

St. Mary School Parent-Student Handbook 2026-2027



"It is not enough that you love the young, they must know they are loved."

St. John Bosco

1600 East Avenue R-4 ☞ Palmdale, CA 93550

Phone: 661-273-5555

www.stmaryspalmdale.org

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SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

Welcome

Welcome to Saint Mary School, home of the Angels. Each and every one of us became an Angel because we believe that education must be based in Jesus' message of salvation. In our Christ centered learning environment teachers, staff, parents/guardians, students and the parish are counted upon at all times to work as a faith community to make the ordinary learning experience extra-ordinary. This Parent-Student Handbook provides essential information about the policies and procedures that the school expects parents and students to understand and follow. By reading the Handbook and signing the Acknowledgment parents and students agree to be bound by the school's Code of Conduct and all other school policies and procedures. You can print out a copy of the Handbook if you wish, but the binding document is the one that is online. The school reserves the right to amend the Parent-Student Handbook at any time. Parents/guardians will be notified of any amendments and will be asked to sign an acknowledgment of receipt.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Handbook

The Parent-Student Handbook provides important information pertaining to the policies and procedures of Saint Mary School and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, including general information about the school, academics, discipline, admissions, co-curricular activities, and much more. The school's website has important calendar updates and a news section that is updated regularly. Please visit our website: www.stmaryspalmdale.org to learn more about our school.

Sections of this Parent-Student Handbook are particular to Saint Mary Catholic Elementary School. Other sections are policies and procedures of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles (ADLA), most of which can be found in the [ADLA Administrative Handbook](#). All sections with an "*" were developed by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Department of Catholic Schools and are required to be implemented within all Los Angeles Archdiocesan schools. The ADLA policies and procedures are automatically updated on the [school's online handbook](#) by the Archdiocese. The school reserves the right to amend the Parent-Student Handbook at any time. As Angels we are all responsible for meeting the expectations, demonstrating values, and pursuing excellence on a daily basis.

Chapter 2: General Information

Section 2.01 - Mission Statement, Philosophy, and Vision

Mission. Our mission is to help students develop a deep and evolving personal relationship with God and their community through the teachings of reason, religion and loving kindness. As ethical leaders with values rooted in our Catholic teachings and traditions, students will demonstrate academic excellence and teamwork through creative and critical thinking while being of service to others.

Philosophy. Saint Mary School finds its deepest roots in the educational system of Saint John Bosco and the Salesians. It is called the Preventive System of Education, and is based on three basic principles: *reason, religion, and loving kindness*.

Through *reason* we endeavor to help students discern God's Will and to discover the meaning of their lives. Through *religion* we guide the students to establish a personal rapport with God and to be of service to the Community. Through *loving kindness* the faculty and staff strive to respond to youth's needs for a personal relationship with others. All this is carried out in the Salesian "family spirit," a familiar, respectful rapport among the faculty, students, staff, and families.

Saint Mary values the uniqueness of each child as a gift from God and will accept children who are capable and willing to learn how to make these their personal values.

Vision Statement. Saint Mary students will possess a deep personal relationship with God. Students will integrate Catholic teachings, traditions, respect, community, and values in their quest for knowledge as life-long learners. Exhibiting strong moral character, Saint Mary students will demonstrate academic excellence through creative and critical thinking, leadership and teamwork within the global community.

Section 2.02 - School Wide Learning Expectations:

Soar with the A.N.G.E.L.S.

A: Academically Prepared

Expectation	Measurable Examples
- Uses critical thinking skills and applies problem solving strategies - Demonstrates the ability to utilize technology - Displays knowledge of required curricula	- Completes projects/assignments/homework on time - Meets grade level academic standards - Uses technology to submit assignments - Participates in academic events such as the Science Fair, Spelling Bee, Decathlon, Mathletes, and Geography Bee - Understands and meets class learning objectives - Attends field trips - Utilizes technology to find information - Maintains an academic portfolio - Maintains awareness and accountability of grade and academic status

N: iNvolved in Parish and Community

Expectation	Measurable Examples
- Demonstrates leadership - Demonstrates self-discipline - Possesses sound mind and body - Demonstrates active membership within in the parish, school and local community	- Participates in extracurricular activities - Participates in service activities outside of school - Volunteers for non-required academic activities - Participates in parish activities - Volunteers for leadership positions - Makes a habit to serve the community

G: Globally Aware

Expectation	Measurable Examples
- Respects the environment - Appreciates multicultural diversity - Serves others within their community	- Visits cultural places - Participates in cultural awareness activities in and out of school - Cleans up after themselves - Routinely reads the newspaper - Volunteers for community clean-up activities - Donates to community/mission collections - Recycles

E: Effective Communicator

Expectation	Measurable Examples
- Articulates ideas in both writing and speaking - Displays the ability to work as both a leader and team member	- Asks for clarification when needed - Utilizes technology for learning, growth, and communicating ideas - Orally expresses emotions in a positive and effective manner - Asks permission appropriately - Presents ideas orally and in writing - Writes answers/responses in complete sentences - Works cooperatively in groups - Gives oral and written directions - Equally contributes to group work and projects - Actively participates in class

L: Life-long Learner

Expectation	Measurable Examples
- Shows respect and is willing to learn - Strives to be creative and appreciates the fine arts - Positively plans for the future	- Develops a passion for reading - Takes notes in class without being asked - Establishes goals for future college and career - Respects authority - Develops a hobby and commits to the hobby - Actively seeks assistance in learning - Works to earn placement in honors' programs

S: Spiritually Responsive

Expectation	Measurable Examples
- Has good moral character based on the teachings of Christ - Prays and is active in their faith - Understands the teachings of the Church	- Participates in Mass - Offers prayers in Petition Book - Reads the Bible regularly - Prays actively and respectfully - Attends the Family rosary - Participates in service projects and charity collections - Participates in random acts of kindness without reward - Attends religious celebrations - Is a positive role model for their Little Buddies

Section 2.03 History of the School

In the spring of 1960, an eight-room elementary school was built on the grounds of St. Mary's Parish. The Pastor, Fr. Martin Hiss, officially opened the school in the fall of 1960 with 42 first grade students and 30 second grade students. A parishioner, Mrs. Rae Henry, became Principal; Mrs. Margaret Wilhelm took charge of first grade and Mrs. Chamblin taught second grade. Registration for the 1961-1962 school year more than doubled with the addition of the third, fourth, and fifth grades. At the invitation of the Pastor, three Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters, Sr. Martin de Porres, Sr. Mary Edwardine, and Sr. Mary Noemi assumed the roles and responsibilities of the administration, first and second grade teachers. The first graduation from St. Mary's took place in 1965 with 33 students. The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary continued their dedicated service to the school until June of 1968, when their community withdrew from the parish.

In 1968, His Eminence James Cardinal McIntyre of Los Angeles extended an invitation to the Salesian Sisters to assume the administration, and partial staffing of the school. On September 10, 1968, 272 students began their first day of school. Palmdale had a population of 23,000. In the 1970s, unstable employment in the area caused the general population, as well as the school population, to be extremely mobile.

The 1980's, '90's and early 2000's saw a more stable school population as families commuted to work in the San Fernando Valley. Saint Mary's rapidly grew to a parish with the largest geographical area in the Archdiocese. The parish includes three missions, Acton, Littlerock and Lake Los Angeles. The population of Palmdale has since grown to over 150,000. The school staff expanded from three parishioners to include 29 educators and support staff, and a Consultative School Board and provides a quality K-8 education, Extended Care Program, and Lunch Program. In June 2003, the Salesian Sisters concluded 35 years of service to St. Mary's School. A lay principal assumed the administration of the school.

From 2008 to the present, Saint Mary School has experienced the challenges of the recession and economy. Once again the student population is transient with many parishioners burdened with financial limitations. The addition of a Transitional Kindergarten for the 2016-2017 school year helped strengthen the academic preparedness of students. The learning community has worked diligently, compassionately and with researched best practices to grow the student population to over 230 with a goal of reaching capacity of 344.

Section 2.04 - Accreditation

St. Mary School is accredited by the Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA) and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The school received a full six-year term of accreditation in the Spring of 2026.

Section 2.05 - Code of Christian Conduct*

Parents are advised not to address other students or parents when concerns arise regarding discipline matters including, but not limited to, bullying, rumors, or inappropriate activity. Parents/guardians should address concerns with school personnel in order to handle situations in an appropriate, respectful, and constructive manner. Conferences will be held with parents/guardians to address inappropriate parental behavior.

Students can best receive a quality, morally based education if students, parents/guardians, and school staff work together. As an express condition of enrollment, students and parents/guardians shall follow standards of conduct that are consistent with Christian principles of respect and consideration ("Code of Christian Conduct"). In schools, the principles and expectations arising out of the Code of Christian Conduct include but are not limited to:

- Parents/guardians and school staff are expected to be positive role models for their students and each other. Accordingly, parents/guardians shall work courteously and cooperatively with school staff and each other to assist students in meeting the academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of the school.
- Students and parents/guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the school's operations and its staff. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile, or divisive.
- Parents/guardians and students should communicate concerns directly to the appropriate school staff member on an individual basis. The individual staff member is expected to respond to those concerns appropriately according to the Code of Christian Conduct and the [Core and Pastoral Values](#). Public communications by parents/guardians or students such as petitions, group emails, protests, negative social media comments, and group meetings not scheduled by the school violate the Code of Christian Conduct. Note: this provision does not apply to any employee-parent who engages in employment-related concerted activity, including but not limited to picketing and distributing handbills.

The school environment should enable school staff to carry out their calling as ministers. Therefore, any parent/guardian or other person whose conduct materially disrupts class work or extracurricular activities or involves substantial disorder violates this principle.

