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**ST. MARY’S CATHOLIC SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

**“Educating for Today, Tomorrow and Eternity”**

The mission of St. Mary’s Catholic School is to provide a Catholic education for our students enabling them to become faithful adult Catholics, responsible citizens in this world, and blessed citizens in the next.

**ADMISSION**

Before enrolling in St. Mary’s Catholic School, an original birth certificate is required, with a social security number, immunization records, and baptismal records. Nebraska State Law (LB 59) requires that all students must be immunized and that schools must keep a record of each student’s immunization on file.

 **St. Mary’s School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.**

 **The Omaha Archdiocesan Schools admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origins to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the schools. They do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin and administration of their educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.**

 **According to policy of Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Omaha, those admitted to our school and his/her parents will subscribe to the school’s philosophy and agree to abide by the educational policies and regulations of the school and the Archdiocese. If serious dissatisfactions result in ongoing agitation on the part of the parents, school administration, after discussion with parents, will exercise the school’s prerogative to withdraw permission for enrollment.**

**HOURS OF OPERATION:**  **ARRIVAL, DISMISSAL, & TARDY**

 The School doors **will open at 7:45 A.M** and students may enter the building. Classes begin at 8:10 A.M. and students arriving after 8:10 are considered tardy (students arriving on buses after 8:10 will not be counted tardy). Students are to enter school quietly andorderly upon arrival at school **since teachers meet to pray and go over the day**.

 **Parents bringing children to school are asked to park on the church side to keep the bus lane open.**

 Buses come to pick up students at 3:20 P.M. **Bus students are dismissed first and after the bus has left, students being picked up or walking home will be dismissed. Students not riding the bus will not be dismissed for any reason ahead of students riding the bus. Parents may park in the area south of the school to wait for students until the bus has picked up children, so as to leave the bus lane open.**

 **If a friend or family member will be picking up your child, please let the school know by note or phone call.**

 If your child is going to have a friend over for the evening, or if you know in advance they are going to go somewhere after school, please communicate this to your child in advance of coming to school. We also ask that you **send a note stating where your child is to go** so the homeroom teacher is aware of it.

**INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS**

 Instructional time in the academic areas and religion is accounted for allowing time for lunch and recess. Liturgy time is considered instructional time because history, health, speaking and music are included. A minimum requirement of 1032 hours of instructional contact time is an annual State of Nebraska requirement for K-6 (or K-8).

**HOLY DAYS**

 St. Mary’s Catholic School will not be in session on Holy Days of Obligation. However, it is important to note that the purpose of the day off isn’t to miss Holy Mass. Holy Days of obligation have the same importance as Sunday. To miss Holy Mass on purpose on a Holy Day is a mortal sin just as it is for Sunday.

 \*\*\*\*\* When school is not in session at St. Mary’s, but classes are being held at the Osmond Community School, students involved in certain classes or activities at Osmond Community are required to attend. Classes or activities would include but may not be limited to: 5th & 6th grade band, 7th & 8th grade band, sports practice, individual band lesson, etc. Students are not to stay at the public school if they have time between classes or activities. They are to leave the campus. Students failing to show up for class or causing problems during class times are subject to dismissal from participating in these classes/activities. Parents are responsible for transportation to and from the public school for these classes/activities.

**DRESS CODE**

 St. Mary’s has coordinated attire, which may be worn everyday if desired, will be worn on Mass days and special occasions. The special occasions will be announced by the administrator. Coordinated attire will consist of a royal blue St. Mary’s polo shirt and either black or khaki pants**.** Special care and consideration should always be given to the appropriateness of clothing worn during the school day.

 All clothing worn by students of St. Mary’s should reflect Christian modesty and promote Christian dignity befitting a child of God. Common sense is the best rule to apply when dressing for school. The guidelines for our dress code are as follows:

 • On Mass days and special occasions, coordinated attire is required.

• Any shirt reflecting a view that is contrary to our Christian beliefs and appears to be morally or ethically offensive is not to be worn (i.e., athletic shirts with negative messages).

 • Halter tops and tank tops are not appropriate

**• The wearing of nylon sweat pants may be worn this year on a trial basis. They must be appropriate in fit and length for modesty and not be a distraction to others. Shorts should be no shorter than two inches above the knee.**

• Tight leggings or stretch pants **may only be worn under dresses or long dress length tops.**

**• Girls wearing skirts should be sure that they are no shorter than two inches above the knee. Skorts or split skirts should be of similar length.**

 • No hats are to be worn in any building.

• **Sandals with backs** may be worn to school, but children should have gym shoes available.

• Appropriate length of shorts may be worn only on warm days in August, September, and May. Administration may make exceptions. **Black or khaki short pants may be worn on warm church days. KNIT GYM SHORTS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON CHURCH DAYS.**

* Appropriate wear for cold weather (hats, gloves) should be worn. Students will not be allowed to stay in from recess because they do not have appropriate wear.

