

# **Parent/Student Handbook**

## **Saint Margaret Mary School**

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Let it be known to all who enter here  
that Christ is the reason for this school,  
the unseen, but ever-present, Teacher in its classes,  
the Model of its faculty,  
the Inspiration of its students.

## **FOREWARD**

This handbook has been designed to describe to you the philosophy, curriculum, and procedures of the school. It is believed that you can contribute much to the success of the school program if you understand what the school is trying to do. The education and training of children must remain the joint responsibility and cooperative program of the home and school. Nothing contained in this handbook is intended to, or shall be construed to, create any contractual obligations, expressed or implied, on the part of the diocese, or school. It is hoped that you will read the handbook, acquaint yourself thoroughly with its contents, keep it in a safe place, and consult it for the assistance it is designed to give.

## **RIGHT TO AMEND**

The School Administration, in consultation with the Pastor and the Board of Education of Saint Margaret Mary School, reserves the right to amend this handbook when circumstances warrant it. Parents and students will be promptly notified, in writing, of any such amendment.

## **SAINT MARGARET MARY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

Saint Margaret Mary School provides the best possible Catholic education in a faith-filled, safe and happy environment while fostering a love for God, self and others. The administration, faculty, and staff encourage peacemaking, self-discipline, and learning through a variety of experiences that will lead to well-rounded individuals, who will become future leaders in our church and in the world.

### **Core Values and Beliefs of Saint Margaret Mary School**

#### **We believe...**

- We must provide an excellent religious and academic education in a Catholic environment.
- We must help each child grow in faith, knowledge, and sense of service to the community within and outside the school.
- Self-esteem, self-discipline, a spirit of cooperation, and a desire to learn are values, which we must encourage and incorporate into our curriculum and foster in our multicultural school community.
- Teachers are partners with our parents, who are the primary educators of their children.
- Evangelization is part of the school's mission to Catholic students, their families, and the sharing of the Christian message with students and families of other faith traditions.
- St. Margaret Mary School is a family oriented school guided by caring qualified teachers.

## **HISTORY OF SAINT MARGARET MARY SCHOOL**

Saint Margaret Mary School has a solid tradition of bringing Catholic education to the Harrisburg area community. St Margaret Mary Parish was established in March 1948 with Father Francis A. Kirchner serving as the first pastor. In October 1949 the school and church (which occupied the current gymnasium) were dedicated. The School Sisters of Notre Dame taught in the school. In 1955, the St. Margaret Mary Convent was built.

With the growing Catholic community, an additional four classrooms were built in 1958. In 1985, the Sisters of Notre Dame withdrew and Dr. Kathleen McKenna became the first lay principal. In July 1986, with the closing of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament School, the students from the parishes of both Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament and St. Matthew the Apostle, Dauphin enrolled in St. Margaret Mary School. At the same time, two Sisters of Mercy began teaching in the school. Due to the growing enrollment, a modular classroom building was added in July 1987.

As a service to working parents, the A-STEP program, which provides after school care for the school children, began in 1997. In the summer of 1999, extensive renovation was completed on the school building. Tragically, in February 2000, a fire destroyed the modular classrooms in the back of the school. With insurance funds and the overwhelming support of the community, a new annex consisting of six modular classrooms was attached to the main building in August 2000.

A Pre-Kindergarten Program began in September 2007, in the former Sacred Heart Room of the convent building. In the same year, a Before-School Program, known as B-STEP, began.

Today the school offers a full curriculum that meets state and diocesan standards, taught by a certified faculty with numerous extracurricular opportunities for students to learn and grow.

### **SCHOOL BOARD**

The School Board is a consultative body consisting of elected and appointed members, whose purpose is to advise and assist the pastor and principal with the governance of the school, especially school policy. The Board is composed of representative members from the three constitutive parishes (ie. St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, and St. Matthew the Apostle and Evangelist). In contrast to public school boards, parochial school boards of education are consultative in nature and are not tasked with administrative responsibilities or duties appropriate to the principal and faculty.

## **PARENTS AS EDUCATORS**

First and foremost parents have a serious obligation of providing and monitoring the progress of the education of their children. Parents are the first educators and must create a family atmosphere filled with love and respect for God and His people. By teaching their children values, attitudes, and a love of Christ, self and others, parents foster a well-rounded personal and social education.

The Catholic school is an extension of the education that begins in the home. By the time a children enter school, they are not beginning their education, but they are continuing their education with the help of the adult community i.e. parents and trained educators. A positive attitude toward education by both parents and students is very important to achieve success. The parental attitude towards education is the utmost influential factor of the students' academic achievement.

When concerns between teachers and students arise, parental judgments should be reserved until a conference with the teacher can be arranged. In cases requiring disciplinary action of a student, the full cooperation of the parents will be most helpful in resolving the situation. A disregard of authority allowed to continue at this level of education may carry into adulthood.

## **FACULTY AND STAFF**

The faculty is comprised of state certified teachers who are dedicated to providing students with a quality Catholic education in accordance with the Office of Catholic Education, Diocese of Harrisburg and Pennsylvania state regulations.

## **ABSENCES AND EXCUSES**

It is essential to teach our students that education is a priority in their lives. Through regular school attendance, students learn personal responsibility with emphasis on the importance of education as a lifelong foundation.

Parents are required to notify the school office before 8:30 A.M. on the day of a child's absence. On the first day that a student returns to school after an absence, the student is required to present to his/her teacher an absentee note properly completed and signed by a parent.

- **It is mandatory for a parent to send a note reporting an absence.**
- A Friendly Reminder will be issued the first time the student returns without an absentee note.
- Extensive absences may be reported to the Diocese Department of Education and Children and Youth Services.

### **Procedures for Tardy and Absence:**

Students who arrive at school after 8:10 a.m. but before 10:00 a.m. may be considered tardy

Students who arrive after 10:00 a.m. will be considered absent for half day.

Diocesan policy states that 5 tardies for non-medical reasons will be changed to 1 day absent.

A medical excuse from a doctor is required for three or more consecutive days of absence.

### **Procedures for Leaving During the School Day:**

A student who leaves school before 10:00 a.m. due to illness or an appointment, and does not return to school is considered absent for the entire day.

- Early dismissals will be monitored for frequency.
- Five (5) early dismissals may be changed to one (1) day absent.

No student is permitted to leave the school after arrival in the morning or at any time during the day before the regular dismissal except in case of a doctor's appointment, sickness, or similar emergency. In such cases, the student is permitted to wait the waiting area outside the school office until the parent or person authorized by the parent arrives. No student will be permitted to wait outside the building or leave with an individual other than the one who has been designated through a note or phone call by the parent. Parents are encouraged to make doctor and dental appointments after 3 p.m. to avoid interruption of the school day.

A student will not be dismissed early for reasons other than sickness unless the homeroom teacher and the school office receive a written statement from the parent explaining the reasons (e.g., doctor's appt.) for the early dismissal request. Upon arrival at the school, the parent must sign the student out in a book provided for this purpose.

- **If a student is going to be absent from school for more than two days for a non-medical reason, a written request must be submitted to the principal for approval at least 5 days prior to the absence.**
  - Non-medical reasons include but are not limited to: non-school athletic competitions, Take Your Child to Work Day, and vacations
  - Parents are requested not to plan vacations during the school term, as this is disruptive to both the class and the student
  - Any student who is out of school will be marked absent and is responsible to make up any work that is missed.
- Students who participate in or attend extra-curricular or school sponsored activities must be present in school for the full day in order to participate.
- Schoolwork that is missed must be made up upon return to school.
- Only after **two** days of absence, parents may request missed assignments to be picked up at the office

## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The Office for Catholic Education of the Diocese of Harrisburg sets the guidelines for all curricula in the school. The total development of a student depends not only on their ability to learn as well as they can through a diversified curriculum.

The curriculum objectives:

### Religion

- To provide the essentials of Catholic doctrine and the principles of morality
- To teach the Catholic Liturgy with the Mass as its center
- To familiarize the student with the Scriptures
- To expose the students to the historical development of the Church
- To teach truths that illuminate our understanding of life
- To teach reverence for God and for all creatures
- To prepare students for first reception of the Sacraments

**Please note: Part of the religion curriculum for grades 7 & 8 is to provide service to others. A minimum of 30 hours is required in both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Ten service hours are required to be submitted to the religion teachers by the last day trimesters 1 & 2. The service hours for the 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester are due no later than a date determined by the teacher. Service hours may be turned in early and will be credited to the appropriate trimester. Failing to complete required service hours each trimester will have a negative impact on a student's religion grade as well as a negative impact on their ability to participate in special end of the year activities such as school dances, special assemblies, Track & Field Day, and the class field trip.**

### Human Sexuality/Formation in Christian Chastity

The Diocese of Harrisburg has approved guidelines for programs in Human Sexuality and Formation in Christian Chastity. Saint Margaret Mary School integrates both programs into the religion curriculum. Students in grades one through eight are guided in identifying life as a gift from God. The emphasis is upon an awareness and simple appreciation of creation in all forms: plants, animals, family, and self. In addition, students are encouraged to become more aware of their personal attitudes toward life, their dignity as persons, along with their normal physical and emotional development. They explore the wonders of life through sound theological materials and under the watchful eye of parents, church, and faculty. In short, students are presented with the idea that “what they are is God’s gift to them and what they become is their gift to God.”

