades 4-8), progress reports, report cards, letters, newsletters, and emails are sent home on a regular basis. Our website, stmsaints.org, is updated regularly. Please check with your child's teachers regarding their primary way of communicating. In addition, messages concerning early dismissal should be communicated to the school office as early as possible.

If after the above procedures take place, the parent feels that their concerns have not been addressed, then they may contact the principal.

STARTING TIMES AND DISMISSAL

Early Childhood
- Classroom doors open at 7:50 a.m.
- Dismissal is 1:50 - 2:00 p.m.

Elementary School (K-5)
- Teacher is on duty at 7:40 a.m.
- Homeroom is at 8:00 (students must be in their homeroom). *
- Dismissal is at 2:15 p.m.

Middle School (6-8)
- Teacher is on duty at 7:40 a.m.
- Homeroom bell is at 7:50 (students must be in their homeroom). *
- Dismissal is at 2:15 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Success at school requires consistent attendance. Frequent absences and habitual tardies are detrimental to a student and their studies. Therefore, regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students.

ABSENCES

Excused Absences
- Personal illness (note required from a doctor after 3 days)
- Death in the family
- Serious emergency
- Quarantining due to COVID

Unexcused Absences
- Vacation during academic school year
- Truancy

Our policies for handling absences from school include the following:
1. A dated and signed note giving reason for the absence must be given to the school when the child returns.
2. If a child is absent due to a contagious disease, the school office should be notified.
3. If a student is absent on the day of an extra-curricular activity, he/she may not attend as either a participant or as a spectator.
4. We strongly discourage children from being withdrawn from school for vacations during school time. **No schoolwork will be provided in advance of a planned vacation that coincides with academic school days.** It is the student's responsibility to catch up once they return.
5. Leaving school grounds without permission is absolutely forbidden for the protection of the child as well as the school.
6. Repeated absences from school/class are a serious concern. Diocesan policy states that any elementary school student missing nine days at the half-year point or eighteen days at the full-year point will not be allowed promotion to the next grade. For more information, see the promotion section under Academics on page 15.

TARDIES

The school recognizes that there are times when a family emergency or special circumstance can prevent a student from reaching school on time. Chronic tardiness from school constitutes a blatant disregard for school policy and is extremely disruptive to the school climate and atmosphere.

Our policies for handling tardies from school include the following:

- All students are required to be seated in their classrooms by the time the bell rings to start the day. Any student not in his/her seat will be considered tardy.
- The school requires that the parent/guardian of all tardy students should call the school before 9:00 a.m. to notify the school of a student's late arrival.
- A note, kept for the school files, should accompany the student and be given to the main office personnel upon arrival. If the office does not receive the note, disciplinary actions may follow.
- When a child is tardy, a parent must also sign them in at the office.
- After 5 tardies, the child will receive a 3-day recess detention. A form will go home that will need to be signed by a parent.
- After the 10th tardy a student's parent/guardian will be notified to schedule a meeting, in order to review school policy and remedy the situation. In this case, the school reserves the right to ask for an attendance contract. Repeated tardiness may result in further disciplinary action for the student.

EARLY DISMISSALS

- A child being dismissed early must be met by the parent in the school office.
- Leaving school early for any reason that is not deemed necessary by the principal will result in students being ineligible for after school events such as sports practices or games, school dances, drama practices or productions, club events, and/or any other school-sponsored activity. This includes being a spectator.

UNIFORM & DRESS CODE

Good personal hygiene and neat appearance are an essential part of our school. Violating these norms of neatness and cleanliness, even though conforming to specific uniform guidelines is unacceptable. Hair must not be unkempt or dyed an unnatural color. For boys, hair cannot be worn below the top of the shirt collar. Because some interpretation or judgment in these matters is obviously necessary, the administration of the school will be the final arbitrator of what is or is not acceptable.

Regular Uniforms

The administration may discipline any student when, in his/her judgment, he/she is wearing inappropriate apparel. If a student is out of uniform, a written uniform infraction will be sent home. Three infractions will warrant a detention.