• Boots are required whenever the playground is wet or covered with snow. Students will change into shoes upon entering the building. No substitutions will be allowed in lieu of boots for outside wear. Upper grades may wear old shoes instead of boots, but change into clean shoes when entering building.

**Take Note**: The administration of St. Mary’s Catholic School has the authority to deem ANY clothing as inappropriate and not acceptable attire for School. Students will have to call home for a change of clothes or change into some old clothes we have at school.

**RESPECT FOR SCHOOL AND FACILITIES**

 Students are members of the parish and have a moral obligation to preserve and protect the school and the parish property. We are obliged to respect property as well as people. If any facility in the school is not operating properly, students should report it to the administrator.

 As the school is the student's home during the day, it should reflect cleanliness and orderliness. Students should enter the school with clean shoes and boots. Students should take care of their desk and not write or deface it in any way. Chewing gum and eating of candy during school hours is not permissible. At the end of the school day, students are responsible to help the classroom teacher clean the classroom.

**ABSENCE AND ATTENDANCE**

If your child is absent from school, **parents must notify the school before 8:00 A.M**. **Word of mouth message from a sibling cannot be accepted.** **Please provide a brief explanation of the absence, including general symptoms of the sick student. The state health department makes weekly calls and requests this information.** The secretary will call home before 9:00 if a phone call has not been made by the parent. When a student has been absent; **a signed, dated, and written explanation** for the absence is required from the parent or guardian before the student will be readmitted to class. The student will present this excuse to their Teacher upon returning to school. If a student arrives at or after 10:00 A.M. or leaves before 1:30 P.M., he will be counted absent for 1/2 day. Parents are requested to schedule medical and dental appointments outside of School hours if possible. Generally, students should not be absent from school for travel. Parents are responsible for planning family activities that do not conflict with the school calendar. Excessive tardiness is a form of truancy. Tardiness also disrupts the entire class. Please have students arrive at school on time. If a student must leave school during class hours due to illness or some other reason, he will not be dismissed until a parent or guardian arrives and checks the student out of the office.

 If a student is absent from school, they should not be in attendance at extra-curricular events at school in the evening; this includes events at the Public School. If they aren’t well enough to be in xchool, then they shouldn’t be in attendance at evening events either.

 **If a student is absent 10 days, a letter is sent to the parent/guardian. The county attorney will be notified if any child is absent 20 days. This is required by law.**

**SCHOOL CALENDAR**

 All school families will be supplied with an annual school calendar, which includes the days in session and the days in which there will be no school. This calendar will be posted on the school website for public viewing. Changes in the school calendar or different dismissal times will be sent home as needed.

## STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

 St. Mary’s Catholic School complies with all State of Nebraska requirements for **accreditation** and with all Archdiocesan policies relating to Catholic Schools.

**RELIGIOUS FORMATION**

 St. Mary’s Catholic School provides a strong religious education program for all students. The Catholic philosophy is integrated in academic subjects as well as the fine arts curriculum. Classroom teachers and the Pastor give instruction in religious education. All teaching will faithfully follow the Magisterial of the Church.

 Devotions and spiritual development is fostered by daily classroom prayer and the opportunity to attend Holy Mass on Wednesdays and Fridays. Students are exposed to the sanctifying effects of regular prayer, spiritual reading, and familiarity with the Saints. The school children play an active role in the planning and facilitation of school liturgies. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated once a month **or as determined by the Pastor**. During Lent, the Stations of the Cross and Eucharistic Hours of Devotion are a part of the student’s faith life. Devotion to the Blessed Mother in October and May is also encouraged. Prayer begins the day in each classroom and prayers are said before lunch, after lunch and before dismissal. Students should always recite the Act of Contrition as part of their “end of the day” prayer.

## TRANSFERS

 In the event of a student transferring from St. Mary’s, the new school must send a written request, which includes the parent/guardian’s signature for the transfer of student records. These records include a copy of report card grades, attendance records, standardized test scores and health records. Records are then sent directly to the school requesting them.

 Students entering our school must sign a release form to have the previous school send cumulative records to St. Mary’s. We will provide a form “Authorization for Release of Records” to be signed by the parent/guardian and sent to the school last attended. Sacramental records may also be requested.

**PROMOTION**

 The student is promoted each year on the recommendation of the teacher and administrator. When evaluating the student's academic progress the Teacher reviews the social, emotional, physical, and moral development of the student. If the possibility exists where a student may be retained in the same grade, the teacher will discuss this with the parents at approximately the middle of the School year.

**PARENTAL CONCERNS AND PROCEDURES**

A parent who has a question or concern regarding a situation involving a student is asked to follow these procedures:

1. Contact the student’s teacher to discuss the situation and work with the

 teacher to arrive at a possible solution. Appointments with the teachers

 will be made by writing a note requesting a conference or by calling the

 school office to ask a teacher to return the call to a parent.