## **Language Arts**

- To develop and practice correct grammar
- To improve oral and written communication skills
- To teach writing in accordance with acceptable English usage
- To master logical organization of ideas in both written and spoken forms
- To develop reading and comprehension skills
- To acquaint students with literary classics

## **Mathematics**

- To develop mathematical and application skills
- To teach quantitative concepts
- To teach mathematical computations
- To teach concepts and operations in practical applications
- To develop the ability to prove geometrical relationships and to use units of measurements
- To encourage sound reasoning and logical thinking
- To emphasize problem solving
- To involve the students in math competitions and math-a-thons

## **Science**

- To utilize a hands-on approach in teaching science
- To develop for each student a working knowledge of terminology, laws, theories, methods of investigation, and scientific process skills
- To expose students to laboratory experiences and techniques
- To have students participate in science fairs
- To teach scientific achievement in historical context

## **Social Studies**

- To present the different geological areas of the world
- To emphasize cultures, industries, and natural resources
- To chronologically trace the development of civilization throughout the world
- To familiarize the student with the United States Constitution, the American political process, and the structure of the American government
- To expose the student to current events that affect the world today and evaluate them in relation to past events that constitute our American heritage
- To have students participate in National History Day

## **Music**

- To develop music appreciation through theory and singing
- To teach liturgical music
- To offer optional instrumental music lessons and a band experience

## **Art**

- To expose students to various art forms and styles
- To familiarize the students with many artists and to help them appreciate the beauty in all forms of art and history
- To allow for creativity in the student's own expression of art
- To involve the students in art competitions

### **Physical Education/Health**

- To teach the student basic calisthenics and physical fitness
- To teach the student the basics in hygiene, proper nutrition, and dangers of drugs and alcohol

### **Spanish**

- To expose students to the language and culture of Spanish speaking countries
- To learn basic grammar, conversation, idioms and vocabulary of the Spanish language

### **Technology**

- To teach basic computer terminology
- To teach students to collect, graph and analyze data
- To have students explore a variety of simulations and applications
- To reinforce basic computer literacy to include keyboarding and word processing
- To instruct students on Internet safety and proper Internet behavior
- To participate in distance learning via the Wide Area Network

### **Services for Special Needs**

Through the use of state funds, the school shares in certain special services provided for all non-public schools under PA Act 89. Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) provides:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Educational/Psychological Evaluation
- Remedial Math/Reading
- Guidance Services

### **Remedial Reading and Mathematics**

Remedial reading and math instruction is available on a part-time basis to students who are in need of individualized help. The classroom teacher and the remedial teacher in conjunction with the parent make this determination. This service is provided through the Capital Area Intermediate Unit. The program allows for carefully planned and executed activities geared to individual needs, and individual evaluations to determine level of ability and measured progress.

### **Instructional Support**

St. Margaret Mary School employs certified teachers who are part of the St. Margaret Mary School Instructional Support Team. They work with students identified with a learning disability and/or enrichment needs.

## **ACCIDENTS**

In minor cases, authorized school personnel will give first aid. In the event of an emergency requiring professional medical assistance, every effort will be made to contact the parents. If a parent is not available, an authorized local contact person on the emergency card will be called. If none of the authorized persons on the form can be reached, the school will seek the care needed. Parents will be responsible for any expenses incurred. If an emergency exists, the student will be taken to the nearest hospital by ambulance or by car, and efforts to contact a parent will continue. **For this reason, it is important that the emergency card information is kept up to date.**

## **ACHIEVEMENT TESTING**

In April, students in grades 3 through 8 participate in the ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) standardized testing, which measures achievement and ability. Test results are sent home to parents after they are received and reviewed by the school. All students are required to be in school during the week of testing.

## **ADDRESS CHANGE**

All changes of address, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses during the year must be reported promptly to the office, to the homeroom teacher, and to the nurse. Be certain that the school has a second telephone number to be used when a contact number cannot be reached with the home telephone.

## **ADMISSION**

Families of Saint Margaret Mary, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, and St. Matthew Parishes who desire an educational experience founded on the Catholic philosophy of education are given the privilege to have equal eligibility for admission to Saint Margaret Mary School. The request for admission of students from all three parishes will be carefully reviewed as to the family's parish registration, coupled with their commitment in church attendance and faithful parish support. The Catholic rate is reserved those who have been baptized practicing Catholics and are actively supporting a Catholic parish.

After accommodating the families of the three parishes, Saint Margaret Mary School may provide space for other families to include children of other parishes, and children not of the Catholic faith.

**All new admissions in grades 1-8 are on a provisional basis. Students' academics and behavior are monitored throughout the first trimester of school. Support is given to help all new students to find success at St. Margaret Mary School. Students who do not succeed academically or are unable to conform to our discipline policies will be asked to find another academic setting that would be more suited to meet their needs.**

**All transfer students are accepted on a trial basis, and admission is reviewed after the first trimester.**

## **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Regarding the admission of students, Saint Margaret Mary School will not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, or religion. Enrollment shall not exceed 25 students in any class except when approved by the principal and the pastor. For admission to grade one, a child shall be six years of age by September 1 of the school year in question.

Children who reach the age of five by September 1 of the school year in question may be admitted to kindergarten. Screening is done for incoming Kindergarten children during the month of May. This screening evaluates the child's vision, hearing, physical development, ability to listen and follow directions, and fine motor skills. The following must be presented upon registration:

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate
- Verification of Immunization as required by the Commonwealth of PA
- Proof of custody where applicable
- Academic records from previous school (transfer students)

## **ANTI-HAZING POLICY**

The Diocese of Harrisburg prohibits any form of hazing of or by employees, volunteers or students. Hazing is defined as: "Any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a person or which willfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in, any organization. The term shall include, but not be limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug or other substance, or any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health and safety of the individual, and shall include any activity which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual, or any willful destruction or removal of public or private property.

For purposes of this definition, any activity as described in this definition upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with or continued membership in an organization is directly or indirectly conditioned shall be presumed to be "forced" activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such activity notwithstanding." (From Act 2016-31) Any student who experiences some form of hazing or staff member who becomes aware of hazing should report it to the school administration. Any staff member or volunteer coach who permits or encourages hazing will face disciplinary action, including possible dismissal. Any student who engages in hazing is subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the offensive conduct. Every elementary and secondary school shall promulgate this policy to parents and provide a copy to all athletic coaches and moderators of activities in accord with Pennsylvania state law.

Policy Adopted: July 1, 2016, RWG/Bishop of Harrisburg

## ALTAR SERVERS

Boys and girls who are altar servers in their home parishes are invited to serve at school Masses and will be trained in this ministry.

## ANNUAL FUNDRAISERS

In order for St. Margaret Mary School to maintain a reasonable tuition rate a variety of fundraisers take place during the year. **The PTO and the school administration depend upon the support of all families for the fundraisers to be successful. Your participation is crucial and greatly appreciated by the students, teachers, and staff.** Each student benefits from these endeavors; therefore, it is required that each parent fully participate and support them.

Following are the ongoing fundraisers for each school year:

**Boxtops for Education:** General Mills will donate ten cents for every box top redeemed. Box tops may be sent into school in an envelope or deposited in the basket in front of the office window.

**Coke Rewards:** Go to the website [Coke.com/give](http://Coke.com/give) to get started with Coca-Cola Give. You'll donate by signing in and choosing your local school. Note, schools are not authorized to have individual accounts so all donations must originate from individual Coke.com accounts. Any donation that a school receives from the program can be used to purchase supplies for extra-curricular activities including sports, technology, art and/or school supplies within your school.

**Giant A+ Rewards:** Register your bonus card at [giantfoodstores.com](http://giantfoodstores.com) and select St. Margaret Mary School to donate a portion of your qualified purchases. All bonus card donations will be calculated and St. Margaret Mary School will receive the donation in May. Bonus Cards do not have to be re-registered each year.

**Inkjet Cartridges:** St. Margaret Mary School collects and recycles used home printer ink cartridges only. The school earns points which are redeemable for equipment or cash rebates.

