

*A Community of Faith, Tradition  
and Excellence since 1953*

# Parent-Student Handbook

## *Mission Statement*

It is our mission to provide our students with an academic environment which uniquely balances the importance of education, faith and family. Our nurturing atmosphere enables our students to excel intellectually and thrive spiritually, developing into compassionate, lifelong learners. An outstanding academic program combined with the moral foundation of Gospel teachings creates young adults who are critical thinkers and leaders for the future.



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A school of the ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ALBANY

## Introduction

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Our goal at St. Mary's School is to create a community where parents, faculty, administration, clergy and staff work together to provide a faith filled education environment for our children. We believe that when children see cooperation taking place they will put forth their best effort. In order to provide the very best education possible, we need and encourage the commitment of everyone involved.

## The School Day

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Daily Schedule	
School Office	7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Early Drop Off (Morning Care)*	7:00 a.m. - 7:30 a.m.
Arrival Window	7:30 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.
Kindergarten - 8th Grade	8:00 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.
Pre-K Half Day	8:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Pre-K Full Day	8:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
After School Care*	3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

**\*Additional Fees Applied\***

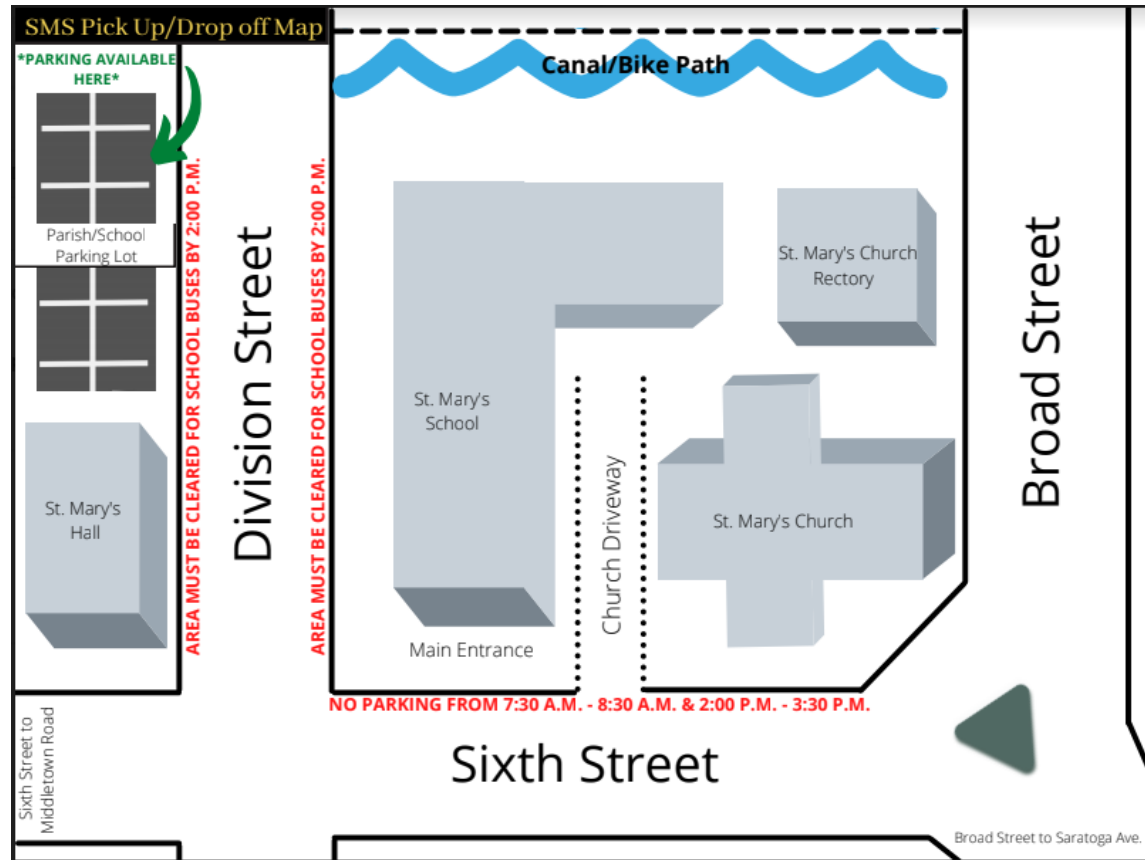
### Drop Off

- All K-8 students are to arrive at school by 8:00 a.m.
- Parents are not allowed to accompany their child to the classroom
- Please see map on next page for designated parking locations

### Pick Up

- It is necessary to know in advance the dismissal plans for each one of our students. Anytime there is a change in their normal routine, we must have written or electronic notification of this change in the Main Office
- Parents are asked to remain outside the front door and wait for their children to be released.
- No student will be permitted to leave on their own without proper authorization.