School staff have the right to serve the school community free from humiliation or harassment. Parents/guardians or other persons may not insult or harass any school staff member in the presence of students, parents/guardians, or other school staff while on school premises, public sidewalks, public streets, other public ways adjacent to school premises, or at some other place if the staff member is required to be there in connection with assigned school activities.

These expectations for students and parents/guardians include but are not limited to all school-sponsored programs and events (e.g., extended care, athletics, and field trips). The school's parent/student handbook may include additional expectations based upon local requirements.

The school may respond to violations of the Code of Christian Conduct and its principles by requiring parents/guardians to:

1. cease the behavior that violates the Code of Christian Conduct or any of its principles
2. cooperate with the school to remediate any violations
3. limit the parent(s)/guardian(s) interaction and presence with school staff unless required by the school
4. withdraw the family and its enrolled students from the school. If a family is asked to withdraw and declines, the school may expel the family's enrolled students.

Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-26-2024 | Updates made by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles can be found here: [13.8.1 - Code of Christian Conduct Covering Students and Parents/Guardians](#)

Section 2.06 - School Organization and Personnel Lists

Saint Mary School is a small Transitional Kindergarten through 8th grade Catholic parish school with a maximum student population potential of 344. We have a dedicated and experienced team of staff members who are committed to the students and families we serve. Each person is a valued member of our staff and plays an integral part in ensuring the school runs efficiently. Transitional Kindergarten through 2nd grade classes are self-contained with a primary teacher and a full time teacher's aide for classes with more than 34 students. Third through fifth grades are also self-contained. Sixth through eighth grades are departmentalized. Each grade has a homeroom teacher who also serves as a subject-specific teacher for all junior high students. There are two full time and one part time office staff to support the administrative requirements for running an Archdiocesan school. Two part time staff members organize the school lunch and snack program.

The principal is the educational leader who promotes the success of all students by:

- Facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of the Saint Mary School vision.
- Advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a faith community and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
- Ensuring management of the school, school operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, effective and faith filled learning environment.

All Saint Mary School staff members are responsible for:

- Living their commitment to Gospel values and Catholic traditions.
- Integrating faith and prayer within the classroom and learning community.
- Taking responsibility for contributing to an atmosphere which fosters the development of the faith of students.
- Being committed to personal, professional, and spiritual growth for self and others.
- Exhibiting personal commitment to social justice by practicing Christian justice in the classroom and in the school community.
- Recognizing and respecting the primary role of parents/guardians in the education of their children.
- Integrating Christian truth and values into all courses.
- Acting professionally in matters of attendance, punctuality, grooming, language, class preparation and interaction with students, parents/guardians, staff, and the parish.
- Being innovative and open to the use of current technologies and varied approaches in instruction and methodology.

2026-2027 Personnel List

Role	Staff Member
Pastor	Fr. Guillermo Martinez, MSP
Principal	Nennette Barriga
Transitional Kindergarten (TK) Teacher	Lisa Higgins
Transitional Kindergarten Teacher's Aide	Arlene Morales
Kindergarten Teacher	Ofelia Torres
Kindergarten Teacher's Aide	Izbeth Perez
First Grade Teacher	Leslie Zamora
First Grade Teacher's Aide	Esther Cancio
Second Grade Teacher	Brandy Samson
Second Grade Teacher's Aide	Cristina Ruiz
Third Grade Teacher	Elia Barreras

Fourth Grade Teacher	Judi Silva
Fifth Grade Teacher	Karla Gallegos
Sixth Grade Homeroom Teacher Jr. High Social Studies and Literature Teacher	Nancy Segura
Seventh Grade Homeroom Teacher Jr. High Math & Science Teacher	Emily Velez
Eighth Grade Homeroom Teacher Jr. High Religion and Grammar/Vocabulary Teacher	Arlinda Robles
Music Teacher (TK-8th Grades)	Tizoc Estrada
Art and P.E. Teacher (TK-8th Grades), Yearbook and Friday School Mass Student Coordinator	Sarah Gonzalez
Office Manager/Administrative Assistant	Claudia Mendez
Bookkeeper	Melissa Lewis
Development/Marketing Coordinator	Karla Briceno
Receptionist	Isabel Varela
Day Care Director	Cristina Ruiz
Cafeteria Manager	Mildred Simon
Cafeteria Assistant	Sarah Cantila
Counselors	Counseling Partners of Los Angeles
Academic Interventionist	Catapult Learning
Tutor	Catapult Learning

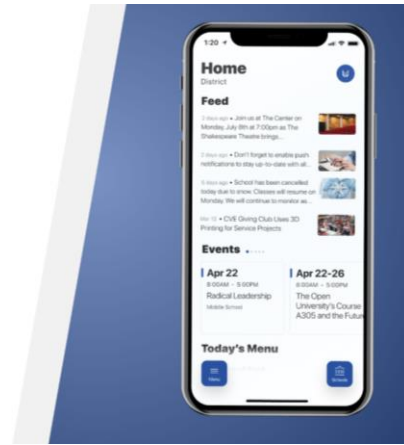
Section 2.07 - School Schedule and Calendar

Saint Mary School begins promptly at 7:55 am and dismisses at 3:00 pm. Every day begins with a Morning Assembly that includes prayer and announcements. ***School is dismissed at 12:30 pm every Friday.*** Before and after school care is provided on all days in which school is in session, unless otherwise stated. A daily classroom schedule will be provided by each teacher at the beginning of the school year which includes recess and lunch times. Saint Mary's follows Archdiocesan guidelines for time allotments and provides a minimum of 50 minutes of P.E. weekly, 40 minutes of art and music weekly, and 300 minutes of recess and lunch weekly.

The [online school calendar](#) found on the school website and SMS Angels mobile application, provides as many of the school events and activities as possible for the school year. Hard copies of the calendar are no longer provided. ***Events and activity dates are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances or will be added as needed.*** Families and students will be notified of any changes or additions as soon as possible. Families are also advised to routinely check the [Saint Mary School website](#) and download the mobile application for updates.

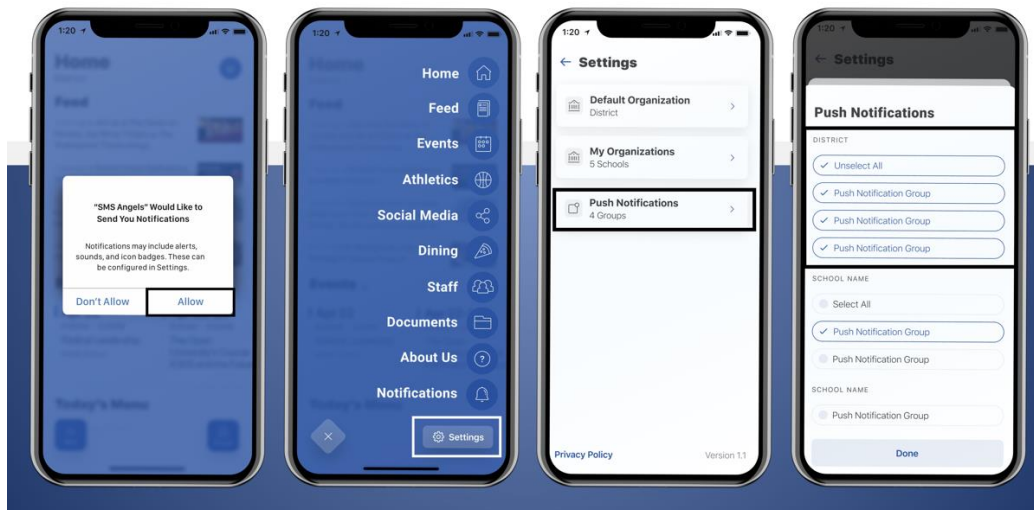
It's everything SMS Angels, in your pocket.