 2. If the concern cannot be resolved with the teacher, the parent should then

 request a conference with the administrator. After discussing the situation

 with both parties, the head teacher will act as a facilitator, making every

 effort to resolve the problem and initiate reconciliation between the two

 parties. A summary of this conference will be documented and signed by

 all parties.

 3. If resolution and reconciliation have not been achieved after discussion

 with the teacher and administrator, and the parent still feels the issue has

 not been addressed, the pastor may be asked to assist in the resolution

 and reconciliation of the problem.

 4. Every effort should be made to resolve questions, concerns and problems

 at the earliest possible stage in a manner appropriate for Christians.

**PERMISSION TO LEAVE EARLY**

 A request for a student to leave school early MUST be presented in writing to the homeroom teacher. No student will be allowed to leave school before regular dismissal unless accompanied by a written note and a parent must be present to pick up the student. No student will be allowed to walk home to meet a parent for a doctor, dental or other appointment without a note from the parent. The student must be picked up at the school for early dismissals as requested by the parent.

##

## SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

 St. Mary's School participates in the USDA’s National School Lunch Program and serves nutritious meals each school day.

 Applications for free and reduced meals are sent to each family at the beginning of the year. The applications are reviewed by the administrator and are notified as to application status. Families may apply for free and reduced meal plans at anytime during the school year. This information is kept confidential

**Nondiscrimination Statement**

 **The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual’s income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)**

 **If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at** [**http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\_filing\_cust.html**](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html)**, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U. S. Department of Agreiculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202( 690-7442 or email at** **program.intake@usda.gov**

 **Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.**

 **Please note: As stated above, all protected bases do not apply to all programs. The first six protected bases of race, color, national origin, age disability and sex are the six protected bases for all applicants and recipients of the Child Nutrition Programs.**

**SCHOOL LUNCH CHARGE POLICY**

 Lunch bills are included in the family folders **at the end of each month**. All payments must be made in the school office. It is the responsibility of each family to pay lunch bills promptly to assure the success of our school lunch program. Families with outstanding balances will be notified and actions will be taken as needed for collection of payment. Any student who has money to purchase a reduced price or paid meal at the time of meal service must be provided a meal.

 Families with a remaining balance at the end of the year will have their balance carried over to the following year. In the event that your family will not have students at St. Mary’s for the upcoming year and there is a remaining balance, your family will be refunded all money in your account.

**SCHOOL VISITATION**

 Parents or visitors who want to visit the school are always welcome. However, we ask that you first make arrangements with the homeroom teacher who will then inform the administration. **We also ask parents not to visit during the first two weeks of school.** Be sure to check into the office upon your arrival. If you are bringing items to school, please leave them at the school office and they will be delivered to the appropriate classroom.

**BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

 **Birthdays and half birthdays (for those with summer birthdays) may be observed in the classroom as permitted and directed by the homeroom Teacher.** **Teachers will give out information about food allergies. If allergies exist, any treat or activity must have prior approval by the classroom Teacher.**

 **Please do not send invitations for private parties to school, unless every child in those classrooms is invited. Likewise, please do not gather students afterschool for a party unless every child is invited.** The school cannot help with the distribution of private invitations. **Parents should be sensitive to excluding children from a party to which the majority of the class has been invited.**

**CLASSROOM PARTIES**

 Class parties are organized and limited to three times a year: Halloween, Christmas and Valentine’s Day. All parties will be held at the same time during the school day, starting no earlier than **one hour before school is dismissed or as directed by teachers. We do not serve food or treats ½ hour before lunch.**

**DISCIPLINE**

 Education at St. Mary’s Catholic School is a privilege, not a right. Students must treat all members of the community with care and respect.

 High standards of conduct are an important goal in our school. Proper attitudes and character development are stressed. An unacceptable action on the part of an individual child always interferes with the education of the other students. It is our purpose to develop good citizens who will respect and abide by rules of good conduct and therefore the cooperation of everyone is expected.

 Classroom teachers have the authority to set any and all rules as expected in their classroom. Teachers shall have consequences for breaking classroom rules and will handle all incidents in their room. Teachers shall request the assistance of the administration of the school to intervene with such punishments as deemed necessary. Teachers and Staff have the authority to correct and discipline any student at any time for any incident they deem inappropriate.