<u>Shirts (girls and boys): Must Have School Logo</u>

- May be purchased through Tommy Hilfiger or Blakes School Uniforms
- Colors: light blue, navy blue, white, and hunter green
- Styles: Golf, Rugby, Oxford

<u>Sweaters and sweatshirts (girls and boys): Must Have School Logo</u>

- Co-ed ½ zip fleece jacket, co-ed full zip polar fleece
- Long sleeve V-neck sweater, long sleeve full sweater vest, V-neck sweater vest(all with STM logo)
- No oversized sweatshirts or hoodies are permitted unless it is a spirit wear or dress down day.

Pants (girls and boys)

- Uniform-style pants in navy blue or khaki; no pants or khakis that look like jeans, no leggings or tight fitting yoga pants.
- If belts are worn, they must be brown, black, navy, or tan. Belts are not required as long as pants are able to stay up.

Skirts and Jumpers (girls):

- Plaid jumpers or golf shirt style dresses. Our required plaid is available from both uniform distributers.
- Plaid skirts or kilts available from our two vendors.
- Skirts and skorts navy blue or khaki – no denim
- Navy blue or khaki jumpers
- Tights must be worn with skorts or skirts between November 1 and the Friday before April vacation. (white or navy blue)

Shorts (girls and boys):

- Golf or Bermuda shorts in navy blue or khaki. These must be no more than two inches above the knee.
- Cotton twill or polyester cotton is acceptable – no nylon, denim, or multiple snaps. Cargo shorts with multiple pockets are not acceptable.
- If belts are worn, they must be brown, black, navy, or tan. Belts are not required as long as shorts are able to stay up.
- Shorts may be worn from the first day of school through October 31 and from the Monday after April vacation until the last day of school.

Footwear (all):

- No open-toed shoes or sandals are allowed.
- No open-backed shoes are allowed.

Physical Education Attire

Students may wear their gym clothes to school on the day of their gym class. From the first day of school until October 31 and from the Monday following April Vacation until the end of the school year, they may wear shorts of appropriate length to school for gym class. From November 1 until the last day of school before April Vacation, they must wear long pants and a long sleeved sweatshirt. A T-shirt may be worn under the sweatshirt. No jeans are allowed. Students are to come prepared for indoor and outdoor activities.

Acceptable gym attire:

- Shorts of appropriate length, at least to mid-thigh, loose fitting and not baggy, no denim shorts or jeans allowed.
- Loose yoga pants, allowed only with a shirt that reaches to at least mid-thigh. **NO LEGGINGS** above grade 2.
- T-shirt with no offensive pictures or words
- Sweatpants or nylon running pants
- Sweatshirts or gym shorts. Shorts must be no shorter than 1⁄2 way between the thigh and knee.
- Sweatshirts with no offensive language or pictures
- Sneakers, tied or Velcro, no step-ins
- Socks must be worn.

A warning will be issued for any student not having appropriate clothing for gym. Students may wear their gym clothes in school all day. Students may not wear dangling earrings or watches during gym period. The teachers will not be responsible for jewelry.

Dress Down Days

If a dress down day is granted, students are encouraged to dress comfortably and appropriately, conforming to the following limitations:

- No pants with rips, holes, fringe, or frayed edges.
- Loose yoga pants are allowed only with a shirt that reaches to at least mid-thigh. **NO LEGGINGS** above grade 2.
- No hats, bandanas, visors, coats, gloves, mittens, or ear muffs.
- No tight shirts, midriff shirts, spaghetti straps, or tank tops (loose fitting, sleeveless shirts with a 2-3" shoulder are allowed).
- No shorts that are skin tight or shorter than mid-thigh.
- No clothing with slogans, advertising or innuendos for alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or other inappropriate language.

If a student's attire is deemed inappropriate it will be considered a dress code violation and a written uniform infraction will be given. Three warnings warrant a detention. Because some interpretation or judgment in these matters is obviously necessary, the administration of the school will be the final arbitrator of what is or is not acceptable.

The administration reserves the right to amend the dress code at any time.