Documents · Events · Staff Directory · Alerts · News

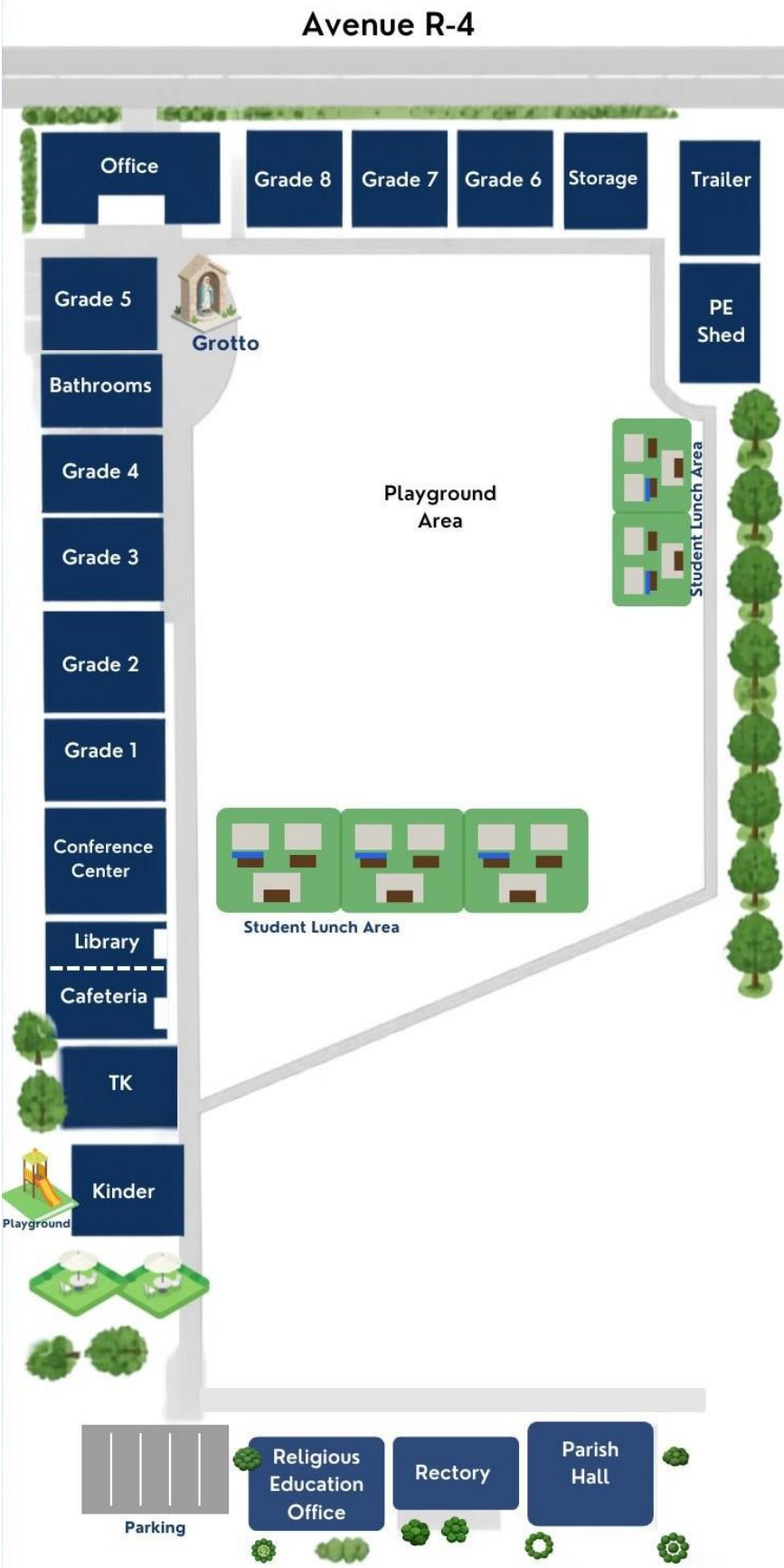


Don't miss any updates from SMS Angels!

1. Search 'Saint Mary School, CA' in your phone's app store and download the app
2. Select '**ALLOW**' when prompted on initial download to ensure you receive notifications
3. Open the app, and navigate to the bottom menu then tap '**SETTINGS**'
4. Ensure your settings are turned on and your organization is selected



Section 2.08 - School Map



Section 2.09 - School Website and Social Media*

The [school website](#) is updated periodically and serves as one form of communication between home and school. Forms, documents, and important links can be found on the school website. The school's [FaceBook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages are additional forms of communication between the school and the general public. This social media forum is intended to inform the community, prospective families, and donors.

The school must own and control all internet presence including all social media. Individuals or groups may not personally launch anything that can be regarded as owned, sponsored, endorsed, or supported by the parish, school, or any related or affiliated ministry. Individuals or groups may not host any school website on their own domain or with a web hosting service that does not have a contract with the school itself. Those who violate this section will be asked to shut down their site or turn it over to the school. Failure to comply may result in the removal of the student/family from the school.

Section 2.10 - Zero Tolerance Policy*

Under its [Zero Tolerance policy](#), the Archdiocese of Los Angeles will not knowingly assign or retain a priest, deacon, religious, lay person, or volunteer to serve in its parishes, schools, other pastoral ministries, or in any other assignment when such an individual has previously engaged in the sexual abuse of a minor (person under 18 years of age).

To be clear, any person who has engaged in the sexual abuse of a minor under the age of 18:

- May not have any paid or volunteer assignment in any ministry in the archdiocese
- May not engage in any paid or volunteer non-ministerial activity or event

The archdiocesan Zero Tolerance policy is broader than the requirements of [Megan's Law](#) and similar statutory restrictions.

Updated: 8-25-21

Section 2.11 - Safe Environment Training for Children and Youth*

Each elementary school, high school, religious education program, and youth ministry (including confirmation preparation) must annually offer the Archdiocese of Los Angeles [Empowering God's Children & Young People Safety Program](#). The program includes home-based materials for parents/guardians to help them understand and support their children's education regarding child sexual abuse prevention.

To ensure the safety of children and youth in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, all middle and high school age youth, including students who are already 18, who work or volunteer with children or youth in cocurricular school programs or parish ministries must receive training on the [Archdiocese of Los Angeles Boundary Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Middle and High School Youth Working or Volunteering with Children or Youth](#) from the adult in charge before beginning their ministry. Youth workers/volunteers and their parents/guardians must sign this form to verify they understand their obligations. This form applies when students or youth hold specific leadership roles in ministerial service (including parishes and schools) and not to interactions with each other as fellow students or family or friends.

Updated: 8-25-2021, 1-21-2025

Section 2.12 - Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Minors at Parish or Parish School Activities or Events*

Adults who work or volunteer with children or youth are subject to archdiocesan guidelines and regulations; they must sign the [Archdiocese of Los Angeles Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Minors at Parish or Parish School Activities or Events](#).

Junior high and high school students who work or volunteer with children or youth must sign the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Boundary Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Middle and High School Youth Working or Volunteering with Children or Youth. (*updated: 7-14-2021, 8-20-2024*)

Fingerprinting Policies and Guidelines*: The archdiocese uses fingerprinting as its core method of checking a person's background, which includes a check of criminal history. All persons, whether paid or volunteer, who have regular contact with minors or vulnerable adults are fingerprinted and agree that the archdiocese or other specified person will receive any subsequent arrest notifications. The details of the fingerprinting requirement are listed in the next online sections in this Handbook and vary depending on one's role. Accordingly the policies must be reviewed and implemented with care and attention to the current role of the individual being fingerprinted.

The California Department of Justice does not charge a fee for fingerprints submitted under the Penal Code for volunteers or the Health and Safety Code for preschool administration, staff or volunteers. The California Department of Justice charges an administrative fee when fingerprints are submitted to the agency under the Education Code for paid school personnel, paid religious education staff/catechetical leaders, and clergy. The FBI charges a fee for submission of all fingerprints whether under the Penal Code, the Education Code or the Health and Safety Code. Each of these fees is paid by the archdiocese and billed to the locations for reimbursement.

The archdiocesan Fingerprinting Office provides fingerprinting services free of charge to the locations. Accordingly, locations are encouraged to arrange fingerprinting by referring to the [Fingerprinting Calendars](#), which give information about these services that are regularly scheduled throughout the archdiocese. The Fingerprinting Office does not charge for fingerprinting and does not have a separate charge for submitting fingerprints to the Department of Justice or FBI, subsequent arrest notification review and processing. (Any administrative fees imposed by the Department of Justice or the FBI will be billed to the location, as described in the paragraph above.)

If an individual or location has fingerprints processed by a third party provider, the individual or location will be charged directly by the provider for the fingerprinting services, all other service costs, and the governmental administrative fees. See [Fingerprinting Protocols](#) for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. (updated 7-20-21)

Safe Environment Initial Training*: Parishes, schools, religious education, and youth ministry programs (including confirmation preparation, co-curricular and athletic programs, scouting, etc.) must comply with all applicable archdiocesan safe environment training requirements. (updated: 8-23-21; 1-23-2025)

Safe Environment Training Recertification*: All clergy, staff, and volunteers who [previously participated](#) in the VIRTUS® Protecting God's Children for Adults training are required to be VIRTUS® recertified every four years. Recertification takes place on or before the expiration date of the last certificate.

Recertification options include:

- Attending the one-and-a-half-hour [VIRTUS® Keeping the Promise Alive](#) recertification program
- Repeating the three-hour [VIRTUS® Protecting God's Children for Adults](#) program
- Qualifying for an Option #3 Recertification by registering with [VIRTUS®online](#) using information from your Protecting God's Children certificate and reading VIRTUS® online bulletins every month for four years
- Completion of the self-paced (approx. 1-2 hours) online mandated reporting course entitled Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect, which is accessed through this portal: <https://c3.leadlms.com/register/group/946>

For a summary of these options, see [Adult Safe Environment Training Recertification Summary Policy](#)

Updated: 8-25-2021; 1-23-2025, 1-28-2026

Section 2.13 - Boundary Guidelines for Junior High and High School Youth Working or Volunteering with Children or Youth*

Every year, the [Archdiocese of Los Angeles Boundary Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Middle and High School Youth Working or Volunteering with Children or Youth](#) must be distributed to, reviewed by, and signed by all youth volunteers (junior high and high school students, including students who are already 18 years old) who work or volunteer with children or youth and their parent/guardian. The location must provide annual training on these boundary guidelines. The form's signed acknowledgment of receipt must be on file at the parish or school (see "Safe Environment Training Documents" in the Record Retention Schedule, sorted by category and record type).

Updated: 8-23-2021, 1-23-2025

Section 2.14 - Dress/Uniform Code

Students are to attend Saint Mary School in the following established uniform: All uniforms must be kept clean, well kept, and properly sized (not too big or too small)

Formal Uniform – Required for Friday Masses, Award Ceremonies, and special events. The formal uniform can also be worn on regular school days.