 Disciplinary action will be imposed for the following violations (as well as others), which may include suspension or expulsion:

 • Consistent failure to complete assignments

 • Consistent disruption in class or during school activities

 • Disrespect for authority - administrator, teachers, staff, volunteers, Pastor, or other personnel or disrespectful behavior toward any community member

 • Possession of or distributing alcohol or drugs

• Bringing knives, matches, chains or guns to school or any object deemed threatening

 • Violation of safety or fire drill rules

 • Leaving School grounds without permission

 • Damaging and defacing school/church property

 • Demoralizing conduct and/or use of vulgar language - BULLYING

 • Throwing snowballs, rocks, gravel or other dangerous objects

 • Fighting and rough playing

 **• Fighting or disruptions anywhere on St. Mary’s School campus**

 • Stealing

 • Cheating

 • Removing items from another student’s desk/coat

 • Chewing gum or eating candy during school hours

**USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION**

Physical restraint and seclusion of students for behavior management shall be used in circumstances and under conditions that are in the best interests of students.

Physical restraint is appropriate when a student is displaying physical behavior which presents substantial imminent risk of injury to the student or others, and the student is demonstrating the intent and the ability to cause injury within a matter of seconds or minutes. The degree of physical restriction employed should be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident, the size and condition of the student, and the potential risks for injury to the student or others. Physical restraint does not include: (a) taking away a weapon; or (b) breaking up a fight.

Seclusion is appropriate when a student is displaying physical behavior that presents substantial imminent risk of injury to the student or others, and the threat could be diminished if the student were placed in a safe environment away from other students and staff. Seclusion should only be used as long as necessary and should be discontinued when the student is no longer a threat to himself/herself or others. Time out procedures which do not constitute seclusion are permitted in school.

Immediately after the student has restored emotional and behavioral control following the use of physical restraint and/or seclusion, a staff member not involved with the incident shall examine the student to ascertain if the student has sustained any injury. The Principal (or Head Teacher) will verbally notify the parent/guardian as soon as possible (no later than the end of the school day in which the physical restraint or seclusion occurs).

All use of physical restraint or seclusion must be documented in a memorandum within one school day of the incident. The administrator will send a copy of the memorandum to the parent or guardian within two school days following the use of the restraint or seclusion.

**EXPULSION AND SUSPENSION**

 **Expulsion** will be used only when all other means of disciplinary actions have failed and the student’s conduct is a hindrance to the welfare and progress of the school community and shows repeated disregard for the philosophy, policies, rules and regulations of the school.

 The following procedure will be followed for expulsion:

 1. The decision to expel a student rests with the administrator and Pastor. Because documentation of preliminary attempts to help a child redirect inappropriate behavior will be on file, and the parents/guardian has to be notified at least three times of the disciplinary actions that might result. The decision to expel a student should not come as a surprise to anyone involved.

 2. Upon expulsion, the student’s parent/guardian will be notified in writing of the measure being taken, the reasons for the expulsion, and their right to due process.

 3. The expulsion may be reconsidered by the administrator and Pastor when a written request for a special hearing is made by the parent/guardian.

 **Suspension** of a student will be used when he/she is sent to the administrator three times within a two month period or in extreme cases when the administrator determines the seriousness of the action warrants such an action.

 The administrator will notify the parent/guardian the student has been suspended (in-school or out-of-school) for a period of up to three days.

 During the suspension, the student will be required to complete all of the work missed while on suspension.

 A probationary period will be set once the student returns to school and any further infractions of the rules could be just cause for an expulsion.

**BULLYING/HARASSMENT/OFFENSIVE CONDUCT**

 Archdiocesan Policy 5032 states: Student offensive conduct or harassment on the basis of a person’s gender, sexual orientation, race, color, age, religion, national origin, marital status, or disability is prohibited. Repeated incidents of offensive conduct directed to the same person or group of persons constitutes harassment. Offensive conduct or harassment may result in suspension or expulsion.

 Examples of offensive conduct which, when repeated constitute harassment include but are not limited to the following:

 1. Explicit and offensive sexual references or gestures.

 2. Name-calling or taunting on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, physical appearance, color, religion, national origin, marital status or disability.

 3. Language of any kind, including graffiti, epithets, vulgar or profane jokes which is disparaging or demeaning to others on the basis of their gender, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, or disability.

4. Any of the above harassment on computers and internet is also forbidden.

 Exclusion from activities can be the result of even minor incidents, which may not warrant suspension or expulsion from school.

**POLICIES**

 St. Mary’s Catholic School follows all policies as directed by the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office Policy Handbook dated June 2000. St. Mary’s Catholic School also adopts certain policies as needed for the directive of our School as made by the Board of Education. Parents wishing to view these policies may contact the school office.

**BUS CONDUCT**

The following rules are to be carefully observed when your child or children ride the bus.

 1. Students are expected to be courteous and cooperative.

2. There will be no eating, drinking or littering on the bus. A student caught doing any of these will clean the bus if asked to do so.

 3. All students must be seated whenever the bus is in motion.

 4. Windows are opened and closed only when directed by or with the

 permission of the bus driver.

