**Diocese of Youngstown**



**ST. MARY SCHOOL**

**2025-2026**

**ABRIDGED Family Handbook**

640 1st Street, N.E.

Massillon, Ohio 44646

330-832-9355

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

## MISSION STATEMENT

At St. Mary School, a catholic school in the Diocese of Youngstown, we strive to educate the whole child to become a life-long learner and disciple of Christ who leaves the world better than they found it.

The school utilizes a historically successful framework of faith, love, and knowledge to develop each student's fullest potential. St. Mary School is operated by Divine Mercy Parish within the Diocese of Youngstown.

## NON-CATHOLIC STUDENTS

Students from other faiths provide a wonderful diversity to the school. However, the presence of non-Catholic students in the school shall not alter the primacy of Catholic religious formation as an integral component of the educational program in the school.

Non-Catholic students are expected to participate in the school's religious formation and education programs.

Non-Catholic students must participate in liturgies, retreats, other religious functions, and religion classes for credit.

Non-Catholic students may be exempt from formal co-curricular or extracurricular sacramental preparation programs but not from the catechesis held during the school day.

For testing and discussion purposes, students are expected to be knowledgeable of the Catholic Church’s positions on scripture, revelation, and moral practices.

While Catholic teaching respects the various faith traditions of the students attending the Catholic school, parents must be aware that the Catholic position will be taught.

## STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

As a member of God’s family, each student at St. Mary School has the following rights and responsibilities:

* Follow our guidelines for success
* The right to make choices and the responsibility to accept the consequences associated with their choice.
* The right to be treated with kindness and the responsibility to treat others kindly.
* The right to be treated fairly and the responsibility to treat all fairly.
* The right to be safe and the responsibility to follow safety rules.

## FAMILY/COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

The Catholic Church recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children. The Catholic school exists to assist parents in the Christian formation of their children.

In this handbook, the term “parent” refers not only to a student's natural or adopted parent but also to a student's non-parent legal guardian or to any person or agency authorized to act in place of parents.

Parents are expected to display an attitude of respect and support toward the school, the staff, and the educational process by:

* Supporting the school's mission and commitment to Christian principles;
* Supporting the school’s policies as outlined in the school handbook and regulations. In addition, parents are to ensure their son/daughter has read this handbook;
* Participating fully in the school’s programs that are developed to support the education of their children;
* Remaining informed about and involved in the religious instruction of their children.

**STAFF EXPECTATIONS**

* Communicate with families/stakeholders
* Provide a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students
* Teach and Serve as a model of our Christian/Catholic values
* Use standards-based curriculum and activities to increase every child’s spiritual and academic achievement.
* Enforce and hold all stakeholders accountable to our handbook/code of conduct expectations

**NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

St. Mary School, administered under the authority of the Catholic Diocese of Youngstown, complies with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to Catholic schools, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, marital status, handicap or disability, national origin, or citizenship in the administration of the educational, personnel, admissions, financial aid, athletic, and other school administered programs. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Diocese of Youngstown, each parish and each Catholic school, expressly reserves any and all rights and protections afforded to them by the United States Constitution, the Constitution of the state of Ohio, and applicable law, including but not limited to, the free exercise of religion.

All schools of the Diocese admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Schools of the Diocese do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

### **SCHOOL HOURS**

School is in session from 8:00-2:30pm

Students may report to school as early as 7:40 AM. The first bell rings at 7:50 AM. The tardy bell rings at 8:00 am. Late buses are the exception. All times and practices are subject to change.

School dismissal begins at 2:30 PM for bus riders and 2:35 PM for walkers and car riders. Children are expected to be out of the building unless under adult supervision (i.e., teacher, coach, Aftercare Program staff).

For those students requiring before-care services, the school building opens at 6:30 am, or after school care, the building closes at 5:30pm (arrangements for extended day care must be made beforehand, otherwise, children are allowed into the building at 7:40 am.) **Any student arriving prior to 7:40 am or staying after 3:00pm MUST attend the Extended Day Care Program and will be charged accordingly**.