**Monte Carlo Night:** An adult only event, sponsored by the School Board, is a fun evening of Casino-Style gaming for fabulous prizes. Other exciting activities include Bingo Room, Piano Lounge, 50-50 drawing, Widescreen viewing for sporting event. Tickets include food, drinks and start-up gambling chips.

**Online Auction:** St. Margaret Mary families are invited to bid on auction items on E-Bay. Items include fun faculty events with students, student artwork, Principal for a Day, sports memorabilia and event tickets and a variety of gift baskets.

**PTO Fundraisers:** Sub sales are held several times per school year. Butter Braid sales are held in the spring. As with sub sales, orders are placed, filled and sent home with the students.

**SCRIP:** This program is a crucial fund-raising program for our school. Scholarship funds are generated through the sale of gift cards. A variety of gift cards may be purchased in the Divine Mercy Room after weekend Masses at St. Margaret Mary Church or online at [shopwithscrip.com](http://shopwithscrip.com). Think of it as "one-stop-shopping." No more running around for gift, etc. You can get all your gift cards through this program. Order over the weekend or on Monday and receive by Friday!

**Shoparoo:** Hassle-free fundraising phone app. Shop for products at any store. Snap a picture of your receipt. Shoparoo then donates to our school. It's that easy!

**Spartan Sprint:** A major fundraiser for St. Margaret Mary School. Families submit twelve or more address labels for sponsorship for students. Students participate in a run/walk to raise funds for St. Margaret Mary School.

**St. Margaret Mary 5K:** Participants run/walk a challenging course through our St. Margaret Mary community. T-shirts are included with registration, if completed by deadline. Prizes are awarded in each age category.

## **ASSEMBLIES**

Assembly programs are held periodically throughout the school year. Advance notification of assemblies, listing dates, and times will be distributed to students and is also available through the school website.

## **A-STEP/B-STEP**

The Saint Margaret Mary School A-STEP (After School Tutorial and Enrichment Program) is designed to develop the social, intellectual, emotional, and physical dimensions of the children entrusted to its care. Certified teachers of St. Margaret Mary School staff both the A-STEP and B-STEP (Before School Tutorial and Enrichment Program). A-STEP provides its own handbook and fee schedule. For more information on the before and after school programs, please call the school office or school website.

## **ATTENDANCE**

The students should be in the school cafeteria by 7:55 a.m., but not before 7:30 a.m. When a student arrives for school after 8:10AM, he/she is marked tardy. Student who are tardy are required to report to the school office for a late slip before entering the classroom. Excessive lateness is detrimental to a child's learning, and, consequently, a parent conference will take place when a pattern of lateness occurs. See Absence section.

## **BIRTHDAY TREATS**

Parents may send in a small birthday treat to celebrate their child's birthday. This treat should be an individual serving size for each student in the homeroom. These treats will be shared at morning recess or at lunch. Please send treats with students or drop them off at the office. *Parents will not be permitted to drop treat off in the child's classroom.* Please check with the homeroom teacher to see if there are any allergy concerns in the class.

## **BULLYING POLICY**

St. Margaret Mary School has an anti-bullying policy that is based on our Catholic faith. In the Gospel of Saint Matthew, Jesus tells us "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you." We continually work with our students to help them gain a complete understanding of this area of faith and to practice living this rule in all aspects of their lives. Because they are a work in progress, we feel that this is a necessary tool to help students who bully others in this area of their faith.

Bullying, as defined in our school community, is when someone is repeatedly being hurt on purpose either physically, verbally, by written words, including by electronic correspondence, or by exclusion of a group or individual student.

The anti-bullying message is posted and enforced in each classroom in the form of our Friendship Pledge. To promote a friendly atmosphere each morning the students say a Friendship Pledge:

1. I will treat others with kindness and respect.
2. I will offer help to anyone who needs it.
3. I will include others in games and activities throughout the day.
4. I will inform a trusted adult if I have a problem or see anyone else having a problem.
5. I understand that we are all important members of God's family and the St. Margaret Mary School Family.

**CONSEQUENCES FOR BULLYING:**

<b>First Offense</b>	Bullying incident report will be sent home to parents. Parents will be contacted by the teacher an/or principal to discuss the incident	Student receiving the report will make amends to the victim. Teacher will verify that this was done.
<b>Second Offense</b>	Bullying incident report will be sent home to parents. A meeting will take place with the parents, teacher, principal and school counselor.	<b>Student will discuss incident with principal and counselor.</b>
<b>Third Offense</b>	<b>Detention</b>	
<b>Fourth Offense</b>	<b>Suspension from School</b>	

**Because each situation is unique, and we are dealing with a wide age range of students, the school has the right to adjust these consequences as we see fit.**

Along with having our policy posted in each classroom, we also have age-appropriate anti-bullying posters throughout our hallways. Teachers go over these rules and procedures at the beginning of each year. We use videos and role playing activities in religion classes as well to educate students in this area. We put great emphasis on the job of each student to be a responsible reporter when they see bullying occur. Bullying occurs most often when an adult is not present. This is why we train students in responsible reporting, and we encourage them to seek out a trusted adult when there is a bullying issue. The name of students who report bullying is always kept confidential.

NOTE: Not all “incidents” are bullying. It is important to understand the difference between bullying and disagreements, misbehavior, and isolated incidents.

## BULLYING POLICY (Cont'd)

### BYSTANDERS

**Bystanders who are seen encouraging bully behavior are subject to this discipline chart:**

	<b>DESCRIPTION OF</b>	<b>BEHAVIOR</b>	
<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Verbal Harassment (name calling, gossip, etc) Social Exclusion</b>	<b>Hitting Pushing Shoving Tripping</b>	<b>Severe hitting Physical threats Severe Harassment Cyberbullying</b>
	<b>DISCIPLINARY</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	
<b>1st Time</b>	Verbal Warning. Bullying Form completed and signed by parent.	Lunch Detention - 1 day. Call to parent Bullying Form signed by parent	Call to parent. Bullying Form signed by parent Lunch Detention for 1 week
<b>2nd Time</b>	Bullying Form completed and signed by parent Lunch Detention	Lunch Detention for 1 week Call to parent Bullying Form signed by parent	Suspension out of school -1 day SST (Student Support Team) Bullying Form signed by parent Counseling in school
<b>3rd Time</b>	Bullying Form completed and signed by parent After School Detention - 1 day	Suspension in school - 1 day (fees apply for monitoring) Bullying Form signed by parent Counseling SST meeting	Suspension out of school -3 days Extended counseling Bullying Form signed by parent
<b>4th Time</b>	Bullying form completed and signed by parent Suspension - 1 day Counseling SST meeting	Extended suspension (OSS) Out of school Bullying form signed by parent Counseling	
<b>5th Time</b>	Extended Suspension		Possible Expulsion

### CARE OF BOOKS AND SCHOOL PROPERTY

Each student is required to have a book bag to carry books to and from school. Students are responsible for the proper care of his or her books. All textbooks must have book covers on them at all times. Soft-covered workbooks should be covered in clear contact paper. Writing in hard-covered textbooks is not permitted. If a book is lost, the student/parent may be responsible for reimbursing the school for the cost of the book.

## **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

It is the policy of Saint Margaret Mary School, as well as all of the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Harrisburg, to take reasonable action to prevent and reduce incidents of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse is defined as when an individual acts or fails to prevent something that causes serious harm to a child under the age of 18. This harm can take many forms, such as serious physical injury, serious mental injury, or sexual abuse or exploitation.

**All faculty and staff members are mandated reporters and are required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect. All members of faculty and staff completed the required training for Youth Protection for the Diocese of Harrisburg and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.**

As mandated reporters the school's first obligation is to the child's welfare. As mandated by the state, the first notification of suspected abuse must be made to the authorities at Childline and the Diocese of Harrisburg. The school will cooperate with Childline and law enforcement officials in cases of child abuse or neglect.

## **CHRISTIAN LIFE**

The whole atmosphere of Saint Margaret Mary School reflects the spirit of Christian life and learning. The building of a faith community in which the students can experience the living of the Gospel is paramount. The rite and ritual of worship permeates each child's life. Attendance at Mass allows students the opportunity to listen to God's Word in Scripture and to strengthen their personal lives through the reception of the Eucharist. Children delight in joining their parish community at Mass, as well as take pride in participating as a lector, altar server, gift bearer, or choir member. The students have the opportunity to experience the God's love and forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which is scheduled twice a year. Prayer becomes a lived experience each day as students develop their understanding of prayer. Non-Catholic students participate in all aspects of the religious education program.

### **Sacramental Preparation**

In the second grade, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of Eucharist are celebrated. Confirmation is celebrated in the eighth grade. The candidates receive two years of instruction, combining their heightened sense of knowledge of their faith with service, as they continue to grow in the life of the Church.