- Any student without clear dismissal instructions on a given day will be sent to aftercare. After care fees will apply.
- Please see map below for designated parking locations



## Bus

Students riding buses from various public school districts are expected to follow the same code of conduct on the bus as they do in school. Any bus referral would warrant a meeting with the Principal. If inappropriate behavior continues the student's privilege to ride the bus will be revoked. Parents will receive a copy of the bus referral.

## After School Care

The After School Care Program Operates each day school is in session, including half-days, except the last day before Christmas Break and the last day of school.

- Hours of Operation: Dismissal – 5:30 PM
- Fees: \$15 per day per child; \$20.00 per day for 2 or more children in the same family. First Fridays~ \$22.00 per child; \$30.00 per family
- Fees are applied to your FACTS tuition account weekly.

- An after school snack will be provided each day.
- Students are given the opportunity to complete homework assignments as a part of the after school program.

### **Absences and Illness**

- If students are going to be absent for any reason, parents are asked to notify the school office before 9:00 AM.
- When the student returns to school they must communicate with the school office regarding the nature of the absence.
- Given advanced notice, teachers may be able to provide missing work in ahead of lengthy absences.

## **Academics**

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Next to the formation of our faith, academics is the primary reason St. Mary's School exists. All students are responsible for:

- Keeping up with homework assignments and outside preparation for each class.
- Making up all missed work after an absence. It is the student's responsibility to obtain and make up all work that is missed. Absences due to illness are allowed one extra day for each day of absence to make up.
- The passing grade in all major subject areas is 70%. For a Regents course the passing grade is 65%.
- Students who fail any subject are required to receive remedial instruction during the summer by an approved teacher/instructor for that subject, at their own expense. Proof of satisfactory completion will be required prior to promotion. Students who fail more than two subjects may be required to repeat the school year.
- Specific to our 8<sup>th</sup> grade, any student who is failing by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter may lose the privilege of attending the end of the year class trip, at the discretion of the Administration. Any student who fails the 8<sup>th</sup> grade will not participate in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation ceremonies.

### **Promotion and Retention Policy**

Advancement to the next grade in St. Mary's School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level. Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Principal may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as a requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

# Tuition Policy

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Tuition is collected by FACTS by automatic deduction from a checking, savings or credit card account. An annual tuition collection fee for each family is payable at registration.

- Tuition is payable monthly from July through May. The July and August payments must be paid before a student is admitted in September.
- Any family that falls behind on scheduled payments will receive an email from FACTS reminding them their payment is due. FACTS will assess a return payment fee for each returned ACH debit. This fee can not be refunded by St. Mary's School as it is not collected by the school but is collected rather by FACTS. FACTS charges a \$30 late fee each month that a payment is late.
- Any family that falls three months behind will receive an invitation from the principal to conduct a payment plan meeting.
- If a family cannot agree to a payment plan, student records will not be released, participation in graduation ceremonies and future enrollment may be jeopardized.

We will work with all families to make a St. Mary's School education affordable. Families will have several opportunities for financial assistance.

- Families may apply for Diocesan Aid (Beacon of Hope and Lally Scholarships) by applying through FACTS Grant and Aid by April 1st.
- Families may apply for Parish Aid (Penny Fund) by applying through FACTS Grant and Aid by August 1st.
- Any current family who successfully refers a new family to St. Mary's School will receive a tuition credit on their next year's tuition
- Any family who secures a St. Mary's School Sponsorship will receive a tuition credit on their next year's tuition.

# Uniform Policy

The purpose of the school uniform is to provide a cohesive and aesthetically-pleasing student look. Our uniforms should be worn with pride and promote our school's mission and identity to our larger community.

Our school uniform is available through Student Styles in Latham, NY or B. Lodges in Albany, NY. Most pieces with our school's logo are available for purchase directly from the school office. Additionally, there is a uniform closet on the bottom level of the school where families swap gently-used uniform items at no cost.