5. When leaving the bus, walk at least 10 feet in front of the bus (State law).

 Students failing to comply with these rules may be suspended from riding the bus for a time to be determined by the bus driver and the Osmond Community School Principal. The student will be reinstated only after consultation with the parents.

**DRUG-FREE SCHOOL**

 In order to comply with state and federal law, no person may consume, distribute, or possess any illegal drugs or controlled substance in the school building. Possession of or distributing alcohol or drugs will result in suspension or expulsion.

St. Mary’s School is a smoke free environment. Smoking is strictly forbidden in the school building by students, staff, and visitors. School staff or students are neither to carry nor use tobacco products of any kind anywhere on campus.

**GROUP BAND & INDIVIDUAL BAND LESSONS**

 Students in Junior High may participate in the band at Osmond Community School. Transportation is provided and at the end of the month, parents are given a bill in the brown envelope to pay for the service provided.

 Students in grades 5 through 8 may have individual band lessons during School hours. Transportation is provided for this and parents will be given a bill in the brown envelope to pay for the service provided.

 Students at band or a band lesson are responsible for completing any missed assignments and are required to have the work completed the next School day.

**FIELD TRIPS**

 Each classroom takes educational field trips each year as approved by the administrator. Parents are required to sign a permission slip and a medical release form for students to participate in such field trips. A minimal cost for admission to the places visited may also be requested.

 Field trips are privileges given to students; no student has an absolute right to a field trip. Students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic and/or behavioral requirements.

**STUDENT PROGRAMS**

 St. Mary’s Catholic School students will have an annual Christmas program to which the public is invited to attend. There may be other programs offered throughout the year as well.

 **Catholic Schools Week is a week long celebration which begins the last week end in January. There are many fun activities including a Grandparents’ Day program on Wednesday. Parents’ Day activities are on Friday, with lunch and a program. It is customary for students to leave early with their parents on that day.**

**TUITION/BOOK BILL**

 Tuition is set as a small portion of the entire costs to education. Rates decrease with the number of students in the household attending St. Mary's. Parents may indicate if they would like to pay monthly, quarterly, or annually. Tuition/book fees are due by the last day of school. If anyone is unable to pay by that date, arrangements should be made with the Pastor.

 All payments are recorded on a family ledger sheet and kept by the school secretary. Questions or concerns should be brought to her attention.

 Teachers, parents, and students should take special care of all school books. All hard covered books are required to be covered. Any hardcover school books damaged during the year, will be assessed a damage fee to be paid by the student/parent. Any lost books will have to be paid for according to their replacement value. This applies to hardcover books and library books.

**TUITION ASSISTANCE**

 **Parents may ask for tuition assistance by speaking to the Pastor.**

 **Tuition assistance is available to all families/students who attend the school, by applying to the Omaha Archdiocese Scholarship Fund. Receiving assistance from this fund is beneficial to families and the school since it is based on the total cost of education at St. Mary's School, not just the cost of tuition. It is mandatory that anyone who seeks assistance from the parish must complete this application process. Please note that not all applicants receive the scholarship, it is by a drawing, and has income limits.**

**FUNDRAISING**

 Fundraising projects are a vital part of our school. Tuition/book fees do not cover the entire cost of educating the students. Parents are asked from time to time to prepare items and/or services as a part of their tuition/book fee.

**SPORTS WITH OSMOND COMMUNITY**

St. Mary’s 7th & 8th graders may participate in sports at Osmond Community School including football, volleyball, basketball and track. Transportation is provided to Osmond Community School for the practice time of these sports and parents are sent a bill home at the end of the month to pay for this service. All Junior High students will comply with the “NO PASS, NO PLAY” policy adopted by the St. Mary’s Board of Education. The said policy is as follows:

# NO PASS, NO PLAY POLICY

 For a Junior High student from St. Mary’s to be academically eligible and participate in an Osmond Community School sponsored activity, he must have passing grades in all academic subjects (religion, math, English, spelling, social studies, science, keyboarding, reading, language arts, etc). This rule doesn’t apply to art, music, or handwriting. Eligibility will be determined every 4 1/2 weeks at Progress Report time and at the end of the quarter. If a student is failing one or more courses, he will be declared ineligible. After two weeks, his course work will be checked by the administration. If the student is passing all subjects at the time of the review, he will be declared eligible. Junior High students may not practice or participate in sports while they are ineligible.

 The above are MINIMUM standards to be followed by all St. Mary’s Junior High students participating in Osmond Community School sports activities. A student who is declared eligible for the resource program as defined by the Osmond Community School Board is not subject to the above academic rules. This eligibility rule includes sports and includes but is not limited to band, vocal and instrumental music, choir, etc.