## **CLASS PARTIES**

Parties may be scheduled during the school year celebrating Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. The teacher and homeroom parents are responsible for the planning and celebration of the parties. Any other celebration must have the prior approval of the school principal. Students are not permitted to distribute personal party invitations in the classroom unless the entire class is invited, or if either all boys or all girls in the class are invited.

## CLUBS/ACTIVITIES

Many opportunities for service, social interaction, and growth are available at St. Margaret Mary School.

- Band (grades 4-8)
- Cheerleading (girls grades 5-8)
- Choir (grades 4-8)
- CYO Basketball (grades 3-8)
- Forensics (grades 7-8)
- Girls on the Run (grades 3-6)
- Math 24 (grades 4-8)
- Quiz Bowl (grades 6-8)
- Respect Life Club (grades 4-8)
- Scouts (grades 1-8)
- Spring Musical (grades 6-8)
- Student Council (grades 4-8)
- Track (grades 3-8)

## CODE OF CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

The Catholic Church and this Catholic School recognize parents as the primary educators of their children and that the education of students is a partnership between parents and the school. The students' interest in receiving a quality, morally based education can be served if students, parents and school officials work together. Our school is committed to providing an environment that educates, nurtures, and supports students according to the basic Christian principles of charity and love of neighbor. Everyone involved in the development of children and youth— parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, family and friends—is expected to behave in accordance with these principles.

**It shall be an express condition of enrollment that the students behave in a manner, both on and off campus that is consistent with the Christian principles of the school.** These principles include, but are not limited to, the policies, principles or procedures set forth in our school's handbooks.

It shall also be expected that the parents/guardians of a student follow the standards of conduct that are consistent with the Christian principles of the school. These principles include, but are not limited to the policies, principles or procedures set forth in our school's handbooks.

Our codes of conduct for members of our school community were developed to promote a learning environment based on reverence, respect, discipline, responsibility and excellence. As a partnership, we all need to understand the importance of a good working relationship.

In most cases, differences can be resolved. In some rare instances, however, if, in the opinion of the administration, the partnership is irretrievably broken because of the severe nature of the conduct, the school reserves the right to disenroll a family.

The purpose of this policy then is to provide a reminder to all members of the community of the expected conduct, so that we may continue to thrive, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect.

Our Christian principles provide that all members of our school community:

- Work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting the school's academic, moral, and behavioral expectations
- Communicate and respectfully express concerns about the school operation and its personnel in a constructive and Christian manner within an appropriate setting

In order to support a Christian and safe school environment, the following behaviors are inconsistent with the Christian principles of the school and, therefore, are unacceptable:

- Physically or verbally intimidating a member of the school community
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the students/parent/staff at the school on any social media sites (Any concerns are to be addressed through the appropriate channels)
- Abusive and/ or threatening electronic, written or verbal communication
- Disruptive behavior which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of the classroom, office, or any other area of the school property

### **DISCIPLINE**

We believe that Saint Margaret Mary School provides a Christian atmosphere of love, trust, acceptance, and mutual respect. The parents must model Christian living, since they are the first teachers with the greatest influence on their children. In addition, the faculty acts as a model of the Gospel values inherent in our faith for students through their actions and teaching.

We realize that our students are still in formation, and that as they grow and mature, they need to be guided toward self-discipline. A Christian, positive, and consistent approach to discipline will lead our students to make responsible choices. As they mature, they will reflect Gospel living and learn to look beyond themselves to principled living as exemplified by Jesus. Ultimately, our goal is that students, intellectually and spiritually, will become productive members of society who will give service God.

### **Application of Discipline**

Students are expected to conform to school regulations. There are times when admonishment is necessary, such as when students' behavior is disruptive or interferes with the learning environment. No student has the right to interfere with the education of fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators and all others who are involved in the educational process (PA Code 12.2b).

Students learn self-discipline and responsibility through the following means:

- Cooperation in class by obeying the school and the teacher's regulations
- Respect for themselves, others, school property, and the property of others.
- Developing a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living (PA Code 12.2a)

The school has an obligation to provide a safe and orderly environment that will enable each student to progress at a rate commensurate with his or her own ability. The rights of an individual must be carefully considered and individual expression encouraged. When such expression interferes directly or indirectly with the rights of others, appropriate steps will be taken.

## **Disciplinary Measures**

Communications between teachers and parents will take place to inform parents of the students involved about behavior problems as they occur. In individual cases, a reprimand, in the form of a Reflect and Correct slip, a detention, or a note home will be the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Detentions are issued at the discretion of the teacher for willful and/or repeated violation of school regulations. Additional reprimands which may result from continued or more serious offenses will involve parents, and the principal. The principal determines the specific disciplinary step.

**When a parent feels that an issue or circumstance has developed which is interfering with their child's ability to profit from the educational experience at St. Margaret Mary School, the parent is asked to first consult with the teacher before contacting the principal.** Parents may contact the teacher and request an appointment via the school telephone, teacher email, or a written note. If the problem cannot be resolved with the teacher, the opportunity to discuss the issue with the principal may be requested.

In cases where serious disagreement between the school and parents cannot be resolved amicably, it will be necessary to adhere to the following protocol:

- Consult with teacher
- Consult with principal
- Consult with pastor
- Consult with Diocese of Harrisburg, Department of Education

In cases where the conflict cannot be resolved or the conduct of parents is deemed to interfere with the mission of the school, St. Margaret Mary School reserves the right to require parents to withdraw their child from school.

## **Reflect and Correct**

Reflect and Correct slips are issued to the student for minor conduct and uniform infractions. Reflect and Correct slips may also be issued for not completing class assignments, homework, repeatedly not returning correspondences between home and school, or arriving to school late without a written excuse, etc. For policy violation or for unacceptable behavior, students may be detained during lunch/recess or after school depending on the severity of the action.

## **Detention**

Detentions will be issued for behavior/infractions above and beyond minor conduct or uniform fractions (See Student Code of Conduct). It is the student's responsibility to notify his/her parents about the detention. A parent must sign the detention slip, and the student must return it to the teacher before the assigned detention day. Detentions are held Wednesdays from 7:00 a.m. to 7:40 a.m. OR 3:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. Parents have the responsibility for arranging transportation for the detention. Students are responsible for arriving on time for detention and parents are responsible for picking up students on time. Students will be sent to and charged for ASTEP if not pick-up on time.

- Wednesday morning drop off is promptly at 7 a.m. at the office door. (door #1)
- Wednesday afternoon pick-up is promptly at 3:45 p.m. at the cafeteria door. (door #7)

While the violation of any of the school regulations is considered to be a serious matter, there are violations that are intolerable. Every effort is made to counsel students and parents so that drastic measures, such as in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion, will not be necessary. However, occasions may arise when such action is in the best interest of all.

### **Definition of Disciplinary Terms**

**In-School Suspension (ISS)**– The exclusion of a student from class for a specified period of time usually lasts from one to five days. Students in ISS require monitoring by a qualified professional. Remuneration for the proctor of ISS will be covered by the parents. The student eats and does all the school assignments in a room provided by the principal. **ISS may be assigned after 5 detentions. Students with repeated ISS will be subject to loss of privileges such as field trips, Track & Field Day, school social and special assemblies.**

**Out of School Suspension (OSS)**– The removal of a student from school for a specified period of time.

**Expulsion** – The permanent dismissal of a student by the decision of the principal in consultation with the pastor.

### **Categories of Misconduct**

The following are categories of misconduct which may result in an ISS, OSS, or expulsion. These categories are general in nature and are not deemed to be all-inclusive:

**Matters relating to public and private property** – Examples: theft; misuse of books, materials and equipment; defacing property; trespassing (unauthorized presence in the building); and willful, malicious destruction of the property of the school or another person. Restitution of damages will be demanded.

**Matters pertaining to citizenship** – Examples: Violation of state laws, local ordinances, approved safety and fire codes, laws pertaining to civil disobedience; use of profane and obscene language; possession, selling and/or use of drugs, narcotics and/or controlled substances, tobacco products, e-cigarettes or any vaping devices, or alcoholic beverages; engaging in immoral conduct (including inappropriate public displays of affection); physically threatening and/or actually abusing any student or staff member; cheating; extortion; persistent disobedience; gross misbehavior; possession of pornography; sexual harassment; and Internet violations.

**Matters pertaining to attendance** – Examples: Violation of compulsory attendance laws; persistent tardiness (See attendance policy); and failure to attend school regularly.

**Matters concerning threats** – A threat to inflict violence on oneself or another person will be investigated immediately by the school. Appropriate measures will be taken to insure the safety of all persons involved.

- A threat to harm oneself will be referred to the school counselor and to crisis management.
- A threat to others will result in a police investigation to determine if the threat is credible.
  - If a threat is determined to be credible, the student(s) involved may be suspended/expelled/asked to withdraw from school and may be subjected to criminal charges related to the offenses.