TECHNOLOGY

Laptop Program: All Saint Mary's Parish School students in grades 3-8 will be issued a school laptop. Students must have on file a signed copy of the Laptop and & Internet Acceptable Use Policy and Laptop Home Use Rules & Regulations.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Students must turn in their cell phones to their homeroom or classroom teacher at the start of the day. Cell phones will be returned at dismissal. It is the responsibility of the student to retrieve their phone before leaving school. Smart watches that work as phones are not allowed in school at any time.

Cell Phone and Other Electronic Technology Infraction Policy

First Offense	▪ Device is confiscated. ▪ Device will only be returned to parent/guardian.
Second Offense	▪ Device is confiscated. ▪ Device will only be returned to parent/guardian. ▪ Detention is assigned.
Third Offense	▪ Device is confiscated. ▪ Device will only be returned to parent/guardian. ▪ Device may no longer be brought to school.

Telephone Calls: If students need to call home, they may use the office phone. The office phone is a business phone. Students will not be called out of class for phone messages, unless it is an emergency. Parents/guardians must not contact their son or daughter by cell phone during the school day. This includes

the sending of text messages. All communication will be made through the main office of the school. Students receiving calls or text messages will still be subject to the penalties above. If a student is feeling ill, he/she should report to the main office and will receive attention from the nurse. Students are prohibited from calling home from the restroom and requesting to be dismissed. Students who do so will be subject to the penalties outlined in the cell phone policy.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation is provided within Westfield. The schedule, routes, times, and rules are determined by the School Department of the City of Westfield. Student behavior on the school busses should be exemplary at all times. Children who break any of the bus rules will receive a Bus Conduct Report issued by the driver. Continual abuse of bus rules will result in denial of bus transportation.

In order for a student to ride another bus or get off at another bus stop other than the one assigned, a parent/guardian must write a note which must be delivered to the main office before homeroom. The City of Westfield does not allow the changing of busses during the first three weeks of school. Only students who qualify for bussing, according to the City of Westfield, may ride the busses.

Morning Drop-Off Times

- Early Childhood: 7:50-8:00 a.m.
- Elementary School: 7:40-7:55 a.m. Homeroom begins at 8:00 (students must be in their rooms and settled)
- Middle School: 7:40-7:45 a.m. Homeroom bell at 7:55 (students must be in their homerooms)

Morning Drop-Off Parking

- For parents walking their children to the Early Childhood buildings or to their lines, parking is in the main lot behind the cones. Exit by front gate.
- All K-8 students not dropped off in the drop-off lane MUST be walked to the door.
- Front parking lot is for faculty and staff. There is no parking here for drop-off.
- Handicap parking spaces and on-street parking restrictions are monitored by the Westfield Police.

Morning Drop-Off Procedure

- Enter the main parking lot by the back gate on Mechanic Street.
- Take a sharp right and proceed to the drop-off lane. Stay in a single file line.
- Exit by the dumpsters back onto Mechanic Street.

Parking during the School Day

We are always trying to give our elementary school students as large a recess space as possible, while affording the maximum number of student and faculty parking spaces. We ask all parents and visitors to respect the signs for handicapped and teacher parking. Additional parking should be available in the main lot, as well as along the street. Please note the street signs. The City of Westfield enforces its parking restrictions.

After School Pick-Up Times

- Early Childhood: 2:00 p.m.
- Elementary & Middle School: 2:15 p.m.

After School Pick-Up Parking

- Early Childhood: park in the main parking lot behind the elementary school in lanes 6-9 and exit by the front gate before 2:15.
- Elementary & Middle School: Park in lanes 1-5. Pull all the way up to the car in front of you. If you

are planning to stay in the lot for an few extra minutes, park in lanes 6-9. Do not park outside of the marked lanes.
- Rows are released by staff in order starting along the street side of the lot. Please be patient.