## The St. Mary's School Uniform

### **Boys K-8**

- Gray Uniform dress slacks
- White oxford shirt (button down collar) long or short sleeve
- School selected plaid tie
- Black Belt (optional for Kindergarten students)
- Black dress shoes with above the ankle black dress socks
- Navy blue cardigan or sweater vest (optional)
- Navy blue polo with school logo, short or long sleeve optional
- St. Mary's selected navy quarter zip (5-8)

### **Girls 5-8**

- School Selected Plaid Skirt
- White oxford blouse (button down collar) long or short sleeve
- White or navy blue tights or knee socks
- Black or navy blue sensible dress shoes with backs (no clogs)
- Navy blue cardigan sweater or sweater vest (optional)
- Navy blue polo with school logo, short or long sleeve optional
- Navy blue pants
- St. Mary's selected navy quarter zip

### **Girls K-4**

- School Selected Plaid Jumper
- White Peter Pan collar blouse (short or long sleeve)
- White or navy blue tights or knee socks
- Black or navy blue sensible dress shoes with backs (no clogs)
- Navy blue cardigan sweater (optional)
- Navy blue pants

### **Gym Uniform - All Students**

- Navy blue sweat suit with school logo
- Gray tee shirt
- Gold Crusader tee shirt
- Navy blue shorts with school logo (seasonal)
- Athletic socks with sneakers

## St. Mary's Uniform Examples



# Uniform Do's and Don'ts

## DO

- Comply with the dress code
- Maintain a well-groomed appearance
- Tuck in all shirts regardless of grade level
- Only have two piercings per ear
- Wear full dress uniforms (no polo shirts) on days we attend mass
- Keep length of skirts no shorter than mid-thigh
- At the principal's discretion, wear gym uniforms in place of normal uniforms during warmer times of the year
- Wear your school spirit every third Friday (permitted items are anything with the school logo or anything blue and gold)
- Wear leggings under skirts or jumpers on colder days, **BUT** must remove leggings at the start of each school day

## DON'T

- Wear make-up during the school day
- Wear body piercings
- Wear earrings larger than a dime, large hoops, or dangling earrings
- Wear jewelry on gym days
- Have visible body markings (may not be allowed to attend class until markings are removed)
- Shave symbols, logos, emblems, or numbers into hair
- Expose undergarments
- Use extreme hair coloring and/or bleaching
- Dress down with no school spirit wear on third Friday of each month (students who are not in appropriate spirit wear will be provided with a school uniform to wear)

\*The school uniform may need to be amended based upon religious or health concerns

## Dress Down Days

St. Mary's School does host a number of dress down or out of uniform days. Students have the option of contributing \$1.00, to be donated to a charity, for the privilege of dressing out of uniform. Below are the guidelines for dress down attire:

### Prohibited Dress Items

Flip flop sandals  
Open back shoes  
Tank tops  
Spaghetti Straps  
Clothing with inappropriate writing  
Pajama pants  
Unnatural makeup  
Low cut blouses/tops  
Hats

Students who arrive at St. Mary's inappropriately dressed on a dress down day will have their parent or guardian contacted so that alternate clothing can be brought to school or provided with a uniform from the closet.