Any other action or conduct which is deemed to be inappropriate will be subject to discipline by the school in its sole discretion. Students may be suspended/expelled/asked to withdraw from school for serious offense. After consultation with the superintendent, the principal with the pastor has the authority to expel a student. The student and parents will be informed of the in-school suspension or expulsion. Should a student be accused of a serious or criminal violation whether inside or apart from school, the student may be placed on home study until the matter has been resolved, or another determination has been made by the administration.

#### **Diocesan Policy on Expulsion**

Expulsion is viewed as a radical action in which the school feels the student's interest would be better served in another environment, or that the student's behavior is a serious threat to the school community. Expulsion is invoked as a last resort after the matter has been referred to the superintendent.

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal the expulsion of their student to a special Review Board consisting of two School Board members and one Parish Council member. The Review Board shall not have any direct involvement in the case, for example, the pastor, principal, teacher or relative of the student.

The task of the Review Board is to hear both sides of the case and to render impartial judgment as to whether or not the procedures and policies were followed.

The parents/guardians have ten days from the reception of the expulsion notice to request an appeal. The request must be made in writing and addressed to the principal. The hearing is to be held as soon as conveniently possible for all parties. Legal counsel or other support personnel are not admitted to an appeal before the Review Board. The Review Board will determine whether the school administration has followed appropriate policies and procedures, and confirm the expulsion. They may determine that the facts do not sustain the decision to expel the student, and recommend that the administration to rescind the expulsion.

Saint Margaret Mary School reserves the right to enforce its regulations in a manner best suited to the individual situation and in accordance with the regulations of the Diocesan Board of Education.

### **Safe Schools Act of 1997**

Pennsylvania legislation dealing with school crime and safety issues:

- **Record Keeping** – Non-public schools must keep records of incidents involving violence. A statistical summary of the record must be available to the public upon request.
- **Sworn Statement** – Parents enrolling a child in public school must give a sworn statement that their child was not under suspension or expulsion.
- **Student Records** – Public schools must automatically transfer a student’s discipline record, without parental permission. St. Margaret Mary School will continue to observe the general practice of not forwarding a student’s discipline file with academic records, with the following exceptions: A student involved with the possession of a weapon, the sale or possession of controlled substances, or involved with an act of violence which posed a potential threat to others. St. Margaret Mary School will send an advisement of these situations to any school a student transfers to, either in the case of expulsion or voluntary withdrawal of the student. (This policy reflects our commitment to the Safe Schools Act of 1997).

### **Alerting Law Enforcement**

St. Margaret Mary School will notify the local law enforcement authorities and the Diocesan Educational Office when a weapon is discovered on school grounds. If a student under our care, parent, or staff member brings any type of weapon to school or threatens to use any school materials as a weapon toward another student, staff member or volunteer, the item will be confiscated and the individual will be escorted to the principal’s office and law enforcement will be contacted. Parents of students involved will be contacted first, then families will be made aware of any situation through our One Call Now system. It is St. Margaret Mary’s School’s responsibility to protect the privacy of the student and family as to not impede the investigation process.

### **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

To maintain a Christian academic atmosphere as a student of Saint Margaret Mary School, I will:

- Treat others as Jesus would treat me.
- Respect my teachers, volunteers, school personnel and fellow students.
- Obey the rules of my school, home and community.
- Strive to be honest with others and myself.
- Develop good study habits and work to the best of my ability.
- Maintain good sportsmanship.
- Take proper care of personal, school, and classmates’ property.
- Observe the dress code.
- Maintain orderly and quiet behavior in the hallways and locker area.
- Observe bus regulations.

*As a student of St. Margaret Mary I will:*

- Refrain from chewing gum on school property.
- Refrain from using cell phones or other electronic devices during school hours.
- Refrain from fighting.
- Refrain from cheating.
- Refrain from the use of tobacco products, e-cigarettes/vaping, alcohol, drugs, and narcotics.
- Refrain from leaving school without permission.
- Refrain the use of obscene language and gestures
- Not carry or use a weapon, which could cause bodily harm (Diocesan Policy #5114).

*Regarding classroom manners, I will:*

- Be on time.
- Upon entering the classroom, go directly and quietly to my seat and prepare for the school day.
- Complete all assignments on time.
- Comply with the teacher's directives.
- Use my time wisely for my own growth and that of others.
- Obtain the owner's permission before borrowing anything.
- Be courteous at all times.
- Share the responsibility for keeping my classroom clean.
- Cooperate with my teacher in making the teaching-learning experience a creative and pleasant one.
- Be prepared with necessary covered books and materials for class.

*Regarding morning arrival, I will:*

Consume all food and drink items before arriving at school. (i.e. Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, Sheetz, food/drink from home). All food items need to be disposed of properly before entering the school building.

- Proceed to the cafeteria and sit quietly until dismissed to my classroom to begin the assigned morning activity until the 7:55 a.m. bell rings.

*Regarding Mass/Liturgies/Assemblies, I will:*

- Walk to and from liturgies and assemblies in an orderly, quiet, and respectful manner.
- Be attentive, reverent, and prayerful in Mass.
- Show politeness and respect toward speakers and performers at all times.
- Participate in assemblies, liturgies, and school functions through actions such as singing, listening, reciting, and praying appropriately.

*Regarding bathroom facilities, I will:*

- Use the facility with care and consideration for others.
- Tend to my needs quickly without loitering.
- Bring no objects that will cause damage to the property.
- Conduct myself properly and respect the rights of others.
- Help to maintain the facility.
  - Not deface bathroom property.

*Regarding lunch, I will:*

- Bring the proper clothing needed for the outdoors to the cafeteria.  
(During the winter months, a hat, gloves, and coat are requested.)
- After entering the cafeteria, ask permission from the principal or a teacher if there is a reason to leave.
- Stand calmly when waiting in line for hot lunch.
- Sit in my assigned area of the cafeteria.
- Remain seated while eating, using a conversational tone of voice.
- When directed, leave my assigned place clean with the chair in its proper position.
- Dispose of trash and line up to proceed to the playground.
- Obey and respect the teachers, principal, and the parent volunteers at all times.

*Regarding recess, I will:*

- Observe fair play with everyone.
  - Include others who are easily left out.
  - Be a responsible reporter.
- Stay in the section of the play area assigned to my class.
- Avoid fighting or pushing another student and pulling on another's clothing.
- Refrain from throwing any objects except balls.
- When the whistle signifies the end of recess rings, stop playing and line up quietly in the assigned area.
- Walk to and from the play areas.

## **DRESS CODE**

Students are expected to present a neat and clean appearance. The dress code has been devised to help parents and students avoid confusion about what is to be worn to school. Each student is required to wear the complete uniform on the first day of school and thereafter, unless otherwise directed by the principal. When a student is not in uniform attire, the parent should send a note explaining the reason. Children in kindergarten wear neat and clean play clothes. Tattoos and other markings are never permitted on a student.

## School Uniform

School uniforms are worn by all students in grades 1 through 8 **to and from school and on all school days** except on the designated Physical Education day. A uniform exchange is held each August before school starts. School uniforms, including sweater vests and sweaters, are to be purchased at Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company located in Harrisburg.

### GIRLS:

#### Grades 1-8:

- Navy uniform shorts in September and May (Optional)
- Navy uniform slacks from October through April (Optional)
- Light blue long or short-sleeved uniform shirts may be worn with slacks and shorts
- *Makeup*: no makeup may be worn (including lip gloss)
- *Jewelry*: no large jewelry, no necklaces unless of a religious nature; one ring per hand and one bracelet.
- *Hairstyles*: no exotic hairstyles, including hair coloring, highlights or head decorations; Headbands must be the same print as the uniform or a solid color that matches the uniform such as navy, green, white, black. Bright neon colors, large bows, or other hair accessories are not permitted.
- *Earrings*: one earring per ear, no dangling earrings; earrings may not be larger than a dime.
- *Watches*: a watch may be worn. Smart technology watches, including Apple watches, and any other devices that connect to the internet are not permitted to be worn in school.
- No baggy sweaters or short skirts; skirts should not be shorter than one inch above the knee.
- Only short, natural nails are permitted. Nail polish, nail tips, and fake nails are not permitted at any time.