## TEXTBOOK LOAN PROGRAM

 St. Mary’s Catholic School participates in the Nebraska Textbook Loan Program that provides Catholic School students with textbooks. Once a year in January, parents may be asked to sign a textbook request for the following school year. Any questions concerning this program should be directed to the administrator.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

 **During the 2014-15 school year, St. Mary’s School is proud to introduce a new website that parents and other community members can access to find information on. The address is stmarysosmond.com. Please check this website often. We will try to update the website regularly.**

 Communication with parents will continue to take place through the “Brown Envelope” or folder system. It will be sent home on Fridays and should be returned promptly the following Monday. Newsletters and important information the parents should look for will be included in the brown envelope.

## WEATHER REPORTS

The public school has an automated calling system, which will inform parents of all St. Mary's School students upon cancellation of school. In case of a late start, remember there will be no morning preschool or prekindergarten.

 **St. Mary’s also has an email services for messages related to St. Mary’s School only. Please keep the school updated on email information.**

**PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

 A private conference between the parents and the teacher will be arranged for each student during the first quarter. Other conferences are made when the teacher, administrator, or parent feels that one is needed. These meetings should not be held during the time classes are in session.

 Schedules are distributed prior to the conferences and parents are requested to follow the times listed. If a longer conference is needed, please notify the teacher.

**NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

 In the absence of a court order to the contrary, we will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other School-related information regarding the student upon request. 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. **St. Mary’s is obliged to release children to a parent who is divorced or going through divorce unless a court order is provided.**

**GRADING SYSTEM**

 The following grading system is used in determining academic ability of our students. The following grades are used in marking daily assignments, tests and used on progress reports and report cards.

 A+ 99-100 C+ 84 - 85

 A 96 - 98 C 81 - 83

 A- 94 - 95 C- 78 - 80

 B+ 92 - 93 D+ 76 - 77

 B 89 - 91 D 73 -75

 B- 86 - 88 D- 70 -72

 F 69 and below

 St. Mary’s uses *Sycamore,* to keep records of attendance, grades, lunch, etc. Parents will be able to access grades online at sycamoreeuducation.com using a login and password system. With access to this program, St. Mary’s does not send home mid-quarter progress reports**. It is the responsibility of the parents / guardians to check progress of their children throughout each quarter**. If you do not have online capabilities, please inform your child’s teacher so that a printed copy may be sent home regularly.

**REPORT CARDS**

 Report cards **(printed from Sycamore)** are given at the end of every quarter. These indicate the academic and other essential characteristics that are desirable for students in our School. Parents are encouraged to review the grades with their child and to have a discussion on their academic performance as indicated on the report card. Report cards should be signed and dated by the parents and returned to the homeroom Teacher within five days.

**HOMEWORK**

 Homework is given for two reasons:

 1) To provide independent review of key concepts learned in the classroom and,

 2) To develop responsibility and good study habits in students.

 Following are ways that parents can help foster good study habits:

• Establish a specific time for homework to be completed every day. During this time both radios and TVs should be off. If no homework is assigned, or when the assignment is completed, students should read for at least 10 minutes every day.

• Establish a space for homework to be done. This will help the early morning confusion of finding things. Also, it will help students develop a sense of organization.

• One parent should check over homework every night. Homework should be clean and neat. Students have an assignment notebook for parents to check off the daily assignments.

• Homework should be completed before students are allowed to go shopping, out to eat, or to sporting events.

• Students should be familiar with both the school and public library. Students should always have a book available at home to read. Establish a place at home for library books so that they can be returned on time.

 Teachers have the authority to set consequences for work that is late. Such consequences may include points off for each day the assignment is late as well as a grade of “0” for late work or incomplete work.

 All homework shall be done with the proper heading as desired by the teacher. Failure to do so may result in a lower grade or late homework plan.

**LATE HOMEWORK**

 **The following plan will be followed for late homework:**

**1st late assignment, needs to be made up by the next class**

**2nd late assignment, miss recess, note or phone call to parents**

**3rd late assignment, after school meeting with teacher and parent**

**More than three late assignments, stay after school for 1 week**

**HOMEWORK - MAKE UP WORK**

 Students missing school should make immediate arrangements with their homeroom teacher to make up the missed work. Depending on the amount of time absent, the teacher will set a date for the completion of all homework missed. **Please do not interrupt the teacher to pick up homework.**

## STUDENT RECORDS

 St. Mary’s School voluntarily complies with the provision of the Buckley Amendment. Parents have the right to request access to their children’s official file. This request must be in writing and at least twenty-four hours in advance. Parents may also request copies of their student’s records. The charge for this service is $5.00.

Confidentiality of Student Records (Archdiocesan Policy #5052)

 The content of student records is released only to authorized persons. A parental signature or a student-of-majority-age signature is required for release of records.

 When a student transfers, records will be forwarded free of charge to the student’s new school upon receipt of a signed request forwarded from the new school.

Information for Student Records (Archdiocesan Policy #5051)

 Official student files contain only: 1) academic transcript, 2) attendance record, 3) records of educational or related testing 4) emergency information, 5) required health information. All information contained in the official student file is factual and not observational.