## EXTENDED DAY CARE POLICY

St. Mary’s Extended Day Care School Program operates each school day from 6:30-7:40am and 2:30 P.M. - 5:30 P.M. Attendance may be on a regular or drop-in basis. Good behavior is expected of students; otherwise, they will be asked to refrain from using the program. Students must be pre-registered to attend. Registration and fee information is sent in the first school newsletter of the year and is also available in the school office.

# **SICK POLICY:**

Please follow the guidelines below to help keep our school safe and healthy:

1. Please report to the SCHOOL NURSE if your child has a communicable disease. Children are expected to remain home during the communicable period of the disease as indicated by your healthcare provider. You are REQUIRED to provide a note from the healthcare provider upon return or a parent note that includes diagnosis, date of diagnosis, date of first symptoms, date of expected return, and best contact number for the parent or guardian.
2. If your child shows these signs of illness, they must remain home (or will be sent home from school):

* **Fever** - Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100.4 F. A child needs to be fever-free for a minimum of 24 hours without the help of fever-reducing medication before returning to school.
* **Diarrhea and/or vomiting** - The student must remain home for 24 hours after stomachache, diarrhea, or vomiting has stopped. The child should be feeling better and food intake should have returned to normal before returning to school.
* **Difficulty breathing** - Student should stay home until he or she is feeling better and his or her activity level has returned to normal.
* **Loss of Taste and Smell -** Student should seek medical evaluation.

### **ILLNESS**

The school makes accommodations for students who become sick at school by removing them from the rest of the student population. Students with fevers (>100.4F) or communicable diseases (vomiting/diarrhea) will be sent home to reduce the risk of infection to the student body.

In the event a child becomes ill during the school day, the parents will be called. If the parent(s) cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called. **Students should be picked up within 30 minutes of notification**.

When a child has been home with an illness, the child should not return to school until free of symptoms and the temperature has been normal for at least 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication).

## STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

Parents and guardians are primarily responsible for their children's health and well-being. School health services supplement, rather than substitute, for parental care and concern for the student's health.

### Immunizations

Families must provide the following to the school each year of enrollment:

* Proof of adequate immunization as required by the Ohio Revised Code no later than the 15th day of school
* Exempt forms will not be accepted in place of late immunization/health records

Students without the required immunization paperwork will not be permitted to attend school after the 15th day. Students will not be permitted to re-enter the school until they have updated health/immunization records.

### **REPORTING ABSENCES:**

Please call the school office at 330-832-9355 by 9:00 AM if your child is absent. When students return to school, they are required to present their teacher with a note stating the reason for the absence and signed by the parent. Please notify the school office immediately if the illness is of a contagious nature.

In order to ensure continuous progress in school, regular attendance and habits of punctuality are essential. The school defines proper procedures as:

1. The parent(s) must phone the school, giving the reason and the approximate length of absence.
2. A written note explaining the reason for absence, signed and dated by the parent, must be presented upon a student’s return to school. (*Please note that Doctor’s visits require a note upon return to school in order to be excused as well*)

If a student arrives after 10:00 AM or leaves before 12:00 PM, he/she is absent for half a day. Please note that students who arrive after 10:00 AM are also considered half-day absent and will also be marked tardy. The only exception is for educational activities authorized by the school. When returning to school, the student is to present a written excuse to the homeroom teacher stating:

* Date(s) of absence
* Reason for absence
* Signature of parent

### **ABSENCES:**

**Excused Absences:**

* Parents may write notes excusing students from school for illnesses not requiring doctor’s notes not more than five (5) school days per semester.
* Any absences beyond the (5) days per semester parents can write a note to excuse must be accompanied by a signed doctor’s note to be excused.

**Unexcused Absences:**

* Oversleeping
* Not feeling like coming to school that day
* Family Trips/Vacations, etc.
* Athletic practices/competitions not affiliated with SCCS.
* Any absences over the (5) allotted days per semester not accompanied by a signed doctor’s note.

Persistent absences may cause serious academic problems (including but not limited to course failure). The administration or the class teacher will normally review the matter with parents before a decision is made by the administration. Persistent unexcused absences may also result in the student being subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Progressive Disciplinary Action aligned to persistent absences includes but is not limited to:

1. Written Warning
2. Removal from specials to complete core classwork
3. Required Family Attendance Success Plan Meeting
4. Unexcused absence percentage greater than 10%- students are not eligible to participate in sports or extra curriculars that grading period.
5. Unexcused absence percentage greater than 25%- students are not eligible to participate in end of the year activities (Field Day, Cedar Point, Washington D.C., etc.) for the year/or quarter in which they fall.