**All students are required to wear all black, all leather sneakers.**

#### Grades 1-4: Uniform

- Green/blue uniform plaid jumpers and round-collared, light blue short or long-sleeved blouses.
- Navy cardigan, V-neck sweater or vest.
- Navy or white knee socks or tights
- NO ATHLETIC OR ANKLE SOCKS

#### Grades 5-8: Uniform

- Light blue, button-down oxford shirt, uniform pleated skirts.
- A navy V-neck sweater must be worn from October through April.  
A cardigan or V-neck sweater may be worn in place of the vest.
- Navy or white knee socks or tights
- NO ATHLETIC OR ANKLE SOCKS

## BOYS:

### Grades 1-8:

- Navy dress uniform pants.
- Navy or dark socks – NO ATHLETIC ANKLE SOCKS.
- Navy uniform shorts in September and May (Optional).
- A belt must be worn at the waistline and shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- *Earrings:* earrings are not permitted
- *Hairstyles:* Hair must be neat, well-groomed, trimmed around the ears, off the collar, and one inch above the eyebrows.
  - Blunt cuts, shaved heads, tails, bowl cuts and spiked hair are not permitted.
  - Hair must be blended and layered in a conservative male haircut and nothing less than #2 blade.
  - Fad haircuts, styles, extensions and attachments are not allowed. Faux hawk styles, mohawk styles, designs and cutouts and drastic changes in length are not permitted
  - No hair coloring, highlighting or facial hair is permitted. Sideburns may not extend beyond the middle of the ear.
  - No baggy, washed-out, slouchy pants or sweaters.
- *Watches:* a watch may be worn. Smart technology watches, including Apple watches, and any other devices that connect to the internet are not permitted to be worn in school.

**All students are required to wear an all-black, leather sneaker.**

### Grades 1-4: Uniform

- Light blue long or short-sleeved knit uniform shirts.
- Navy cardigan, V-neck or vest (optional).

### Grades 5-8: Uniform

- Light blue short or long-sleeved button-down oxford uniform shirts.
- A navy V-neck sweater vest must be worn from October through April.  
A cardigan or V-neck sweater may be worn in place of the vest.

### Grades 7-8: Uniform

- Light blue short or long-sleeved button-down oxford uniform shirts.
- A navy V-neck sweater vest must be worn from October through April.  
A cardigan or V-neck sweater may be worn in place of the vest.
- Navy ties.

**Please have names on all items, particularly gloves, hats, sweaters, warm-ups, and lunch boxes.**

## **Dress Out of Uniform Days**

Dress out of Uniform Days will be announced via monthly calendar, One Call Now, and school announcements. We appreciate the effort of parents to check that all clothing worn to school is clean, modest and appropriate.

*Please refrain from wearing:*

- leggings/jeggings/yoga pants - athletic or fashionable
- jeans with holes/frays/cutouts
- “cold-shoulder” tops
- shorts except for May and September
- crop tops
- any attire that allows for the display of undergarments
- T-shirts with offensive wording/images
- hats/caps of any kind

## **Physical Education Uniform**

Students must wear the uniform shorts, shirts, sweatpants and sweatshirts purchased from the Flynn and O’Hara Uniform Store in Harrisburg. Spirit Wear apparel purchased for athletic teams are **NOT** official physical education uniforms.

- Sweatpants and sweatshirts are worn from October to April.
- Sneakers and athletic above the ankle matching socks must be worn to Physical Education class.

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in disciplinary actions as well as affect the student’s PE grade.

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

An emergency form must be properly completed, signed, and updated as needed throughout the school year. Any change in name, address, email, phone number, or emergency contacts should be made at the school office immediately.

## **EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING**

Should there be an occasion when weather or some other emergency necessitates a delayed opening, closing, or early dismissal of school; parents are notified by *One Call Now*, a school-wide, telephone service. **Saint Margaret Mary School follows the decision of the Central Dauphin School District for weather related delays and closings.** The school website, [stmmparishschool.org](http://stmmparishschool.org), and Facebook will also post the delay or closing as quickly as possible. Closings and delays will also be posted to local news stations.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips are scheduled throughout the year. Field trips are privileges, not rights, and students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. The decision to attend a field trip will be made by the teacher and the principal. Parents of children participating in school-sponsored are required by diocesan policy to sign a permission form. A child who does not return a signed permission form will not be permitted to go on the trip. Verbal permission will not be accepted as a substitute for the signed school permission slip. If the child chooses not to participate in the field trip, he/she is still required to attend school unless arrangements have been made. All trips are to be made in public licensed carriers or school buses adequately chaperoned by adults. The teacher will collect any fees necessary to offset the cost of the field trip. Proper attire for all field trips will be discussed before each field trip.

## **FRIENDLY REMINDERS**

A friendly reminder slip will be sent home to remind parents and students about minor infractions. This is the first notification if a student has a uniform infraction, did not return test folder, did not bring absent note, and did not return office forms. If compliance is not met, then a Reflect and Correct will be issued (See page 18).

## **GRADE REPORT**

Grade reports are issued three times per year in December, March, and June. Grades are based on class work, homework, projects, and test results.

Parents of students in grades kindergarten through three will receive a progress report, which must be signed and returned to the teacher. Parents of students in grades four through eight will have access to their child's/children's grades and assignments through an online system called MMS. Through the parent portal, parents will be able to access grades throughout each trimester. At the midpoint of each trimester, the teachers in grades four through eight will send a Progress Form home for parents to verify that they have seen their child's grades via MMS.

## **HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

In September of each year, St. Margaret Mary School holds a Back-to-School Night. At this meeting, teachers present their educational goals for the year to parents. It is important for parents to attend this meeting.

Parents are always encouraged to meet with teachers to discuss the progress of their child. To make an appointment, parents may contact a teacher via the school telephone, teacher email, or a written note to the teacher. Teachers will schedule before or after school conferences; however, any contact made with a teacher during school hours should allow for a 24-hour response time. Parent/teacher conferences in grades Kindergarten through 8 are held in October.

All correspondence between school and home concerning calendars, upcoming events, and important forms to be signed and returned to the school office will be done electronically through our website via e-envelope each Thursday night at midnight. **All parents should check e-envelope each week.**

## HONOR ROLL

The Honor Roll is established for students in grades 5 through 8 to provide incentive for students to work to the best of their abilities. Students must achieve certain criteria in all subject areas as well as in conduct areas. Students who receive an “I” in Christian Values will not qualify for the Honor Roll.

- Distinguished Honors – All A’s
- Academic Honors – A’s & B’s
- Commended Honors – All A’s, B’s & 1 C (not in Religion)

## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM

Music offers cultural and social advantages to young people. Information concerning the school band program for the school year is sent to parents in September. This program is open to students in grades 4 through 8.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

Pennsylvania law requires that every child attending school in grades pre-kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> must be properly immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella.

Written proof from a physician of the following immunizations is necessary:

- **Diphtheria, tetanus** – four or more properly spaced doses of DPT or DT; the fourth being after the fourth birthday.
- **Polio** – three or more properly spaced doses of oral polio vaccine
- **MMR** (measles, mumps, and rubella) – one administered after 12 months of age
- **MMR2** – prior to entrance of kindergarten
- **Hepatitis B Vaccine** – three properly spaced doses prior to entrance to Kindergarten
- **Varicella Immunity** – Varicella vaccine, or history of disease, or Serologic confirmation of Immunity

Pennsylvania state laws requires a physical examination for all students in kindergarten, or original entrance in grade one, grade six, and transfer students from other states.

## Health Records and Illness at School

A part-time nurse and aide, who provide minor first aid, staff the school health room. When a student becomes ill during school hours, the student is sent to the health room, and if necessary a parent is notified. School health forms are sent home annually, and parents are asked to keep this information current and accurate.

Parents of children with special medical needs (i.e. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, etc.) must notify and instruct the school nurse, teachers, and principal on how to handle emergency situations pertaining to their child’s specific health need.

A scoliosis assessment is provided for students in grade 7. A hearing test is provided annually for students in kindergarten through grade 3 and grade 7. All new students to the school are tested. Hearing tests are performed on students when requested by parents and/or teachers. A dental exam is required for all students in grades K, 3, and 7.

A school nurse is provided by Central Dauphin School District on a part time basis. Students' height, weight, and vision are checked annually. The school nurse will adhere to the Central Dauphin School District Health Policy. The policy, in part, as it pertains to medication, is as follows:

**SCHOOL PERSONNEL ADMINISTER NO MEDICATION, INCLUDING NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE, UNLESS SPECIFIC WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS ARE RECEIVED FROM A PHYSICIAN AND SIGNED PARENT PERMISSION.**

Where medication is to be administered, the following applies:

- The original drug containers must be labeled with the student's name, instructions for administration, content identification, and name of physician.
- Parent must request in writing that school personnel dispense medication as ordered.
- The school nurse or, in her absence the principal or her designee, shall administer the medication or arrange to assist the student.