Boys Grades TK – 8:

- Solid navy blue necktie
- White Oxford button-shirt
- Navy V-neck sweater vest
- Michael's Uniform Khaki long pants
- Navy, black, or white socks that cover at least the ankle
- 100% black shoes (no white soles)
- Boys must wear a black belt at all times (optional for TK)

Girls Grades TK – 5:

- White Oxford blouse/peter pan
- Michael's Uniform Grant Plaid – Center box pleated jumper (skirts/jumpers must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee)
- Navy cardigan sweater (on cold weather days)
- Navy, black, or white socks that cover at least the ankle
- 100% black shoes (no white soles)
- Navy or white tights/leggings may be worn and must match with socks
- Girls may wear shorts under their jumper (strongly recommended)

Girls Grade 6 – 8:

- White Oxford blouse
- Navy tie (optional)
- Michael's Uniform Grant Plaid pleated skirt (skirts/jumpers must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knee)
- Navy V-neck sweater vest
- Navy, black, or white socks that cover at least the ankle
- 100% black shoes (no white soles)
- Navy or white tights/leggings may be worn and must match with socks
- Girls must wear shorts under their skirt

Casual Uniform - Traditional regular school day school uniform

Boys & Girls:

- Blue or white polo shirt with school logo (may be short or long-sleeved)
- Boys and girls must wear a black belt at all times if the garment has belt loops (except TK/Kindergarten)
- Michael's Uniform khaki pants, shorts, or pleated skorts (for girls)
- Navy, black, or white socks that cover at least the ankle
- 100% black shoes (no white soles)
- Navy or white tights/leggings may be worn and must match with socks

P.E. Uniform

All students wear P.E. shirts with navy blue shorts or navy sweatpants with the school logo for colder weather. Students must wear appropriate athletic sneakers in any color.

Retreat Day

Students may wear their P.E. shirt, appropriately fitting blue jeans (no rips, no tight fitting or skinny jeans), black belt, and uniform shoes in place of their regular school uniform.

Winter Clothing

- In winter, students may wear the Michael's Uniform blue jacket with the school logo or a navy blue coat/jacket - no exceptions.
- In winter, girls may wear white or navy tights/leggings and must match with socks.

- In winter, girls and boys may wear white or blue long-sleeved polo shirts with the school logo.
- In winter, girls and boys may wear white or blue long-sleeved turtle necks/mock necks with colored polo shirts.
- All accessories must be navy blue, white, grant plaid, or khaki (e.g. scarves, mittens, gloves, beanies, and earmuffs).

General Appearance

1. Uniforms are to be the appropriate size for the student and allow for growth during the year.
2. The uniform shoe is an all-black shoe.
3. Shoes are to be the appropriate size and tied at all times. Shoes with lights and/or wheels are not to be worn.
4. Pants must be worn with the waist above the hipbone and secure enough that they will not fall if the belt is removed. No oversized or baggy pants will be permitted.
5. Pants are not to touch the walking surface or have slits in them.
6. Skirts are to be long enough to allow for modest movement at all times (no more than two inches above the knee).
7. Shirts and blouses are to be tucked in at all times.

Accessories

- Girls may wear navy or royal blue, white, grant plaid, or khaki hair accessories.
- Girls may wear only one set of small post earrings.
- No jewelry is allowed with the exception of a wristwatch, one ring, and one religious bracelet and/or necklace. No smartwatches.
- Boys may not wear earrings in school.
- The only make-up girls may wear is clear lip gloss and clear nail polish (may not bring to school).
- Girls may not wear artificial or acrylic nails.
- Only Saint Mary hats or visors may be worn in school.
- No embellishments on skin or teeth.

Grooming

- Boys are to have a neat, clean, moderate haircut with an even, blended length (traditional haircut).
- Boy's hair may not extend below the eyebrows, earlobe, or shirt collar. Mohawks, "fauxhawks," mullets, and textured fringe styles are not allowed. Shaved haircuts with carved designs are not allowed.
- No student may shave his/her head or add shaved-in designs. We recommend a fade 3-4 for boys.
- Tinted, bleached, lightened, streaked, frosted, or dyed hair is not acceptable for boys or girls.

Free Dress Days

Free Dress Days are scheduled during the school year:

1. To raise funds for school projects.
2. As part of prize programs.
3. To celebrate a special event.

The dress code for Free Dress Days permits:

1. Jeans – must fit appropriately and be without rips or tears; no skinny jeans allowed.
2. Tennis shoes or shoes that cover the heels and toes of the foot. Princess shoes, heels, crocs/similar shoes, or shoes with wheels are not appropriate for school and cannot be worn.
3. Modest clothing that promotes respect and safety. Shirts must have sleeves and the collar must be within an inch of the collar bone. Yoga pants, tank tops, crop tops, or shirts with spaghetti straps may not be worn. Shorts must be no more than two inches above the knee. Leggings may be worn IF the top extends mid-thigh (below the posterior).
4. Appropriate logos that reflect Christian values.

The dress code for free dress will be modified by the Principal if the need arises.

If a pupil is out of compliance with the uniform standards of dress, grooming, or hygiene, and has been previously corrected in this regard, a demerit will be issued. The cooperation of parents/guardians will be sought to correct the problem. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the personal appearance of the student concurs with school standards. Lack of improvement in personal appearance is grounds for disciplinary action that can include

the dismissal of a pupil during the school day. Parents/guardians will be called to pick up the student from school. This may result in the loss of free dress privileges.

Section 2.15 - Relationship of School to Parish*

As a Catholic School connected to a parish, our school is responsible for supporting the parish and Pastor. The school provides a parish tuition rate to those families who actively participate and tithe to a Catholic parish community. Verification of this participation is required in order to receive the parish tuition rate. The parish community also supports the school through second collections and a monthly subsidy. The Pastor oversees the parish school and is involved in its leadership decision-making.

Section 2.16 - School Governance*

Administrative Structure of Elementary Schools*: Elementary schools in the archdiocese have two essential administrators: the pastor and the principal. In addition, elementary schools operate under a variety of administrative structures that are tailored to the needs of the students, staff and parish community. For instance, certain schools may have a vice principal. The common goal, regardless of structure, is to implement the foundational principles of elementary schools, which are mission and Catholic identity, academic excellence, operational vitality, and leadership and governance. (updated: 1-25-2022, 6-29-2022, 7-28-2026)

Advisory School Board*: The advisory school board exists to support the school and is important to the school's viability. School boards and their members do not have any authority to act independently on behalf of the school or parish. They are not "agents" of the school or parish and any actions taken must receive the official written approval of the pastor and/or the principal as the case may be. They must function in accordance with a written constitution and bylaws that comply with all current provisions of archdiocesan policy that govern the structure and operation of such an organization.

The general responsibilities of the consultative school board are in the following areas: strategic planning; policy development; technology planning; alumni relations; resource development; institutional advancement; public relations; advice and counsel with regard to financial planning, management and reporting; marketing; and evaluation of the board's goals and activities.

The membership of the consultative school board should include the pastor, principal, parents/guardians (no more than one-third of the total membership), alumni parents, parishioners, members of the civic and local business community, and area educators. The School Board is advisory in nature and cannot make decisions binding for the parish education program without the approval of the administrative team.

The regional supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools is available to assist and guide schools in the implementation of a consultative school board.

Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)*: The PTO exists to support the school and is important for the school's viability. The PTO is advisory in nature and has no legal status apart from the school and therefore may not be separately incorporated. The PTO and its members do not have any authority to act independently on behalf of the school or parish. They are not "agents" of the school or parish and any actions taken must receive the official written approval of the pastor and/or the principal as the case may be. They must function in accordance with a written constitution and bylaws that comply with all current provisions of Archdiocesan policy that govern the structure and operation of such an organization.

The main functions of a Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is to promote parent/guardian support for the school program, increase mutual understanding between the school and parents/guardians, build a sense of school community, and assist in the financial support of the school. The membership of the parent-teacher organization shall include the pastor of the parish or his designee, the principal, parents/guardians of currently enrolled students, and religious and lay faculty of the school, where applicable. The pastor and principal shall have the right to approve officers and other members of the executive committee during the nomination process. The financial operation of a Parent-Teacher Organization shall be governed by the regulations for financial operations as found in the PTO bylaws.

Room Parents: The main functions of a Room Parent are to support the grade level classroom teacher in

- Coordinating class activities such as class projects, celebrations, and field trips,

- Communicating class and school-wide activities to classroom parents,
- Increasing mutual understanding between teacher and parents.

Organization and coordination of the Room Parent Program shall be governed by the Head Room Parent selected by the Principal/Pastor.

Chapter 3: Catholic Identity

Section 3.1 - Mass, Prayer, Other Liturgies*

Introduction: Jesus Christ gives a transcendent meaning to human existence and this spiritual dimension should inform the intellectual journey of the human person.

The Directory for Catechesis issued by the Holy See in 2020 declares that teaching in Catholic schools is a form of the ministry of the Word that makes the Gospel present within the overall formation – intellectual, human, and spiritual -- of the whole student. For some students, the school is often the only opportunity for them to encounter the Gospel and the lived witness to faith.

"The Catholic faith should permeate not just the class period of catechism or religious education, or the school's pastoral activities, but the entire curriculum and experience. Catholic schools provide "an integral education, an education which responds to all the needs of the human person." The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools.

In "The Catholic Vision of Education," Archbishop José H. Gomez describes the dynamic mission of Catholic education throughout the Archdiocese: "Catholic education is the Church's future. It is also the key to our society's future. . . . Our Catholic vision always calls us to see deeper — and to give more of ourselves in love. Our Catholic vision always calls us to see with the loving eyes of Jesus; with the eyes of God." The Catholic school is unique because it is an academic community within a religious community. As a school it is a community of learners and teachers, administrators and parents/guardians, staff and resource people. At the same time, it is a faith community of young Christians and adults. where Christ the Teacher is present among them.. A Catholic school always has a twofold purpose: learning and believing. It is exemplary when the school blends these well.

In the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Catholic schools serve students from preschool through high school. Each local school is unique in its charism, foundation, and culture. All schools promote "knowledge of the faith, liturgical education, moral formation, prayer, belonging to community, and missionary spirit." General Directory for Catechesis, 87. All schools are committed to providing an academic education that integrates Catholic values across the curriculum. In light of the great gift and contribution of Catholic education, Archbishop Gomez has expressed his strong commitment to "make sure that our schools are open to every family and every child in our city. No matter who they are. No matter where they come from, or how they got here. No matter how much money they have." (The Catholic Vision of Education, Archbishop Gomez: August 23, 2013).