***Chronic and repeated absences with no attempt or evidence of change or decrease in unexcused absence percentage is subject to the removal of the student and the family from the school program.***

## SCHOOL VISITORS

All persons other than school staff and currently registered students must first report to the school office immediately upon entering school grounds and sign in. Visitors must sign in at the School Safe ID kiosk located in the school office. **A driver’s license is required for visitor passes and for signing out any student for early dismissals.**

Parking for visitors is available in the church parking lot located on the east side of the church. Street parking is prohibited during school hours.

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## TRANSPORTATION:

**BUSING**

The following school systems transport children to St. Mary School: Massillon City, Jackson Local, Perry Local, and Tuslaw Local.

Busing information is provided directly to parents by school systems prior to the beginning of the school year. It is the parent's responsibility to contact the bus garage with any changes or questions. Below is a listing of busses that provide transportation to and from St. Mary School and their facilities’ phone numbers:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Massillon City  Jackson | 330-830-3910  330-830-8042 | Perry Local  Tuslaw Local | 330-477-1300  330-837-7813 |

For the first week of school, parents of students in K-4 should attach a small card to the student’s back pack listing the following:

Child’s Name Phone Number

School District Address

Bus Number or Route Number for A.M. and P.M. bus

If there is an older student responsible for your child, please list the name of that student.

Students are not permitted to ride any bus outside their own, even if the parent writes a note. Each school district is very strict in this regard. The principal does not have the authority to change or interfere with this regulation. Parents must contact the public school district for their policy.

Ultimately it is the parent(s)’ responsibility to assure end-of-day transportation arrangements are made. ​Students are not permitted to call home to make transportation arrangements.

## CAR TRANSPORTATION

Parents who drop off students in the morning are to follow the following drop-off rules:

* Parents must use the lane around the cemetery to get to the lane between the church and school.
* Students may exit the vehicle in front of the gym doors when a teacher is present.
* Parents are not allowed to park on the opposite side of the street to drop students off. ​
* Parents/Students may not walk through the carline to access the school drop off door. All morning drop-off must come to door 2
* U-turns in front of the school are not permitted by law.​
* Cars should not stop within the marked crosswalk.

Parents who pick up students after school are to follow the following pick-up rules:

* Parents must use the lane around the cemetery to get to the lane between the church and school.
* Each student will be called to dismiss.
* Please do not leave your car unattended.
* Please follow the directions of the teachers on duty.

When a child is going home by car with parents or with others, a note must be given to the teacher that morning on behalf of each party. Students may not leave the school premises without a written note from a parent. Parents must call the office by 1:45 PM if no note was sent to the school; after this time, we cannot guarantee the change.

## WALKERS

All students must go directly home after school unless parents provide the school with written information indicating other arrangements. Written parental permission should be on file in the school office for all students who may walk daily or occasionally. Permission forms are available in the school office.

**GRADING POLICY:**

The grading scale for the Diocese of Youngstown includes the following areas: religious, social, and academic development.

**Grades 4-8:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A = 93-100%  B = 85-92%  C = 75-84%  D = 67-74%  F = 0-66% |  |

**Grades K-3** use a standards-based grading scale:

3 = Proficient 2 = Developing 1 = Emerging

**TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

The schools in the Diocese of Youngstown provide information and communication resources and acquire, develop, and maintain devices, systems, and networks as a part of our mission to promote excellence in education. The following agreement aims to ensure that safety and privacy are regarded, and students’ educational experiences are enhanced through technology. The Diocese believes that students’ productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, creativity, and preparation for future studies and endeavors are achieved through innovative technology practices. Protecting users and school resources requires respectful, moral, and ethical behavior characteristic of the teachings and principles of the Roman Catholic Church. Students in the Diocese of Youngstown will have access to the Internet. Parents are expected to encourage their child(ren) to exercise personal safety and security and utilize the guiding principles of digital citizenship.