After School Pick-Up Procedure
- No vehicle will be allowed to leave until the teachers on duty deem it safe to begin exiting. All cars leaving the parking lot between 2:00-2:25 must exit by the front gate only. One lane will be instructed to leave at a time.
- Only students who are parked behind the high school will exit by the Birge Avenue gate.
- No one is to exit by the parking lot by the "enter" gate at any time.
- It is imperative that everyone follow these rules which are established to ensure the safety of all students and staff at dismissal.

Please refer to the Transportation Maps on pages 24-25 of the Handbook for more information.

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Saint Mary's Parish School's disciplinary code and policy is an effort to guide students to meet the high expectations of becoming students of exemplary character and integrity, and to truly embody the "Spirit of the Saints" where community is a valued feature.

Self discipline, self control and self regulation are the objectives of the character formation offered at Saint Mary's Parish School. To foster, encourage and develop self discipline, general behavior rules are enforced in all grades. All students are expected to:
- Respect members of the faculty and staff.
- Respect individual students and his/her rights and possessions.
- Respect school property, including books, computers, and other materials.
- Be courteous and attentive in class.
- Conform to school and classroom regulations.
- Be responsible for assignments given.

The Disciplinary Code and Policy applies to all school activities on school property, as well as school-sponsored events, including but not limited to, athletics, field trips, and extracurricular activities. Both teachers and administrators reserve the right to take disciplinary action.

Grades 3-5

Conduct	Disciplinary Action
▪ Violation of the dress code. ▪ Chewing gum or eating candy during the school day, including in the bus room. ▪ Being unprepared for class, including missing or incomplete homework. ▪ Displaying disruptive behavior or talking during class time. ▪ Mistreating school books, library books, or other materials. ▪ Other offenses as determined by administrators, teachers, or staff members.	▪ Written warning issued to student, which must be signed and returned to the teacher who issued it. ▪ An accumulation of five warnings in each marking period will result in a written notice to serve detention.
▪ Willful destruction of school property.	▪ A call home with a written detention form mailed

▪ Insolence or disrespect toward staff members and/or students. ▪ Bullying or aggressive behavior toward staff members and/or students. ▪ Putting hands on another child with perceived intended harm. ▪ Inappropriate language towards other students or adults.	to parent/guardian. ▪ Any repeat of the offense will require meeting between the teacher, principal, parent/guardian and the student.

For grades 3-5, detentions will be for 3 consecutive days, during lunch recess on Monday-Friday. If the student is absent on the day of the detentions, they are to serve detention upon their return.

Middle School

Step One: Students will receive a written warning for the following offenses: being unprepared for class, throwing things in class, tardiness to class, unprepared for class, chewing gum, disruptive behavior, inappropriate behavior at recess, profanity or obscenity, dress code violation, misuse of phone or technology, vandalism, skipping detention, misconduct at a school event, snowball throwing.

Step Two: Upon the third warning, the student will receive lunch recess detention (3 days at lunch time).

Step Three: Upon the second detention received, the parent/guardian and the student must meet with the classroom teacher and principal to discuss the ongoing disciplinary issue.

Step Four: Suspension may be given at the discretion of the principal.

For grades 6-8, detentions will be held on the bench in the foyer for 3 consecutive days during lunch recess from Monday-Friday. If the student is absent on the day of the detention, they are to serve it upon their return.

The following offenses will warrant an immediate detention and a meeting with the principal: stealing, cheating, fighting, verbal threats, harassment, racial remarks, physical assault, hazing, and bullying.

Academics

Student learning expectations are based upon national or Massachusetts state standards. In addition, our students are educated in the areas of faith and moral development, the arts, and physical education.

A student who is having academic difficulties should immediately seek help from the teacher. The teacher will then schedule an extra help session or may assist in helping the student to find a peer tutor. It is important for students not to wait until just before tests or the end of the marking period to go for extra help; they should go as soon as they have difficulty understanding the material. In some cases, course work is cumulative, one day's work depends upon the understanding of the previous day's material, thus, the longer a student waits, the more difficult it will be to catch up. Provisions for extra help are handled by the classroom teachers on an individual basis.