**Please do not send a child to school if he or she is ill. If your child has a fever (100 or above), he/she should remain at home until the child's temperature has been normal for at least 24 hours. If your child has the stomach flu they must be symptom free for 24 hour before returning to school.**

#### **Communicable Diseases in Children and Personnel**

Diseases requiring a physician's consent to return to school:

Conjunctivitis	Dysentery	Polio
Diphtheria	Tuberculosis	Typhoid
Smallpox	"Ringworm"	Impetigo
Salmonellosis	Pediculosis (Head Lice)	

#### **HIV/AIDS or Related Diseases**

Students who are HIV-infected, have AIDS or other related diseases and desire to attend a diocesan elementary school will not be denied admission to or discriminated against solely because of their medical condition. However, the school does deserve the right to dismiss a student or curtail student activity. Steps will be taken on an individual basis by the principal in consultation with the student's attending physician.

Parents are required to inform the principal that their child has HIV/AIDS or related diseases in order that the school principal can provide for the protection of the child and other individuals in the school. If, for reasons of health or safety, a student can no longer continue to attend classes, the principal and the parents will determine arrangements for alternative instruction.

The school follows the Universal Precautions to Prevent the Spread of Infectious Disease to reduce the risk for employees, volunteers, and students. Instruction on HIV/AIDS shall be included as part of the school curriculum for all students on an age-appropriate basis.

St. Margaret Mary School reserves the right to amend this policy to comply with directives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Harrisburg.

## INSURANCE

An optional insurance plan is offered through the diocese. In the event of an accident, a report must be completed and the principal will be notified immediately. Claims must be forwarded to the insurance company within ninety days.

## INTERNET AND COMPUTER USE POLICY

The Internet is a public forum with unrestricted access. For this reason, the school restricts permission for the posting of information related to the school, our staff, and our students on the Internet. No person is permitted to use the image of the school, the school logo or seal, photos of school staff or students in any form on the Internet, or in any form of electronic communication without specific written permission from the administration.

The posting of any such information on any website, bulletin board, social media platforms, or other messaging system without permission, or the posting or transmission of images or information in any form related to the school, staff, or students that are defamatory, scandalous, pornographic, or which could be construed as threatening or damaging the character of another person is prohibited. Any person involved in the posting or transmission of such material is subject to disciplinary action, including expulsion, deemed appropriate by the administration at the school and/or by the Diocese of Harrisburg.

## LIBRARY

All students are entitled and encouraged to use the library during their scheduled time. Reference books may be used in the library. Parents should remind their child of their personal responsibility to return borrowed materials on time. The student shall pay compensation for damage to books beyond reasonable repair, as well as for lost books. A Book Fair is held in September and during Catholic Schools Week.

## LOST AND FOUND

A student who has lost an item may inquire at the office before or after school and at lunchtime. **Parents are urged to mark each article of clothing with their child's name and grade**, and when items are found they can be returned. *Any unclaimed items left for more than a month will be given to charity.* If a book or other school-owned item is lost or damaged, the student will be responsible for reimbursement.

## LUNCH PROGRAM

Students may bring their lunch and a drink to school. Hot lunch is served several times a week. An online ordering system, boonli.com, is used by our school to post lunch options and take orders for students who wish to purchase hot lunch. **Soda is never permitted. If a fast-food lunch is necessary, healthy choices are encouraged. This is in compliance with the Diocese of Harrisburg and Pennsylvania Wellness Programs.**

### **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

St. Margaret Mary School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment that gives the parent or student the right to view school records. This also applies to non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, Saint Margaret Mary School will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICIES**

In compliance with the Diocesan Board of Education Policy, St. Margaret Mary School shall not discriminate on the basis of race, age, religion, national origin, or disability in the administration of educational policies, admission policies, athletic, or other school programs.

### **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

The objectives of the PTO are to promote the welfare of the students attending St. Margaret Mary School and to foster a closer relationship between parents and teachers. The PTO meets monthly as an executive board. The PTO provides fundraisers for the benefit of the students and the school such as field trips, funds for contests and school awards. The PTO also sponsors the Spartan Sprint for Education which provides funding for technology and larger school equipment purchases. The principal and pastor oversee the spending. The PTO coordinates parent volunteers, publishes an annual school directory, hosts the annual Back-to-School Night and many other events throughout the year. Information on becoming a member of the PTO can be obtained at the Back-to-School Night in early September. Parents are encouraged attend meetings and get involved in PTO events by volunteering their time and talent.

### **PARENT AND TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parents are encouraged to keep in contact with teachers regarding student progress. A scheduled conference is held in the middle of the first trimester which parents are expected to attend. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled at 10-15 minute intervals, and every effort is made to schedule the meetings back-to-back for families with more than one child. Parent/Teacher conferences help to identify the child's strengths, allow time to discuss areas in need of improvement, and to develop reasonable goals.

It is the diocesan position that parents (having some defined custody rights) and step-parents may be present at school conferences. If a custodial or non-custodial parent objects to the presence of another step-parent at such a conference, then they must obtain a court order or made a change to the custody agreement that prevents the appearance of the other party at the conference. If parents begin an argument during the conference, the conference is terminated and not rescheduled until the matter is resolved. The school will not be responsible for adjudicating the custody agreements between parents. Our policy is to abide by the determinations of a court in these matters. This description applies to stepparents in a legal marriage (civil or religious). Live-in significant others are not recognized as step-parents.

When it becomes necessary, the staff is willing to confer with parents concerning their child. Teachers may be contacted through the school office; however, they may not accept calls during their teaching time. Teachers will return telephone calls during their non-teaching time or after school. Parents should never contact teachers in their homes.

### **PROMOTION AND RETENTION**

Students are promoted when they adequately demonstrate mastery of material covered in all or the majority of major subject areas. Promotion is left to the discretion of the teacher and principal.

Students are retained if they have not adequately mastered the subject material in at least two major subjects and do not attend summer school or receive adequate tutoring in the failed subjects. The decision of retaining a pupil is left to the discretion of the teacher, school psychologist, principal, and the parent. The decision will be made after all responsible persons for the child's education have conferred upon the need for retention.

### **SAFETY DRILLS**

Fire drills and emergency drills are conducted at regular intervals throughout the school year. Practice drills are announced at the beginning of the year to model procedures for the students. As the year progresses drills are unannounced so students will respond using the practiced procedures to exit the building safely. These drills ensure that every student will be familiar with the emergency signals and respond appropriately.

### **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Official class pictures of the students are taken in October. These pictures are available for purchase. Spring pictures are offered to families. Picture forms and monies need to be returned in a timely manner as per date provided by the picture company.

### **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

Each teacher will distribute a list of necessary school supplies before the start of the school year. Please obtain all items on the supply list provided by the teacher. Parents should check with their child throughout the year to make sure the necessary supplies are still in the child's possession.

## **SNACKS**

Teachers in grades kindergarten through fourth grade arrange a snack time. Children may bring a nutritious snack to school each day. Sweets/candy of any kind are not permitted.

In keeping with the Health & Wellness Policy as mandated by the State of PA and the Diocese of Harrisburg, we strongly suggest healthy snacks as the best choice. Fresh fruit and vegetables are always encouraged.

Some suggestions for healthy treats include the following:

Popcorn	crackers	cheese	breadsticks	applesauce
Trail mix	dried fruit	mini bagels	soft pretzels	popsicles with fruit juice

*Snacks are not provided through the hot lunch program.*

## **SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES**

The St. Margaret Mary Athletic Association offers boys and girls basketball and track and field teams that compete in the Harrisburg League of the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). Any grade school students that are members of St. Margaret Mary, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament or St. Matthew parishes are eligible to participate. The CYO basketball season starts in November and ends in mid-March; track and field season starts in April and ends in May.

Girls in grades five through eight make up the St. Margaret Mary School junior varsity and varsity cheerleading squads.

Girls on the Run is offered to girls in grades three through five when a coach is available.

## **STUDENT COUNCIL**

Members of the Student Council are elected by the student body and serve for one year. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students are elected as officers of the council, and students in grades four through eight are elected as representatives to the council. All council members must have a "C" or better in all subject areas and may not have an "I" in Christian Values. The code of the council is to work with the faculty and the students to improve the life of the school. Members of the council are expected to set a good example at all times and are required to help with activities after school hours.

## STUDENT SECURITY

**Parents are required to call the school between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. to report their child's absence.** The answering machine may be used if your call is placed before 7 a.m. Teacher supervision begins at 7:30 a.m. Students should not arrive at school before this time, unless buses transport them. The school reserves the right to take appropriate action to ensure adherence to this policy.