Above Section Updated: 6-23-2021, 7-22-2025

Catholic teachings and values are fundamental to our school. Faith's guiding role in our lives, in all things great and small, is examined and fostered throughout our curriculum. In addition to adhering to the Religion Standards provided by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, we provide daily experiences where students can learn about and practice their faith. The Archdiocesan curriculum, *Teaching Touching Safety*, requires classroom instruction focusing on awareness protection. As part of our formation experience, students participate in:

- Daily prayer and Religion classes
- Planning and leading weekly school Mass
- Leading seasonal prayer services & Stations of the Cross
- Praying the Rosary
- Grade-level spiritual retreats
- Celebration of feast days with a special focus on Marian celebrations

In addition to the curriculum and faith formation experiences, students are able to:

- Prepare for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion. Baptismal birthday celebrations are held monthly to recognize the importance of this sacrament.
- Participate in service projects that benefit the Parish and the larger community. Activities and collections are organized by teachers, Student Council, and the Holy Childhood Moderator.
- Get involved in clubs such as the Marian Club which encourages members to develop a love for Mary through prayer, group activities, games, singing, and more. And the John Bosco Club where members are encouraged to develop the spirituality of John Bosco's motto of loving-kindness, reason, and religion.

The ongoing faith formation of faculty is of the utmost importance as they play a crucial role in the religious education of our students. Administration and faculty are engaged in ongoing faith formation and extend that formation to every student so that they value and live the Catholic faith.

Catholic School Communities*: A Catholic school is a community of faith where educational goals are imbued with the values and living traditions of the Gospel. Catholic schools are privileged environments where Christian education takes place in a way that extends the evangelizing mission of the Church. (Directory for Catechesis, 309 – 312) They are committed to developing faith-filled, morally aware, and academically strong individuals who are of service to the Church and society.

Catholic schools provide a Catholic education that illuminates academic teaching with Christian principles and prepares students to see Christ in others by the development of their talents. Catholic schools emphasize the importance of faith in the life of the individual and of morality as the life-giving principle that guides students to become self-giving, responsible citizens and leaders.

With the support of the [Department of Catholic Schools](#), pastors, faculty, parents/guardians, alumni, parishioners, consultative boards, and the community, Catholic schools:

- Educate and form the whole person spiritually, academically, socially, and physically
- Promote the dialogue among faith, reason, and culture
- Build community through the celebration of the Church's liturgical life
- Defend the goodness, dignity, value, and freedom of each person
- Foster awareness of moral and social concerns
- Develop leaders for the community

The goals of the religion program in the Catholic school are to provide an environment for students to encounter Jesus Christ, to form students in the Christian faith, and to provide students with the opportunity to learn about and experience the Church's teachings and practices in an academic setting. Since Christian education and formation is carried out in a community, the entire faculty and staff are responsible for carrying out this goal. Members from all school departments form a faith-based community with students, not only in the classroom and in other school activities but also in planning and implementing the school's various religious activities and events. In this area, the religion department and campus minister together with pastors, priest-chaplains, principals, presidents, faculty, and other staff provide ministerial leadership and support. The Catholic School Pastor Guidebook is a useful resource.

Students from all faith traditions, cultures, and economic backgrounds are welcome and invited to collaborate in fulfilling the mission. All those who quest for truth contribute to and enhance the community.

Above Section Updated: 6-23-2021, 7-22-2025

The Department of Catholic Schools provides support, guidance, and assistance to Catholic schools by:

- Assisting schools in evaluating and strengthening the Catholic identity of the school
- Supporting the faith formation of the entire school community
- Advancing the realization of the school's Mission and philosophy in accordance with Catholic social teachings
- Developing resources for the faith formation of principals, teachers, and staff members as spiritual and educational leaders
- Appointing the commissioner(s) and facilitating the Western Catholic Educational Association (WCEA) accreditation for archdiocesan, parish, and independent Catholic schools
- Providing training and support for financial oversight and planning, marketing and development, public relations, tuition and enrollment management

- Nurturing and encouraging mutual support among Catholic schools
- Providing opportunities for ongoing professional development for principals and teachers
- Providing in-service programs on archdiocesan policies, practices, and procedures for school leadership
- Fostering and implementing the goals of the Department of Catholic Schools
- Assisting distressed schools with the development of stabilization plans
- Responding to schools that seek reorganization and substantive change
- Advising in the establishment and licensing of preschools
- Identifying potential leaders of schools and supporting the process of recruiting, selecting, and hiring new principals and presidents
- Advising pastors in supervising and evaluating principals at parish schools
- Supervising and evaluating presidents and principals of archdiocesan high schools
- Directing a systemic approach to curriculum development, planning and evaluation
- For archdiocesan and parish high schools, guiding the process of staff selection, guiding and assessing the effectiveness of stewardship programs, and evaluating and promoting effective models of school governance
- Providing guidance on the annual budget and monthly financial reports of all schools
- Reviewing and approving the annual budget and monitoring monthly financial reports of designated archdiocesan elementary and high schools
- Consulting and advising on issues of student behavior and appropriate disciplinary actions
- Providing advice and support, as needed, on personnel matters and practices
- Encouraging active engagement in community relations
- Approving capital improvements and capital investments in conjunction with the regional bishop's office, the Construction Department, and the Real Estate Department, as appropriate
- Collaborating with C3 on technology projects and initiatives
- Such other matters as may be appropriate to assist in the successful administration of schools.

Updated: 6-22-2022

Additional Practices: Our Catholic identity is the core of learning at Saint Mary School. Age-appropriate Religion classes provide our students with a strong foundation in scripture, tradition, church history, prayers, and religious practices. Students are also involved in Retreats, service projects, and celebrations to reinforce the Gospel and put faith into action. School Masses are held every Friday and during special feast days. The students, under the direction and supervision of the classroom teacher, prepare liturgies with a different grade responsible each week. Students actively participate in Masses as lectors, ushers, cantors, altar servers, and technicians. Finally, students are given the opportunity during school time to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis.

It is the expectation of the Saint Mary School learning community, parish, and Archdiocese that the teachings of the Catholic faith be reinforced and modeled at home including attending Mass every Sunday as the Eucharist is the center of Catholic life.

Section 3.2 - Sacraments

Students in 2nd grade prepare throughout the school year to receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion. Students in 2nd grade prepare to receive these Holy Sacraments through daily religion classes, annual retreats, participation in weekly Masses, and other at-home activities designed to help parents support students in their faith formation. Students in grades 3-8 who have not received these Sacraments may participate in a year-long preparation program offered by the parish. In addition to the above activities that occur in their respective grades, students participate in an additional class throughout the school year given by the parish that is geared toward Sacramental preparation. Students may also participate in the parish's Religious Education program if the parents wish to do so. Parents are encouraged to speak to the school principal, Religious Education Coordinator, or their child's teacher if they would like their child to receive any of the Holy Sacraments.

Section 3.3 - Religion Curriculum*

1-Canonical Authority of the Diocesan Bishop*. In accordance with canon law, the archbishop exercises full authority over the religious instruction and formation programs in all Catholic schools of his archdiocese, including both schools of the archdiocese and schools in the archdiocese that are owned and operated by religious orders, institutes, or governing boards. The authority of the bishop extends to but is not limited to the content of the religion curriculum, the hiring of teachers of religion, the visitation of schools, and the use of the title "Catholic school." The

archbishop may exercise this authority in person or through designated delegates such as the superintendent(s) from the [Department of Catholic Schools](#).

2-Textbooks, Teaching Materials, Resources, and Content of Instruction*. Textbooks, other teaching materials, and resources are chosen on the basis of sound doctrine, attention to both cognitive and affective domains, continuity with the program of instruction, and adequacy in meeting the needs and capabilities of the students in the particular school.

All religion textbooks are to have the approval of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Subcommittee on Catechism. Other materials and resources used by teachers are to meet the same standards as textbooks with regard to sound doctrine and appropriateness for students.

The content of instruction must conform to the authentic teaching of the Church as summarized in the [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#) and must clearly distinguish defined doctrine from personal opinion and theological interpretation. It will stress the relevance of religious truths and principles to the personal lives and daily concerns of the students. Please see the [foundational catechetical documents](#).

3-Western Catholic Educational Association Catholic Identity Standards*. All schools, whether archdiocesan, parish, or those owned and operated by religious orders, institutes, or governing boards, are required to meet the following Catholic identity standards from the accrediting agency for archdiocesan elementary schools, the Western Catholic Educational Association (Improving Student Learning, 2012 ed., p. 41; Ensuring Educational Excellence, 2014 ed., p. 10 [click on 1-WCEA E3 2014 Protocol.pdf]):

- The school has a mission statement and philosophy statement that indicates the integration of the Catholic faith in all aspects of the school's life.
- The school provides regular opportunities for the school community to experience prayer and the sacraments.
- The school has a religion curriculum and instruction that is faithful to Catholic Church teachings and meets the requirements as set forth by the [United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#).
- The local ordinary approves those who teach the Catholic faith (Canon 805) and there is ongoing formation for catechetical and instructional competence.
- The school maintains an active partnership with parents/guardians whose fundamental concern is the spiritual and academic education of their children (Canon 796).
- The school has a service-oriented outreach to the Church and civic community after the example of Jesus Christ, who said, "I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you" (Jn 13:15).
- The school uses signs, sacramentals, traditions, and rituals of the Catholic Church.
- All school personnel are actively engaged in bringing the good news of Jesus into the total educational experience.