This policyspecifies the expectations that allow for a safe and courteous environment, where academic integrity is honored, respectful behavior is demonstrated regarding communication with members, and the use of school devices, resources, and the components of the network, both locally and globally. The policy also addresses the legal responsibilities of members and institutions. Although no set of policies and procedures can state rules to cover all possible situations, the schools in the Diocese make efforts to protect the users and its system through educating students about Internet safety and by using firewalls and filtering software. We comply with the *Child Internet Protection Act and The Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act*. However, no system or network is considered fool proof.

Important Considerations:

* Technology resources are to be used for educational purposes only.
* Students will be educated in digital citizenship annually.
* Local school policies, related Diocesan policies, and the Student Code of Conduct concurrently apply.
* Users are subject to legal requirements as well. (See link to Ohio Revised Code §§ [2917.21(A)](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/2917.21),

[2913.01(Y)](http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/2913.01)

The policy applies to access to the Internet through the school network, whether the equipment is owned by the school or the student or student’s family.

The policy applies toaccess to the Internet with personally owned devices with personal data plans (i.e., 4G and 5G networks).

Students are responsible for all activities performed using *a personal login* or account, *whether or not they were the user*. Therefore, students must take care to *safeguard passwords* and follow procedures. If students become aware of or suspect any breach of an account, they must notify a teacher, administrator, or technology coordinator of the suspected breach.

In some instances, the policyapplies to technology resources and school-owned devices whether or not on school property (See the section: Violations of the Responsible Use Agreement).

Violations of the Student Technology and Internet Responsible Use Policy

School officials will strive for fair, reasonable, and appropriate disciplinary action for the Student Technology and Internet Responsible Use Policy infractions. Disciplinary action will be taken when violations are intentional, school members\* are “cyberbullied,” vandalism has occurred, or any action involves criminal behavior. Consequences may include but are not limited to detention, termination of Internet or technology privileges, revocation of financial aid and scholarships, suspension, expulsion, or legal referral. Behavior that occurs on or off school property can be considered for investigation and consequence when it interferes with, adversely impacts school operations, or disrupts the school environment.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

In all areas of learning, discipline must be considered in the development of the whole person. The Code of Conduct is based on the Gospel message of Jesus. Growth in self-discipline, responsibility for Catholic moral values, and loving respect for the rights of all persons are encouraged and nourished by the Code of Conduct. To achieve these ends, parents, faculty, and students work together to create a Catholic school environment. These basic components include:

Teachers have the right to teach. No student will stop the teacher from teaching.

Students have the right to learn. No student will stop another student from learning.

The school observes this Code of Conduct because it is built on fundamental Catholic school teachings. The role of the principal/administration, staff, and faculty are to work with the students and parents to assist the students in developing a strong Christian attitude toward life.

## DISCIPLINE

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems which arise, this handbook empowers the faculty and administration to take disciplinary action for any behavior (within or outside of the school community) which violates the spirit, philosophy, and code of conduct of the school, even though not specified.

In justice to the other students, circumstances may dictate that a student be removed temporarily or permanently from the particular school setting.

### Use Of Disciplinary Action

In cases where a student is continually disruptive of others or in the case of a single serious disciplinary infraction, the teacher will apprise the principal/administration of the situation. They will assist in the development of a course of action to be taken to correct the situation. Corporal punishment is prohibited.

Students who lack self-discipline or who violate the rights of others can expect disciplinary action. Each offense will be dealt with on an individual basis according to the age of the student, the nature of the infraction, and the severity of the case. Repeated infractions can result in more serious consequences, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, but there is no requirement for progressive discipline.

#### Disciplinary Measures

The following are some approved disciplinary measures:

* Conference with student and/or parent
* Appropriate verbal reprimand
* Temporary removal from the classroom (e.g., time-out room) or isolation from the group with supervision
* Loss of privileges
* Supervised after-school detention
* Referral to Principal
* Disciplinary contract
* In School Suspension (ISS)
* Out of School Suspension (OSS)
* Removal from school/expulsion

Any time students receive disciplinary actions they are also receiving demerits.

**DEMERIT POINT INTERVENTION/CONSEQUENCE BREAKDOWN**

* **10+ Points:** Behavior Plan
* **20-30+:** Excluded from Class Fun Activities (Parties, End-of-Year Activities, Fun Field Trips, etc.)
* **30-50+:** Expulsion/Removal from School