Extra credit may be available to students that have completed all work that has been assigned by the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher has the right to determine if a student will be allowed to do extra credit. Students who have not sought additional help first, will not be given extra credit work for the sole purpose of raising their grade.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

The faculty and administration strive to keep an open line of communication between school and home. If a parent/guardian has a concern about grades, he/she should contact the teacher first.

- Early Childhood: families are provided with progress reports three times per year.
- Kindergarten and grades 1-2: report cards are distributed three times per year.
- Grade 3: report cards are distributed four times per year.
- Grades 4-8: The school utilizes FACTS to communicate grades. Parents/guardians can and are encouraged to access student progress at any time. Report cards are distributed four times per year.

Please allow a minimum of 3 school days for grades to be posted after an assignment has been completed and turned in.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

- Diocesan policy 5320 states that the decision to promote or retain a student shall be made by the principal after consultation with the teacher and parent/guardian.
- Retention should take place only if there has been adequate evaluation and documentation that indicate that a student would most likely profit from retention.
- If this is the case, the retention should occur as early as possible in a student's educational career to achieve the desired effect.
- If a student has repeated a grade and continues to perform below grade level, a referral shall be made to the local educational district for a full evaluation of the student's educational needs.
- Ordinarily, parents will be consulted by mid-year if retention is considered probable by the principal and teacher.

Safety, Health, and Wellness

Emergency Forms: At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians are required to complete an emergency form for each child. In order to contact you for both emergency and administrative purposes, it is important that each student maintain an up-to-date phone record at the school office. Notify the school immediately if there is a change of address or home/work phone numbers during the school year. Saint Mary's uses an automated one-call system to keep parents notified of pertinent school information. Preferred phone must be indicated.

Crisis Planning: The school has a campus-wide crisis plan in place. In the event of a fire, lockdown, shelter-in-place, or evacuation, plans will be initiated. The school practices regular drills in-house and with city officials to be as prepared as possible in the event of an emergency. In the event of an evacuation, it will be determined by the city whether or not our students will be bused or walk to the specified location. Staff will use a cell phone for communication. First aid kits will be on hand. Our emergency forms will remain with us at all times. A duplicate set of emergency forms has been placed at the rectory. As soon as we are able, the school will contact the police department, fire department, rectory, Westfield School Department, diocesan office, and local media to keep all informed of our status. We will use our one-call system to keep you updated as frequently as possible. Once it is deemed safe for you to come to the location to retrieve your child, we will contact you to do so. We will not be able to reunite you with your child until the situation is under control. Countless measures are taken every day to keep the children as safe as possible.

Inclement Weather: School closings or delays are determined by the Westfield School Department. The decision to close or delay school is made by 5:30 a.m. Parents/guardians are advised to listen to local television or radio stations for this information.

Insurance: Each child is required to have some type of insurance coverage. Saint Mary's sponsors a student accident insurance plan and each parent/guardian must declare in writing if they want their children to be covered by that insurance at the beginning of each school year when the insurance forms are issued. Diocesan policy 5530 states that all schools should offer accident insurance to students. Parents/guardians preferring another insurance arrangement should explicitly indicate in writing that the family has adequate coverage and that the school will be held blameless in case of an accident in school or on school property. Written documentation of a parent/guardian's group insurance plan is kept on file on the emergency form filled out at the beginning of the year.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Medication: Diocesan Policy 5513 states that school personnel are never permitted to administer medication except in cases of emergency when it will be administered by persons trained for this specific purpose. If a school nurse is not available, the parents/guardian or adult designated by them must come to school to administer medication. Parents/guardians are encouraged to work out a schedule whereby medication is administered before or after the school day. If medication is mandatory during school hours, the following steps must be in place:

1. Written orders from the student's physician.
2. Written request/authorization from the student's parent/guardian.
3. Medication, in a pharmacy-labeled container, should be delivered to the school by a responsible adult.
4. One week's supply should be brought to the main office each Monday.
5. The bottle of medicine shall be issued by a pharmacist; the label shall have:

a. The name of the student.
b. The name of the doctor.
c. The name and strength of the medication.
d. The amount of each dose.
e. The schedule for the administration of the medication.