4-Elementary School Curriculum*. Implementing these standards and evaluating and setting goals is a yearly task of the elementary school in a manner that is consistent with the religion curriculum standards set by the Department of Catholic Schools. Curriculum components include:

- The Profession of Faith
- The Celebration of the Christian Mystery/The Seven Sacraments of the Church
- Life in Christ; Man's/Woman's Vocation: Life in the Spirit
- Christian Prayer; Prayer in the Christian Life

These components are based on the four pillars of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Updated: 4-29-22

Section 3.4 - Campus Ministry/Religious Clubs and Celebrations

Marian Celebrations: Fostering devotion to our Blessed Mother is a priority in the educational growth of each student. Throughout the year Our Lady's feast days are celebrated in a solemn way with special emphasis during the months of October (Living Rosary) and May (May Crowning Ceremony). All families are encouraged to participate in this display of honor and affection to the Mother of God and the patroness of our School and Parish.

Marian Club: Girls in Grades K-8 may participate in the Marian Club. Under the direction of faculty and parent moderators, members are encouraged to develop a love for Mary through prayer, group activities, games, singing, etc.

John Bosco Club: Boys in Grades K-8 may participate in the John Bosco Club. Under the direction of faculty and parent moderators, members are encouraged to develop the spirituality of John Bosco's motto of loving kindness, reason, and religion.

Jeans for John Bosco Day: The last Thursday of each month is set aside to commemorate John Bosco and the Bosco philosophy of education. On the last Thursday of each month students may wear appropriately fitting blue jeans or knee-length jean shorts (no rips/tears and no skinny jeans/shorts) in place of khaki pants or skorts and their Salesian t-shirt or P.E. shirt. Students must wear their black uniform shoes. Students are expected to celebrate our Salesian heritage by doing random acts of kindness. All jeans/shorts must follow the school's dress code policy.

Section 3.5 - Christian Service Program

Students participate in service projects that benefit the Parish and the larger community. Activities and collections are organized by teachers, Student Council, and the Holy Childhood Moderator throughout the school year. Junior high students who participate in the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) must give 18 hours of community service. Under the direction of the faculty moderator, they participate in service projects in the parish and community.

Section 3.6 - Retreats

The retreat experience is intended as an effective means of evangelization and spiritual development of students, parents/caregivers, and staff. All students participate in an all day, annual, on-campus retreat which is planned and organized by the classroom/homeroom teacher, religion coordinator, and room parent. Activities may include Mass attendance, prayer and reflection, bible study, prayer service, community building, community service activities, and more. Retreat dates are provided in the school calendar. Parent retreats may be offered at least once per year based on parent interest (an online survey is sent to parents).

Chapter 4: ADMISSION AND ATTENDANCE

Section 4.01 - School Student Non-Discrimination Policy*

The school, mindful of its mission to be a witness to the love of Christ for all, admits students regardless of race, color, national origin, and/or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, medical condition, sex, or national and/or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies and practices, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs, although certain athletic leagues and other programs may limit participation and some archdiocesan schools operate as single-sex schools.

While the school does not discriminate against students with special needs, a full range of services may not always be available to them. Decisions concerning the admission and continued enrollment of a student in the school are based upon the student's emotional, academic, and physical abilities and the resources available to the school in meeting the student's needs. For more information, see [Inclusion Policies and Procedures for Schools](#).

[Note that this School Student Non-Discrimination Policy does not provide nor imply that the archdiocese waives any legal exceptions or exemptions that may apply to it as a religious nonprofit organization.]

Updated: 7-7-2021, 8-16-2022, 7-24-2024

Section 4.02 - Inclusion Process/STEP*

Through the mission of the Archdiocese, our school strives to serve children with varied learning needs. All educators in Archdiocesan schools follow "Directions for the Inclusion Process in Catholic Schools: Support Team Education Plan Process (STEP)." The Support Team Education Plan (STEP) Program is a collaborative process that brings together students, parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators to seek positive solutions based on a student's strengths and special needs to help that student benefit from his or her education and to facilitate participation in the Catholic school curriculum. A [synopsis of the program](#) is available for prospective and current parents. Parents or guardians who feel that their student may need a **minor adjustment** to enable him/her to participate in the general education curriculum of the school should consult the student's teacher and principal to determine how best to meet the student's needs. Teachers, staff, and/or administrators may also initiate the request for the STEP process to be completed for a student. If parents/guardians disagree with the STEP team's decision regarding a minor adjustment for a student with a disability, or believes the school has otherwise discriminated against their child with a disability, the parents/guardians may file a complaint and appeal the team's decision. Parents or guardians may review the ["Procedural Safeguards for Students with Disabilities and Their Parents or Guardians"](#) pamphlet and the ["Complaint and Review Process"](#) to address unresolved issues.

Section 4.03 - Admissions Policy*

Admissions Guidelines*:

- Preferences are given to active members of the parish
- The required age for transitional kindergarten students is four (4) years of age on or before **September 1**.
- The required age for kindergarten students is five (5) years of age on or before **September 1**.
- The required age for first grade students is six (6) years of age on or before **September 1**.
- All students must comply with current [California immunization and health requirements](#) prior to enrollment. Saint Mary School follows the inoculation requirements of the CA Department of Health linked above.
- The parish school will strive to have Catholic education accessible to as many students as possible, both with its educational programs and financial considerations; however, it may have insufficient resources to meet the educational and financial needs of all students.
- The pastor and principal will review a student's continued eligibility for enrollment in the parish school.

Admission Procedures:

The application process for Saint Mary School is scheduled at the beginning of the second trimester. The following steps are required:

1. Completion of a school application with the following documentation
 - Birth certificate
 - Baptism certificate (if applicable)
 - First Communion certificate (if applicable)
 - Immunization records
 - Copy of latest standardized test results
 - Copy of report card for the last two years
 - Letter of recommendation for grades 3 and up
2. Entrance/readiness evaluation is taken by all students
3. Payment of application fee
4. An acceptance/waiting list/non-acceptance letter is sent to the families of all students who complete the process

Section 4.4 - Absence, Tardiness, and Truancy*

Attendance/Arrival/Dismissal Procedures*:

1. ***It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the School Office by 9:00 AM when a pupil is absent from school.***
2. When a pupil has been absent, a written excuse signed by the parent/guardian is required on the day the pupil returns to school.

3. When a child is absent for 15 or more days during a trimester marking period, official grades may be withheld, unless the work is made up. Students have the responsibility to make up work on their own. A daily assignment book is available to students in each grade for this purpose.
4. If a student is absent more than 15 times in a trimester, or a total of 45 days throughout the school year, he/she may be retained.
5. Doctor appointments during the school day are discouraged. Pupils are legally credited for attendance when time is spent in medical and dental appointments; this is considered a medical absence. A form must be completed by the physician and submitted to the school in order for students to be credited for attendance. A doctor's note is required if a student is absent for an appointment.
6. If a student is sick with fever, vomiting, etc., students should not return until they are symptom-free for 24 hours and with no required medications.
7. If, for family reasons, parents/guardians wish to take their children out of school temporarily, the principal and/or teacher will discuss with parents/guardians the possible effects of such an absence.
8. A pupil absent from school because of television or movie contracts is considered an ordinary absence.

Principals and teachers are responsible for checking the regular attendance of all students. Every absence must be recorded on the attendance register and record.

Attendance: The School day begins at **7:55 AM** with students in line. Dismissal is at **3:00 PM** on regular school days. Dismissal on Fridays is at **12:30 PM**.

Arrival: Students may be brought to school no earlier than 7:30 am. Students arriving prior to 7:30 am will be sent to Before School Care and parents/guardians will be charged for the supervision of their child(ren). Students may be dropped off in the Car Line or parents/guardians may park and walk with their child to the black top. Students are not to run or play games in the schoolyard before school. When the first bell rings at 7:55 am students are to **walk** and get in line in front of the grotto.

Dismissal: For security and safety reasons all students are signed out with the teacher at the end of the school day by parents/guardians or other responsible adults listed on the emergency card.

Absences with Acceptable Excuse*: When a student has been absent, a written excuse signed by the parent or guardian is required, and the excuses are kept on file for a period of one year. An acceptable excuse includes illness, attendance at medical or dental appointments, funeral services for family members, quarantine directed by County or City Officials or emergency or special circumstances as determined by the school authorities. Excessive unexcused absences may result in loss of academic credit.

Medical Appointments*

1. It is respectfully requested that parents/guardians make medical appointments outside of school hours.
2. A student who has a medical appointment during school hours is to submit a note written and signed by the parent/guardian on the morning of the appointment specifying the nature and time of the appointment.
3. The parent/guardian must come to the School Office to sign out the child. At that time the child will be sent to the School Office.
4. Upon returning to school the parent is to bring the student to the School Office with the form from the doctor indicating the time of the appointment and the time spent in the doctor's office.
5. If a pupil has an early morning medical/dental appointment and is not present at the start of school, s/he is to bring the form from the doctor's office reflecting the information stated above when s/he checks in.
6. Only with a doctor's form can a "medical absence" be given which is excused and not reflected as a tardy or absence on his/her report card.
7. The school **must** be updated and made aware in writing of any medical restrictions, limitations, guidelines, etc. resulting from a medical appointment. This is for the safety of the student and may be required in order for a student to return to school.

Extended Absences*: When, for family reasons, parents/guardians wish to take their children out of school temporarily, the principal and teacher will discuss with the parents/guardians the possible effects of such an absence. If a student is absent for an extended time, (15 or more days), official grades may be withheld and the student may be retained (may not be promoted to the next grade).

Leaving School Early: A student may not leave school before regular dismissal without a request from a parent/guardian. The student must be signed out in accordance with the school's standard procedures. Parents/guardians must go to the school office to sign out their child. The reason for leaving school early must be recorded in writing. Office staff will call the teacher in the classroom; the parent/guardian **is not** to pick up the child from the classroom, playground, or lunchroom. ***A student will not be allowed to leave or be signed out 30 minutes prior to dismissal. Students who miss more than two hours of a school day for non-medical reasons will be marked absent for half a day. Two early pick-ups are equivalent to one full day absence.***

Tardiness: A student is tardy if he or she arrives after 8:00 am. If a student arrives after morning recess, s/he is marked absent half a day. If a student leaves after lunch s/he is marked absent half a day. A record of all tardiness is kept in the attendance register and records. A written excuse from the parent shall be required at the beginning of the next school day.