# Code of Conduct

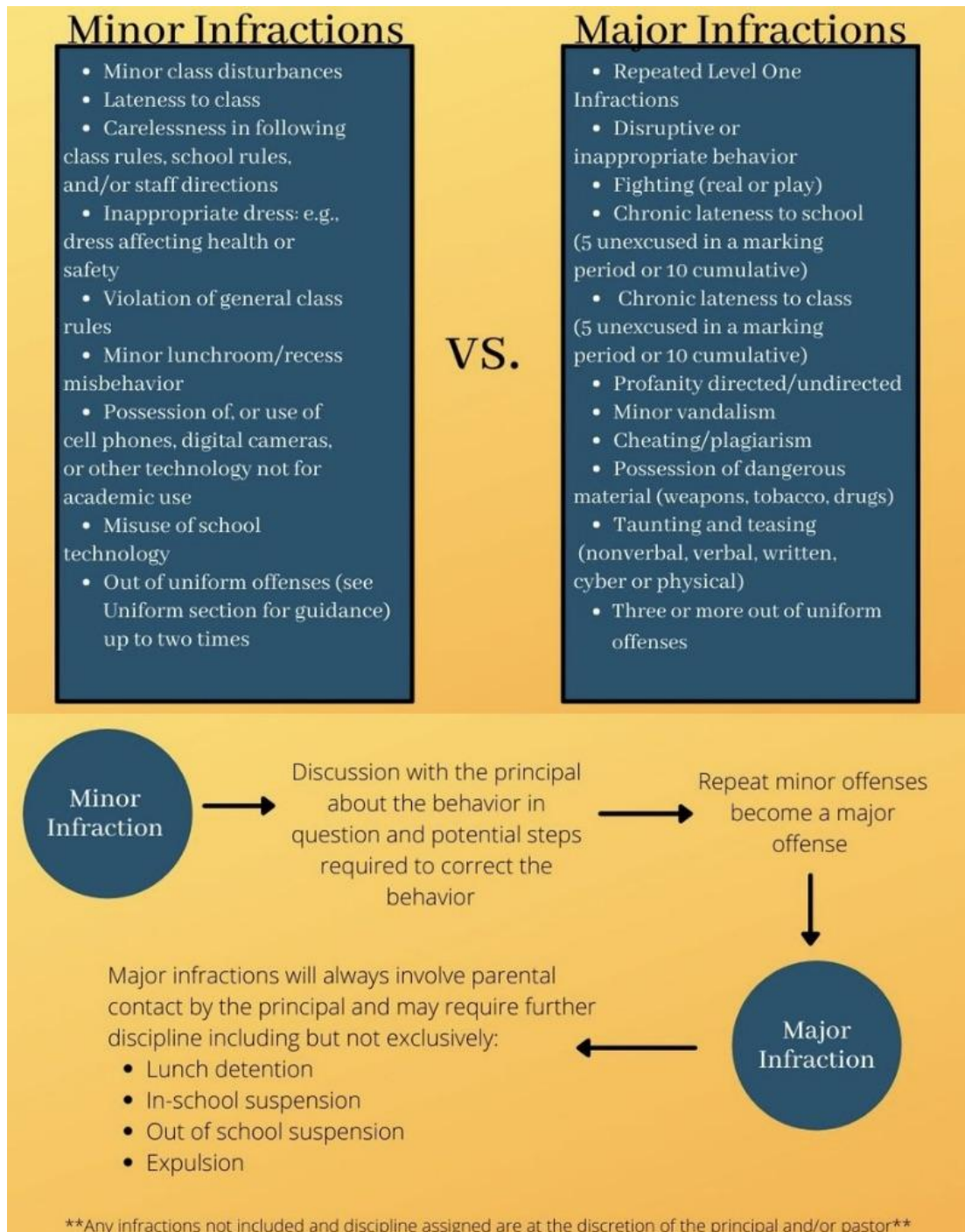
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1. *St. Mary's students should develop appropriate character.*
  - a. We expect our students to display positive character, to accept challenges and criticism, and to continuously seek out ways to improve.
  - b. We expect our students to be productive contributors in the classroom.
  - c. We expect our students to exhibit exemplary morals therefore cheating of any type will not be tolerated.
2. *St. Mary's students should display appropriate social skills.*
  - a. We expect our students to interact with others in an appropriate manner.
  - b. We expect our students to be courteous and respectful.
  - c. We expect our students to find peaceful solutions to the conflicts that can arise during the school day.
  - d. We expect our students to listen to persons of authority and follow directions promptly.
3. *St. Mary's students should respect the rights of others.*
  - a. We expect our students to use an appropriate tone of voice and language with each other.
  - b. We expect our students to respect others opinions and points of view and refrain from harassment, bullying or belittling others.
  - c. St. Mary's School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously.
  - d. St. Mary's students are expected to follow the Diocesan Internet and Technology Usage Policy.
4. *St. Mary's students should respect themselves and their school traditions.*
  - a. We expect our students to come to school promptly and be fully
  - b. prepared with needed materials and complete assignments.
  - c. We expect our students to follow the complete uniform dress code, unless otherwise notified.
  - d. We expect our students to respectfully attend various prayer and liturgical activities throughout the year.
  - e. We expect our students to participate as fully as possible in our various community service projects.



# Discipline Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline for staff, parents and students the expectations and procedures that will be followed if a student's behavior does not meet the standards of St. Mary's School.