**THE BUCKLEY AMENDMENT**

St. Mary’s School adheres to the Buckley amendment regarding access to student records and academic confidentiality.

 1. Students may not grade the work of other students.

 2. Children of teachers may not grade the work of students enrolled in St. Mary’s School.

 3. Graded student work may not be displayed in halls.

 4. A student may not be asked his/her grade aloud.

 5. Parent volunteers may not grade student work.

### STUDENT HEALTH

 Students entering the school are required to have Dental and Health Examination cards on file. Immunization records are also mandated. Section 79-444.01 of the Nebraska State School Law requires that all students attending the school must be immunized against the following diseases, or provide the school with a waiver signed by the parent/guardian exempting them from the immunization. Students will be excluded from school if these conditions are not met by November 1 of the current school year, or 60 days after enrollment for students transferring into the school. Please help us by cooperating with the nurse’s request as expeditiously as possible. The School can be cited for non-compliance.

 Communicable diseases must be reported, upon discovery, to the school office. Any child who has been absent three or more days due to illness should furnish a note from the child’s physician. Special health needs of children should be reported to the classroom teacher, the school nurse, and administration.

**WELLNESS POLICY**

 Students at St. Mary’s School will be provided with nutrition education that is interactive and teaches skills needed to adopt healthy eating behaviors. District health education curriculum standards and guidelines include both nutrition and physical education. It is our goal, as a school, to provide each child with a quality wellness education across the curriculum, linking nutrition education activities with the coordinating heath program.

 Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education classes, daily recess periods, and the integration of physical activity throughout the curriculum. St. Mary’s encourages parents and guardians to support their children’s participation in physical activities to be physically active role models and to include physical activity in family events.

 St. Mary’s School provides a clean, safe, meal environment for students with space to ensure all students have access to meals with minimum wait time. The school encourages all students to participate in the school meal program and protects the rights of those who eat free and reduced price meals.

**MEDICATION**

 When a student must take medication including inhalers, which has been prescribed by a duly licensed physician or dentist, during the hours the child is in school, the school will utilize the following procedures:

• The administrator shall have in writing the permission of the parents or legal guardian AND a written statement from the physician or dentist. This written statement must tell when the medication is to be taken and the amount. The label on the medication will be acceptable as the written statement from the physician or dentist. The label on the medication shall include the student’s name, physician’s or dentist’s name, date, and directions to be followed.

• With the exception of the inhaler, the medication must be brought to the school office and checked in with the secretary or the administrator.

• Only one week’s supply shall be brought at a time, unless otherwise indicated by the parent or attending physician or dentist.

• The medication shall be stored in a locked drawer of a desk in the school office.

• St. Mary’s personnel will not be allowed to dispense any aspirin or other medication that is sent to school without a note of permission.

• Students may carry their inhaler, however it must be accompanied by a written note with all the necessary information as included above. The inhaler must also be checked in by the administrator and classroom teacher.

All St. Mary’s teachers and staff undergo the necessary training to administer medications.

* Parents must provide to the school staff for students having a known allergic condition or asthma: Written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician.
* **If cough drops are necessary, the teacher must disperse them with a note from a parent.**

**CHILD ABUSE**

 When any teacher or staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subject to abuse or neglect, or observes such person being subjected to conditions or circumstances which reasonably would result in abuse or neglect, he is required by law to report such incident to the proper law enforcement agency. Abuse or neglect shall mean knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor child to be:

 1. Placed in a situation that may endanger his or her life or physical or mental health

 2. Tortured, cruelly confined, or cruelly punished

 3. Deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or care

4. Left unattended in a motor vehicle, if the person is 6 yrs. of age or younger

 5. Sexually abused

**MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

In the event of a medical emergency, if the parents or the family doctor cannot be located, the student will be taken to the **Osmond Community Hospital.**

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## TESTING

 **Terra Nova standardized achievement testing will be administered in the fall of each school year. This program is coordinated through the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office. Grades 3 to 8 perform this standardized test in the content areas of reading, language, mathematics, reference skills, science and social studies.**

 **St. Mary’s School also participates in periodic assessments required by the Catholic Schools Office. Results of all testing is kept in each students’ cum record. We also have quarterly Acuity assessments in math and Language Arts.**

 At various times, our school may be asked to participate in a national test. When this happens, a letter will be sent home to parents informing them of this and requesting that the parents give permission for their child to participate in the stated test.

**SPECIAL SERVICES**

 Minimal nursing services are provided by the school. Speech therapy, psychological testing, and the resource program are provided by the Osmond Community School district as needed by our students who are members of the Osmond School District. Parents requesting any of these programs must first contact the faculty of St. Mary’s School. Osmond Community School also provides busing for our students to and from school each day.