Consequences for tardiness:

- For every day a student is tardy, parents/guardians will be charged a \$10.00 fee per student.

Truancy*

A student is considered truant when he or she is absent from school without a valid excuse for three full days in one school year or is tardy or absent for more than any 30-minute period during the school day on three occasions in one school year, or any combination thereof. The school shall report the student to the local public school district's attendance office or its superintendent.

In the event that the school suspects that a student is truant (absent from school, without an acceptable excuse), the school administration will contact the parent or guardian. If the school suspects that the student is a habitual truant (absent three times in a school year, without an acceptable excuse) and all resources at the school level have been exhausted, the school principal will notify the local public Child Welfare and Attendance authorities.

If a student has been reported once as a truant and then is absent again for one or more days without a valid excuse or tardy, the school should again report the student as truant to the local public school district's attendance office or its superintendent. A student who has been reported as truant three or more times is considered a habitual truant and is subject to dismissal.

If a student has been absent without excuse, and it is impossible to contact the parents/guardians within 24 hours and after repeated attempts, the school should notify the attendance office of the local public school district, the local police department, Child Protective Services, or all of those agencies.

Work permits*:

Employment of Minors: Federal and state laws restrict child labor, regulating the number of hours worked as well as the working conditions. Any employer who hires a minor (under 18 years old) must keep a copy of the minor's work permit on file. Employers must require minors to present a work permit before allowing the minor to work. Students can obtain work permits from the local school district (for public school students) or their archdiocesan, parish, or private school. However, a minor who is 16 or 17 years old and has graduated from high school is not required to show a work permit and may be employed for the same hours as adults; evidence of high school graduation must be kept on file.

Ages 16 and 17: A minor can work only a restricted number of hours outside of school. A minor can work for no more than four hours in any day on which the minor is required to attend school. A minor who is at least 16 years old may work up to eight hours on a day that precedes a non-school day. Minors may not work more than eight hours in a day or more than 48 hours in six days in a week. They may not work before 5:00 a.m. or after 10:00 p.m. on an evening preceding a school day. A minor can work until 12:30 a.m. during any evening preceding a non-school day.

Ages 14 and 15: Employers may not hire children under 14 years except in some agricultural jobs. It is permissible to hire 14-year-old and 15-year-old minors. However, there are some special restrictions for this age group. Minors aged 14 and 15 may not work more than three hours on any day in which the minor is required to attend school, more than eight hours on a non-school day, more than 18 hours in a school week, or more than 40 hours in a non-

school week. They may work only between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. except during the summer (June 1 to Labor Day) when they are permitted to work until 9:00 p.m.

Minimum Wage for Minors: California law requires minors to be paid the state minimum wage unless they qualify as learners, who are defined as "employees during their first 160 hours of employment working in occupations in which they have no previous similar or related experience. A learner may be of any age."

Archdiocesan policy requires that all employees be paid at least the state minimum wage or the minimum wage in effect in the location's city or county. Consult with the Human Resources Department before establishing a wage rate for minors. For additional information, see the [California Child Labor Laws pamphlet](#).

See the [Statement of Intent to Employ a Minor and Request for Work Permit](#) and the Permit to Employ and Work.

Updated: 3-12-2021, 11-21-2024, 4-26-2025 (pub)

Section 4.5 - Communications Procedures

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Parent/teacher conferences are held at the end of the first trimester of each school year. These conferences are by appointment only.

The Principal and teachers are available to conference with parents/guardians throughout the school year as needed. An appointment is scheduled through the school office or with the individual teacher or principal.

Parents/guardians are not to conference with teachers:

- During Morning Assembly
- During times when the teacher is scheduled to teach or assist on the playground
- During afternoon dismissal
- Parents/guardians are to conference first with the student's teacher when a need or concern arises. If the concern needs further discussion, an appointment is made with the Principal.

Written Notes: Written notes signed by parents/guardians are required for the following:

1. Absence and/or tardiness.
2. Failure to comply with any aspect of the school uniform regulations.
3. Incomplete or missing work due to illness (indicate when work will be completed).
4. Requests to be released from school for dental, medical appointments, or other urgent reasons.

Change of address, telephone number, or any information contained in the Emergency Cards must be made by the parent/guardian in the school office on the actual emergency card.

Student Use of School Telephone: Students need the permission of the office personnel to use the school telephone. No student will be called to the telephone. Important messages will be given to the receptionist who will give them to those concerned. Families must be organized and responsible for arranging transportation before the school day starts. Students are not allowed to use the office phone to get parents/guardians' permission to go to a friend's house.

Student Cell Phone and Personal Devices Policy: Students are not allowed to have cell phones or personal devices such as smart watches on campus. In extenuating circumstances, students who must have cell phones, smart watches, or other personal devices on campus must turn them in to the teacher at the beginning of each day. Phones must be turned off and not kept in silent mode. Phones will be collected by the teacher and kept in their possession until the end of the day. Personal phones at school are solely the responsibility of the owner. The school will not be liable or held responsible for personal phones or devices in any way. Misuse of personal phones during school hours or on school property will be confiscated, which will constitute a detention and a \$75 fee. Parents must pick up the devices from the principal. Parents/guardians are asked not to contact their child(ren) through a personal cell phone. Devices of this nature that disrupt class will be confiscated and held in the School Office for

parents/guardians to pick up. Students are not to contact home or anyone outside of school using cell phones or electronic devices without the permission of school personnel. All necessary communication must be done through the office.

School-to-Home Communication: The school website, school mobile application, and the e-blast system are the main methods of communication between home and school. The website and mobile app contain an updated events calendar, the lunch menu, and all important communications to keep you updated on school activities. Teachers also communicate weekly with parents/guardians via weekly newsletters, written notes, Class Dojo, and/or SeeSaw. Students are given Homework Planners as a way to inform parents/guardians of assignments. Planners help parents/guardians and teachers to communicate regarding daily behavior or work. Parents/guardians are encouraged to routinely visit the school website or mobile app (www.stmaryspalmdale.org) to get the most current information about school events.

Communication with teachers and administration: The Principal and teachers are available to conference with parents/guardians. An appointment is scheduled through the school office or with the individual teacher. Parents/guardians are not to conference with teachers:

- During Morning Assembly
- During times when the teacher is scheduled to teach or assist on the playground
- During afternoon dismissal

Parents/guardians are to conference first with the student's teacher when a need or concern arises. If the concern needs further discussion, an appointment is made with the principal.

Parent/Student Complaint Review Process*: Concern for the dignity and rights of each person is intrinsic to the Church's mission as a true witness to the spirit of the Gospel.

Using the Code of Christian Conduct, all parties are encouraged to use every available means to resolve these conflicts when they occur. However, if the involved parties are unable to resolve their conflicts, families may use the complaint review process for additional assistance. All those participating in the complaint review process are responsible for striving toward reconciliation and acting in good faith. Legal representation is not permitted at any meeting or mediation of the complaint review process. Any person filing a complaint is to be free from restraint, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal in any form.

1. Addressing Complaints at the Local Level: Schools

- The person bringing the complaint is encouraged to try to resolve the complaint by discussing it with the people who are directly involved at the school.
- If the complaint is not resolved, the person bringing the complaint should discuss it with the principal (or the pastor, if the principal is the subject of the complaint).
- For elementary schools, if the principal is unable to resolve the conflict, the principal will bring the pastor into the process as appropriate.
- After reviewing the facts and facilitating a discussion of the problem, the principal or pastor will respond to the person bringing the complaint.

2. Escalating Complaints to the Central Level: Department of Catholic Schools

- If the complaint is not resolved at the local level, the complaint may be submitted in writing to the assistant superintendent at the Department of Catholic Schools, outlining the concerns and reviewing the local process.
- The assistant superintendent will review the complaint (with such consultation as may be appropriate) in a timely fashion and will endeavor to mediate and resolve the matter.
- However, if the parties cannot reach an agreement, the assistant superintendent will apply the policies and/or regulations of the archdiocese and school to make a final and binding determination, and then communicate that determination in writing to all parties.

Section 4.6 - Closed Campus*

To preserve the academic environment and school security, archdiocesan and parish schools are designated as closed campuses. No person may enter the campus unless authorized by the school administration. Visitors, including parents, must present themselves at the school office upon entering and be granted access.

Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-20-2024

Section 4.7 - Safety and Security Procedures*

Earthquake / Disaster Plan*: Saint Mary School has a complete, well-designed plan for survival in case of an earthquake or other disaster. Faculty, staff, and students are aware of the procedures. Each child will be provided with an emergency kit at the beginning of the school year. The emergency kit is stored in the Saint Mary Parish facility. Saint Mary School participates in the annual California Great Shake Out to prepare for a possible earthquake emergency. The Saint Mary School staff reviews safety and earthquake plans annually to ensure the implementation of the best safety procedures.

Inside the school building, the teacher directs the students to:

1. Drop to their knees under some equipment-desk table, etc.
2. Stay away from windows, mirrors, lights, or objects that may fall over.
3. Clasp one hand firmly behind the head, cover the neck, and bury face in arms to protect the head, close eyes tightly and hold onto table/desk leg.
4. Stay in place until the quake is over, or when pupils are instructed to leave.

If outside the school building, get clear of all buildings, walls, power poles, and objects that could fall.

If damage is major, a siren announces to all that an orderly fire drill shall be conducted to evacuate the building.