Parents must give advance notice in writing to the homeroom teacher regarding changes in after school student transportation. This includes car riders and bus riders who change their means of transportation for going home. A student may not ride another bus home from school unless the parent has contacted the district bus authorities. **A note to the school identifying the change and permission must be submitted in writing to the school office via the homeroom teacher.** No school district will allow a student to ride one of their buses unless the student resides in that district. **Without a written note to change transportation the student will be sent home their usual way. Change of transportation forms are provided on the school website.**

Do not call the school office or contact the teacher via email to notify of a transportation change. ALL changes must be in writing each time. Students in after school sports programs or activities must provide a written change of transportation note EACH day there is a scheduled practice or activity. One note for the season or school year will not be accepted. Families with more than one student attending St. Margaret Mary School will need a separate note for each of their children.

Students will be sent home via their assigned form of transportation if they do not have written permission for a change. Verbal acknowledgement from students or parents will not be accepted for a change of transportation.

## STUDENT WITHDRAWALS AND TRANSFERS

When a withdrawal or transfer of a student occurs or is anticipated for any reason, parents should contact the school office. Parents should supply a letter, directed to the principal, to include the exact date of withdrawal, and the name and address of the new school that the child will be attending.

Student records will be mailed to the transferring school provided. An exception is made when students transfer to schools in foreign countries. In this case, records may be hand carried in a sealed envelope. *Academic records are not forwarded to a new educational placement if tuition payments are not up to date.*

## STUDY AND HOMEWORK

Each student must spend a reasonable amount of time each evening in preparation for his/her next day's class. Homework is a helpful educational tool, which reinforces the study skills presented in class, teaches the student to work independently, and gives the student time to complete certain projects that require individual and creative effort. Parents should provide a place to study, which is conducive to learning. The amount of homework each night is left to the discretion of the teacher. Suggested time allotments are as follows:

- Grades one and two, 20-30 minutes
- Grades three, four, and five, 35-55 minutes
- Grades six, seven, and eight, 60-90 minutes.

Supervision and guidance in homework are encouraged, especially in the lower grades. These are average time allotments but could exceed the average depending on the assignment or the student's ability to manage their time.

All students in grades two through eight have an assignment book in which homework must be recorded daily. Parents are asked to check this book nightly in order to monitor their child.

If a student receives a failing grade on a grade report and is involved in any school activity, the parent will be notified and a conference requested to discuss the child's continued participation in the school activity.

## TELEPHONE/CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students and teachers will not be summoned for incoming calls. Important messages will be relayed. Telephone use by students is restricted to urgent situations (forgotten instruments and homework are not considered urgent) and requires the permission of the teacher, principal or school office staff. Cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, and any other electronic devices are not permitted to be in a student's possession during the school day. **Cell phones, Apple watches, Fitbits and the like or other electronic devices must be turned off and kept in the backpack or locker at all times.** Any student with a cell phone or piece of electronic devices in their possession will receive a detention and it will be confiscated. A parent will be notified and required to pick up the device from the school office.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Bus

Pennsylvania state law (Act 372) provides for transportation to all students within the district or outside the district boundaries at a distance not exceeding ten miles by the nearest public highway. All school districts that provide busing are required to provide transportation for St. Margaret Mary School students. Buses are provided for children living in Central Dauphin, Susquehanna, Harrisburg, and other school districts. In order to retain bus transportation, students must obey the bus rules and regulations.

## **Car**

To ensure safety, the children transported to school in cars are to be dropped off in the school parking lot. **Parents must park their cars in a parking space and not stop their cars in the driving lane. Parents are responsible for crossing the younger students at the Book's Alley crosswalk.**

## **Change of Transportation**

Any change in transportation can only be made through a written note from a parent. Change of Transportation forms are provided on the school website. **No child's transportation will be changed without a note in writing. A verbal message/conversation with a child will not count as a valid change of transportation. Students will be sent home via their regular assigned transportation, as per the emergency card.** When an emergency develops, a parent may notify the office through the telephone; however, the call should be placed as early in the day as possible and only in an emergency situation. **Parents should not email a change of transportation request to a teacher after the school day begins.**

## **Dismissal**

At dismissal, parents must enter the school parking lot from the Herr Street entrance and park on the Herr Street (south) side of the parking lot. Each family will receive two laminated car rider cards to be used by parents or guardians for pick up.

- Upon arrival for pick up parents are to place their card in the mailbox located outside the gym door.
- As the students' names are called, they will then exit the gym and meet their parents in the designated area of the parking lot.
- Parents are requested not to enter the building at dismissal time.

**At 3:15 students who have not been picked up will be sent to A-STEP and be charged the daily rate. Please call the school office to let us know you will be delayed.**

## **BUS SAFETY REGULATIONS**

Students are expected to follow the rules established by the local districts and each individual bus driver. Please consult your school district bus safety regulations.

## **STMM BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Students must ride the assigned bus, stay in the assigned seat, board and leave the bus at the assigned stop. **IN CASES OF EMERGENCY ONLY**, a written request for a change in the buses must be made to the district bus authorities prior to the day of change. Unless this permission is obtained, the bus driver will refuse to honor written requests from the parent. Only permission from the bus authorities will be honored. If a child does not obtain this permission and misses the assigned bus, he/she will be sent to the school office and the parent will be responsible for providing transportation.

Parents of students who ride the school bus are asked to review the rules of bus conduct with their children. Parents should remind their children that breaking these rules could result in suspension or loss of bus riding privileges. The rules are as follows:

- Be on time at the designated school bus stop, arriving five minutes before the bus is due.
- Wait for your bus at a safe place, well off the highway, on the side of the street on which you live. Cross the street to enter the bus only when the bus is stopped and the red flashing signals are lighted.
- Respect the property rights of people who reside at or near the bus stop.
- Do not get into private vehicles with strangers. All school district vehicles are clearly marked.
- Enter the bus in an orderly manner and take your assigned seat. Bus drivers may assign seats.
- Always obey your bus driver.
- Remain in your seat at all times except when boarding and unloading.
- Keep your hands, head and feet inside the bus. Never throw objects in or out of the bus.
- Be courteous to fellow students and the bus driver.
- Use respectful tones and never use profanity or bad language.
- Do not damage or tamper with any parts of the bus. In addition to disciplinary actions from violating this rule, you will be responsible for repair or replacement costs.
- Keep the aisle clear except when entering or exiting the bus.
- Horseplay, fighting, eating, and drinking are strictly forbidden.
- The following items are not permitted in any school vehicle: live animals, weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, flammable liquid, fireworks, firecrackers, smoke bombs, radios, balls, water pistols, spray bottles, and any item too large for students to hold on their laps.
- **Students are not permitted to use cell phones or any other device to take photos, videos or any type of recordings of other students on the bus.**

Any misconduct that could be detrimental to the health or safety of the driver, other students, the bus, or persons outside the bus will not be tolerated.

## TUITION

In order to provide and maintain a high quality education for all students, it is necessary to charge tuition. A payment plan is available from May through February for the convenience of the family. It is imperative that parents stay current with the payment plan they have selected through FACTS Tuition Management. All tuition must be paid before a family can re-register for the next school year. Financial assistance is available to those who qualify but may vary from year to year. Parents may contact the tuition manager ([tuitionmanager@stmmparish.org](mailto:tuitionmanager@stmmparish.org)) to discuss financial assistance.

### **Registration Fee**

A non-refundable registration fee is required for each child upon registration or re-registration for each school year. A kindergarten registration fee of \$200 is required. Each student in grades 1 through 8 is required to pay a \$125.00 registration or re-registration fee. All families who do not pay the tuition in full in the beginning of the year must pay a \$45.00 fee for the Tuition Management Services. **All tuition must be paid before a family will be able to register for the next school year.**

### **VISITORS**

**Parents who have the required diocesan clearances are welcome to visit the school, when invited. When visiting for any reason during the school day, parents must report to and register at the school office first and wear their diocesan badge or receive a visitor's badge.** This is for the safety of the children. If it is necessary to contact a teacher or student, the secretary will make contact to avoid disturbing the learning experience. All transactions are performed through the school office during school hours.

**No parent may visit a classroom before school or during class time without reporting to the school office first.**

### **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

Volunteers assist in areas where professional training is not necessary. Participation in one or more of the various programs is encouraged and greatly appreciated. Parents, grandparents, senior citizens, and all parish members are invited to become a part of this important program. All volunteers must obtain a Youth Protection Badge from the Diocese of Harrisburg to volunteer in our school. **In order to obtain this badge, volunteers must complete the requirements for State Police and Department of Welfare clearances, and view the mandated reporting youth protection video online at [hbgdiocese.org](http://www.stmmparishschool.org/upld/efiles/clearanceProcedures.pdf).** All directions for this process can be found on the school website under the link Youth Protection. <http://www.stmmparishschool.org/upld/efiles/clearanceProcedures.pdf>

### **YEARBOOK**

The annual yearbook will be published and available for sale in mid-May. Pre-orders will be taken in the fall. Pre-ordering a yearbook will guarantee you a copy. Extra yearbooks will be sold in May while supplies last.