The school provides qualified nursing daily for our students.

When the school receives medication for a student, two forms need to be completed: Medication Administration and Emergency Care Plan Form and Parental Consent and Medication Order Form. Diocesan policy 5510 states that each school shall comply with local Board of Health and Commonwealth of Massachusetts regulations regarding immunizations, communicable diseases, administering medications, and physical examinations.

Immunizations: Diocesan policy 5510.1 is as follows: State law requires immunization against Hepatitis B, varicella (chicken pox), diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella, and polio. Children must also be tested for the presence of lead. Parents are required to present certification of immunizations when they register children in school for the first time.

A student shall be admitted to school without required immunizations upon certification by a physician, who has personally examined the student, that the student's health would be endangered by any of the immunization series. Such certification shall be submitted at the beginning of each school year to the health authorities in charge of the school health program.

BULLYING AND CYBER BULLYING

Bullying is the repeated use by a perpetrator of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof directed at a victim.

Bullying

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property.
- Places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property.
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim.
- Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyber Bullying is repeated bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication. Cyber Bullying includes but is not limited to:

- Any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transferred in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic, or photo optical system.
- Electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications.
- Cyber bullying shall also include creating or promoting a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person and in which an individual(s) knowingly impersonates another person as the author of posted content or messages contained therein.

All Bullying shall be prohibited:

- On school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school- sponsored event or related activity, function or program off of school grounds, bus stops, busses, or on technology owned, leased, or used by the school.
- At a location or function that is not school related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at

school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process of the orderly operation of the school.

In accordance with House Bill No. 4571 Saint Mary's Parish School will:

- Inform parents/guardians about bullying prevention.
- Post the school's Bullying Prevention Plan on the school web page.
- Promptly respond to and investigate reports of bullying or retaliation which balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior.
- Have clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a victim and assess a student's need for protection.
- Have strategies for protecting a person from bullying or retaliation who reports bullying or provides information.
- Follow procedures consistent with state and federal law for promptly notifying the parents/guardians of a victim and a perpetrator; provided, further, that the parents/guardians of a victim shall be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying; and provided further, that procedures shall provide for immediate notification by the principal to the local law enforcement agency where criminal activity is involved and criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator.
- Provide a strategy for counseling or referral to victims, perpetrators, and for appropriate family members of said students.

ANTI-HAZING LAW

Massachusetts General Laws, Section 269, Chapters 17-19

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen

to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

Extracurricular Activities

Saint Mary's offers a variety of activities and programs to complement a student's academic formation. Through athletics, clubs, and service activities, students will gain a number of social skills which will help them in the wider community. These activities may vary from year to year based on student population and interest. This year 2020-2021 COVID guidelines will play a part in after school activities.

Saint Mary's Parish School requires its students to maintain a C average and a GPA of no less than 1.67 in order to participate in any club, service, or sports program. No student with an 'F' in any class will be allowed to participate in any club, service, or sports program. Furthermore, students on behavioral contract are ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities.

Extracurricular activities include: athletics, Drama Club, Yearbook Committee, Mad Science, Student Council, Wright Flight, and National Junior Honor Society.

The high school Athletic Director provides all students with a separate Athletics Handbook which outlines school policies that adhere to PVIAC and MIAA rules and regulations.

Clubs and Class Officers

Qualifications for Class Officer/Club Officer:

- Candidates must have a minimum grade point average of 1.67 and no 'F's' during the current year.
- Candidates must have exemplary behavior, a good attendance record, and no more than 3 unexcused tardies.
- Nomination forms must be obtained and properly submitted to class/club advisors.
- Elected candidates must sign an Agreement Form with the faculty and administration, adhering to the above-mentioned qualifications as a representative of Saint Mary's Parish School. The form will be maintained in the office.
- All club officers and members must review and adhere to all anti-hazing and bullying laws.

Dance Policy

Dance Policy rules are to be strictly adhered to. The current policy will be obtained in the main office prior to the dance. Guests from a school other than Saint Mary's will be required to submit a signed guest form before being admitted to the dance.