# **General Information and Policies**

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## **Volunteers**

We welcome families to share their gifts, talents and time to assist St. Mary's in our stated mission as volunteers. St. Mary's School adheres to requirements delineated by the diocese with respect to volunteers:

- Volunteers must complete Safe Environment Training which is provided by the Diocese.
- Volunteers must give consent to St. Mary's School to process a background check.
- Volunteers must review and sign the Code of Conduct.

## **Office Records**

Please notify the office in writing of any change of:

- physical address
- cell, home or business phone numbers
- e-mail addresses
- personal information

It is the responsibility of each family to submit the request for transportation and textbooks to their public district of residence. The deadline for submitting a transportation request is April 1st of each year for the following school year. The deadline for submitting a textbook request is June 1st of each year for the following school year.

## **Withdrawal Policy**

Notice of withdrawal of a student should be made by the parent in writing to the Principal in advance of the withdrawal date. This enables the school to prepare necessary information and settle accounts. No student records will be forwarded to another school until tuition accounts are settled.

## **Birthday Observances**

We acknowledge each student's birthday and allow them to bring in treats for their classmates. In the event that a student is providing birthday treats, please be aware of any food allergies among their classmates and provide a treat that everyone can enjoy. Invitations for non school events should be sent privately to the homes of students unless an invitation is being given to every student in the entire class.

## **Field Trips**

- Field trips will be day trips only, however they can be longer in duration than the length of a school day.
- Individual teachers, in consultation with the principal, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
- A written official permission slip, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip.
- Students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus to and from the field trip with their class.
- Chaperones must adhere to Diocesan Guidelines for Professional Conduct, sign a Code of Conduct, have complete Safe Environment training and consent to a background check.
- All field trips are subject to change based upon Diocesan regulations and/or Homeland Security Regulations.

## **Medical Information and Policies**

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The school does all that it can to ensure the school environment is favorable to students with special medical needs. The school nurse is responsible for notifying classroom teachers about the nature of the special medical needs faced by students. This notification will include an explanation of the severity of the health threat, a description of the signs and symptoms to be aware of and an action plan.

Health services are provided by both Waterford Halfmoon Union Free School District and St. Mary's School. The school nurse provides direct care for acute and chronic health conditions, emergency care, monitors communicable disease, completes the necessary required screenings and maintains the student's cumulative health record.

### **Immunizations**

All newly entering students must have a complete record of immunization provided to the school before he or she may enter. This is in the form of a cumulative health record from the previous school or a Health Care Provider's physician's signed certificate.

Any medical exemption provided by the Health Care Provider will be reviewed by the school nurse and must be updated each year. Parents are required to fill out a notarized request for medical exemption from immunizations. We cannot accept a student without required immunizations or an exemption approved by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. A Health Appraisal form with the required immunizations is available on our website.

## **Emergency Contact**

To provide the best care for your child, it is essential that you provide current information on your child's health, including any special medications they may need. Emergency contact information should be current, as it is the primary contact source used in the event of an emergency. Emergency contact information provided to St. Mary's School gives the school permission to contact an alternate person in the event that the school is unable to contact the parent/guardian.

## **Medication Policy**

NYS Education Guidelines state that all medications, including over-the-counter medications, given at school, meet the following requirements:

- A written order from your child's physician stating the name of the medication, dosage, frequency, and time of administration.
- A written statement from the parent/guardian requesting administration of the medication in school.
- The parent/guardian or other adult must deliver medication to the school office, or Health Office in the original pharmaceutical labeled container. You may request a separate container from the pharmacy for school use. Medication may not be brought on the school bus.
- Medication orders end on the last day of school each year. New orders will be needed for each school year.
- All medications will be kept locked in the Health Office.
- No student is to carry any medication on his or her person at any time, unless written permission to self-carry has been provided by a physician.
- Forms for "self carry" may be obtained from the nurse's office and/or the school website. One form must be completed by the student's physician and a second form is required to be signed by parents titled "Consent and Release" for the Albany Diocese.

## **Forms**

A physical appraisal exam is required for all new students and all students entering grades K, 2, 4, and 7. A physical must be current (performed within the 12 months prior to the start of the current school year is acceptable). The physical report is to be provided by October of the current school year. We prefer that parents make appointments to have their child's doctor complete these exams as he/she will complete a more complete exam and will give the required immunizations.