 Title I services is provided at St. Mary's School by St. Mary's School staff, through government funds provided to the public school.

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## VOLUNTEERS

 Volunteers are always needed for the success of any program. In the fall of the School year, a request via the brown envelope will include opportunities for parents to help out in various ways during the school year. Please be generous with your time. **It is necessary that all volunteers go through the Archdiocese Safe Environment Training.**

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**OFF-LIMIT AREAS**

 No students are allowed in the furnace/electrical room, teacher workroom and supply room, unless directed by a teacher. Students are not allowed in the lower level of the school unless accompanied by a teacher or adult.

## TELEPHONE

 The school telephone is for school business only. Students may use the phone, with the permission of their teacher, ONLY if they are sick or in an emergency.

 **Students will NOT be allowed to take phone calls during school hours.** You may leave a message in the school office and the message will be given to the student during the appropriate time. The only exception to this will be when there is an emergency situation that warrants such a request.

 Classroom teachers will not be allowed to leave their classroom instruction for parent calls. The school secretary will take a message and forward it to the teacher.

 **Telephone calls by parents to the homes of faculty and staff are to be made only in emergency situations or for short questions.**  **Appointments should be made with teachers by parents for concerns.** In the best interest of the child, all parent calls to teachers at their homes shall be recorded and reported to the administration.

**RECESS AND PLAYGROUND RULES**

 Any child well enough to be in school will participate in recess time, unless they are recovering from sickness and a note accompanies the child from the parent/legal guardian requesting the child stay inside.

• A teacher, staff member, or volunteer will supervise students during the recess time.

 • No student is to leave school grounds without permission.

 • Playing on the handicap ramp or grotto is strictly forbidden. To do so shows a lack of respect for the property.

 • Students should not play on or around parked cars.

 • Any teacher or staff member may discipline a student at any time for inappropriate behavior.

• Tackling, rough play, fighting, verbal and physical abuse during recess is prohibited and consequences for such actions may by given by the supervising adult.

• Students who take playground equipment out to recess are responsible for bringing it back into the school building.

**MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION**

 St. Mary’s Catholic School takes to heart Our Lord’s command that we must love our neighbor as we love ourselves. By doing so, we show our love for God Himself.

 The administration and teachers see the importance of making our students aware of national and global pluralism. The curriculum goals of St. Mary’s Catholic School will reflect an awareness of other cultures, as well as other racial and ethnic groups. This multicultural appreciation will be considered in the selection of instructional materials in all subject areas and in-service education.

**LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

 Students are encouraged to use the school library on a regular basis. Teachers do schedule time during the week for students to use the library and to check out books. No more than two books may be checked out at a time by a student. Books that are lost or damaged will have to be replaced by the student checking the book out. The fine will include the replacement cost of the book and any shipping/handling/ preparation cost incurred because of the replacement.

**ACCELERATED READER**

 AR books are available in the library. These books can be checked out at any time. Quizzes may be taken in the St. Mary’s School Library. **Goals are determined by teachers and Star testing. The school has a reward system to encourage each child to meet goals.**

## COMPUTERS/INTERNET

 **MacBooks, and ipads are available for classroom use**. **A BringYourOwnDevice initiative is sometimes used in schools. St. Mary’s students may bring an iPad, iPod or Mac computers from home with written permission from parent and teacher. The cost of software or programs would have to be the parent’s responsibility in those situations. Students must follow rules and the technology use policy concerning the care of computers at all times or privileges will be taken away.**

 St. Mary’s School does not allow unrestricted access to the Internet. Students will be taught to use the Internet responsibly. They may “log on” only under supervision.

 **Students may access the Internet only when a written letter of permission has been granted by the student’s parent/legal guardian, and** **the technology use policy has been signed by the student and parent.** The permission notice must be returned to the school office where it will be kept on file. If a student abuses his/her Internet privilege, the student will loose all Internet privileges. When a student is suspended from Internet he/she will be reinstated only after a conference that includes the student, parent, administrator, and classroom teacher. A consensus of all parities will determine whether the student's internet privileges will be reinstated, or if privileges are denied for the remainder of the year.

 **Teachers may not be friends with students on facebook or other social networks. Please report any abuse to administration.**

**DRILLS - FIRE/TORNADO**

 Fire drills are conducted periodically throughout the year. Silence and total cooperation is expected of all students. Exit plans are posted outside the door of each classroom.

 Severe weather drills take place in the fall and spring. The shelter area chosen is the lower level of the school.

**PARENT – STUDENT HANDBOOK AGREEMENT**

 Every year a note is sent home regarding the St. Mary’s School handbook. In signing this note, you are agreeing to the rules / procedures outlined by St. Mary’s School. A copy of the note with a parent / guardian signature is kept in the school office. Please be sure to keep a copy of the handbook accessible at home to consult as needed.