Field Trips

Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals. Field trips are re-evaluated each year to determine the trip's compatibility with curricular goals. Please note the following policies:

- A field trip is a privilege and not a right. Students ineligible for extra-curricular activities due to disciplinary issues or academic ineligibility may not be permitted to attend the trip.
- All grades, levels, and classes do not have the same number of field trips.
- An informed consent form signed by the parent/guardian is required before a student will be permitted to attend. No student may attend without this form on record. Verbal permission via telephone will not be accepted.
- Students participating in a field trip must ride the school transportation to and from the activity.

- All school rules apply (including rules regarding cell phones and other technology) while on a field trip.
- All chaperones must be following diocesan standards for child-protection, which include CORI checks and VIRTUS training.

Community

FUNDRAISING

A large portion of what makes our schools so successful is the part in which our families play. While some parents can contribute more financially, others can volunteer their time and talents. We welcome your gifts. With your help, our school is able to thrive. Fundraising at Saint Mary's Parish School is handled through the advancement office. And the PTO at the elementary school.

Groups who participate in fundraising must have their fundraisers approved by the principal and the advancement office.

Some middle school clubs and teams will do fundraisers or drives approved by administration.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Saint Mary's Parish School recognizes one Parent Teacher Organization with two subcommittees. During the summer the group will meet with the principals and advancement office to set fundraising goals and the fundraising schedule.

The PTO was established to provide a channel of communication between parents, teachers and the administration of Saint Mary's Parish School in order to promote the general well being of the students. The specific goals of this organization are to:

- Raise the necessary funds to provide for additional educational opportunities for the students.
- Provide opportunities for all concerned individuals to come in contact with ideas which will promote the educational, moral, and spiritual development of the student at home and at school.
- Direct and coordinate parental support to the school through assistance with activities, social functions, and fundraisers.
- Raise the consciousness of the parents regarding local, state, and federal legislation that affect Catholic schools as well as the lives of students and parents.

All parents are members of the PTO and are encouraged to actively participate. A list of meeting dates and times is given out at the beginning of the school year.

SCHOOL BOARD

The St. Mary's Parish School Advisory Board, established by Saint Mary's Parish with the approval of its pastor, shall have as its primary concern the ministry of Catholic School education: the spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development of the students. The board, operating under the guidance of the School Board of the Diocese of Springfield and in conformity with the Diocesan School Office, shall concern itself with matters pertaining to the general excellence of education at Saint Mary's Parish School. It is strictly an advisory board.

STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please sign this form and return to the main office.

Dear Families,

Welcome to a new school year! May it be one filled with blessings and success for all of us.

Our school is guided in many ways by our handbook. Outlined in this handbook you will find explanations of the important policies and procedures currently in effect at Saint Mary's Parish School and in the Diocese of Springfield.

The purpose of our handbook is twofold: to provide the administration and faculty with the means of serving our students and their families, and ultimately, to better fulfill our mission of providing a quality Catholic education that reveals Christ in a loving and safe faith community. Secondly, it is meant to inform both students and their families of what is expected of them and what they can expect from the administration, faculty, and staff at Saint Mary's Parish School each and every day.

In order to be more kind to our earth, and to show that we are constantly updating our technology, our handbook is now available on our website at stmsaints.org. Please review the contents of our handbook, both by yourself and with your child/ren. It is important that we all understand our responsibilities to our school, to our parish, to the diocese, and to each other.

When you have completed your review, please sign and return this entire page to school. This is our mutual assurance that we will work together cooperatively. Your signature indicates that you have read our handbook, understand the policies of our school, and agree to be governed by them.

As we begin this school year, we ask God's blessings on each of you. We pray that together we will be able to maintain and enhance the quality Catholic education already present at Saint Mary's.

Ms. Juli Jensen-Derrig
Principal

Child/ren's names and grades

_____ _____

_____ _____

Parent/guardian signature & date

_____ _____

Student's signature(s) (Grades 3-8)

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____