The Disaster Plan contains the following established procedures following the evacuation of the building:

1. A pre-designated adult locks all gates to the school. Parents/guardians will be allowed in the emergency area.
2. A command area is set up at the small gate by the basketball court. The teachers release children through this gate ONLY. Teachers will be at this post with the EMERGENCY CARDS. The main gate to the basketball court will be used for ambulances or fire trucks.
3. Students assemble on the field away from buildings and sit in classroom order. A faculty or staff member supervises each group. Teachers call roll.
4. A designated group distributes earthquake packs.
5. A First Aid station is immediately set up, headed by a faculty member. Eighth graders who are trained in First Aid help at this station.
6. Search and Rescue team looks for missing students.

REMEMBER:

1. DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL.
2. When you enter the premises use the Church parking lot.
3. Walk towards the children's playground.
4. Enter the playground through the gate by the basketball courts.
5. Ask for your child/children and the children you are authorized to pick up. Children can only be released to parents, guardians, or other individuals listed on the EMERGENCY CARD unless permission is given in the form of a signed note.
6. ID must be available at the time children are picked up.

Fire and Earthquake Drills*: Saint Mary School complies with state and local safety regulations. Fire drills are held in school once a month. Evacuation plans are displayed in every room. Teachers are informed how to conduct fire drills on an annual basis.

Inclement Weather*: In case school is canceled because of snow or extreme weather conditions, school families will be notified through two methods:

- One of the following local radio stations:
 - KAVL 610 AM
 - KSRV 103.1 FM
 - KTPI 97.7 FM
 - KVVU 106.3 FM
- The Principal will also send out a message through the school's notification system.
- In hot weather, students may have a water bottle with water kept in a place designated by the teacher.

Section 4.8 - Arrival/Dismissal Procedures

School Hours: The School day begins at 7:55 AM with students in line at the Morning Assembly. Dismissal is at 3:00 PM on regular school days. Dismissal on Fridays is at 12:30 PM. Dismissal on the last day of school is at 11:00 AM. The office is open Monday-Friday from 7:30 am - 3:30 pm unless otherwise indicated (i.e. holidays, all staff meetings, vacation, etc.).

Arrival: Students may be brought to school no earlier than 7:30 am. Students arriving prior to 7:30 am will be sent to Before School Care and parents/guardians will be charged for the supervision of their child(ren). Students may be dropped off in the Car Line or parents/guardians may park and walk with their child to the blacktop. Students are not to run or play games in the schoolyard before school. When the first bell rings at 7:55 am students are to walk to their classrooms. Morning assembly is held in classrooms via Zoom.

Dismissal: For security and safety reasons all students are signed out with the teacher at the end of the school day by parents/guardians or other responsible adults listed on the emergency card.

Early Dismissal:

1. A student may not leave school before regular dismissal without a parent/guardian reporting to the office
2. The parent/guardian must sign the student out in the office, recording date and time.
3. The parent/guardian is not to pick up the child from the classroom, playground, or lunchroom.

Section 4.9 - Automobiles/Parking Lot

School Traffic Rules

Safety precautions are to be taken when driving and parking near the school.

1. Parents/guardians and students must stay within safety zones.
2. Cars must enter the premises via the West driveway and exit by way of the East driveway.
3. Cars must park in the Church parking lot.
4. Do not park by the school fence or Hall.
5. Walkers and bicycle riders walk along the fence line and exit by way of the West driveway.
6. Parents/guardians, students, family members, and Day Care Providers must use the cross-walk when picking up students at the end of the day. It is the expectation of Saint Mary School that parents/guardians will inform all friends and family members of this requirement.

Section 4.10 - Parent/Guardian and Non-Custodial Parents Right of Visitation*

Rules for Parent/Guardian Visits*: The school may adopt rules regarding the right of any parents/guardians to visit their child during school hours. As a general matter, it is advisable that the principal and parents/guardians work out a mutually agreeable alternative to interrupting the student's schedule at school.

Rules for Non-Custodial Parent/Guardian Visits*: Parents/guardians are responsible for providing any custody orders or other legal documents to the school that they wish the school to follow. Schools should take all reasonable steps to comply with valid orders that the parents/guardians provide. The archdiocesan Office of the Legal Counsel is available to advise on how to handle these matters.

If a parent/guardian does not have legal custody of his or her child but has visitation rights, that parent/guardian may visit the child (subject to the school's visitation policy and if the school does not have a legal order prohibiting such a visit). If the non-custodial parent wishes to visit the child, the principal must verify the nature and extent of visitation rights by referring to any court orders the parents/guardians have provided. Visitation rights are usually limited by the court to specified days and hours. The principal must be aware of these restrictions. If a parent/guardian without visitation rights attempts to visit a student at school, the principal shall inform the custodial parent/guardian.

Schools may not provide legal analysis of custody orders or advise parents/guardians on the legal interpretation of custody orders. If parents/guardians disagree on the meaning of a custody order, the parents/guardians must consult their own legal counsel or come to an agreement on its meaning and provide the school with written documentation of their decision. Schools do not guarantee enforcement of custody orders. If a parent/guardian violates a custody order, schools should call the other parent/guardian, the police, or both for assistance.

Children in Foster Care*: When a child is in foster care and the parents/guardians request to visit the child at school, the school shall inform the agency that is responsible for placing the child in foster care or the assigned social worker before allowing the visit to determine whether permission from the foster placement agency is required.

Updated: 7-16-2021, 10-28-2024

Section 4.11 - Health, Illness, Accident Procedures*

Student Emergency Card*: The Emergency Card for each student shall be complete and current, must be readily available to authorized employees, and shall indicate whether or not the parents/guardians have given the school permission to choose a physician in an emergency.

At the beginning of each school year as well as mid-year, the Emergency Card for each student should be completed by the parents/guardians. Subsequently, the parents/guardians must inform the school when there are changes to key information, including addresses for home or work, phone numbers, names of persons to notify in case of an emergency, or medication prescriptions for the student.

In case of an emergency, the Emergency Card should be shown to the paramedics or emergency room staff in order to authorize treatment and advise them if a student has any particular medical needs or is on medication. Therefore, it is imperative that the Emergency Card information be accurate, complete, and current. Parents/guardians are required to update information about any medication the student takes on a regular basis.

When a student becomes ill or injured, the parents/guardians must be contacted immediately. If the parents/guardians cannot be reached, the school shall contact another person listed on the Emergency Card.

See Peanut Allergy Letter for Schools (sample) and [Medications Administered at School](#).

Updated: 3-31-21

1 Policies Applicable to All Field Trips, Excursions, and Activities*: The policies listed below apply to all excursions, including but not limited to trips for parish religious education, youth ministry and youth groups, traditional class field trips, travel for specific group events (e.g., choir, adult retreats and outings, science fairs, and academic decathlon), graduation and other celebratory trips, athletic games and practices, and certain ministerial and extracurricular activities held at locations. Contracts for field trips, excursions, and activities must follow the rules on signing authority.

Locations may, at their option, plan trips and activities for one or more days, including overnight field trips, retreats, and other excursions. All excursions, whether day or overnight, must comply with the following requirements:

1. The excursion must be approved in advance by the person in charge or, if the excursion is cosponsored or sponsored by an outside entity, the regional bishop's office or the Department of Catholic Schools may be consulted, as applicable.
2. Traditional field trips for elementary school and high school classes must have specific educational goals for students.
3. For excursions outside a 100-mile radius of the location, in which the participants are students or youth, the person in charge should consider the budgetary constraints of parents/guardians, the excursion's financial impact on other fund-raising activities, and class work that students will miss.
4. The person in charge should have a detailed itinerary of any field trip or excursion that involves travel and hotel accommodations, including contact information for all transportation and lodging vendors, coordinators, and sponsors. Businesses selling travel in California have to register with the California Attorney General's office. Verify the licensing and Better Business Bureau ratings of travel agencies, especially those that operate only online.
5. On field trips, excursions, or activities with participants who are minors, the supervising adult must have in his or her possession a signed and dated Student and Youth Activity Permission Form (English version and Spanish version) for each minor.
6. On field trips, excursions, or activities with participants who are minors who take medication, the supervising adult must have in his or her possession a signed and dated Medication Authorization and Permission Form for each minor who takes medication. During the excursion, the supervising adult also must have any necessary medications in his or her possession.
7. All participants—adults and minors—must have appropriate identification and, as necessary, travel documents.
8. All chaperones and any vendors who both provide the trip and have contact with minors must follow archdiocesan safe environment policies, including fingerprinting requirements and background checks. No chaperone should ever be alone with a minor who is not his or her own child.
9. The supervising adult or adult group leader must have immediate access to a first aid kit. First aid kits must be in all location vehicles that transport participants to and from activities. It is expected that every location will have a first aid kit available for the chaperone, supervising adult or adult group leader to take to the activity.
10. In any area where there may be poisonous snakes, the group must have a snake bite kit as required by law.
11. Vehicles used to transport participants must adhere to the rules on transportation for parishes and schools set forth in Transportation for Parishes and Schools.
12. The supervising adult or chaperone on field trips, excursions, or activities involving minors must have immediate access to student emergency information.
13. At least one adult chaperone or supervising adult for field trips, excursions, or activities involving minors shall be in possession of a cell phone to be used as needed.
14. Chaperones or supervising adults driving minors should be at least 25 years old. Non-driving chaperones or supervising adults should be at least 21 years old.
15. Both male and female chaperones or supervising adults must jointly supervise overnight coed events and coed excursions over 100 miles away from the location. Locations should provide parents with the details of the expected sleeping arrangements, if known. Chaperones or supervising adults may not sleep in the same room as minor participants in hotels. When the excursion is at a camp or retreat facility, a chaperone or supervising adult may be assigned to sleep in the same cabin or similar housing facility with a group of minors.
16. No chaperone or supervising adult should be alone with a minor who is not his or her own child; therefore, at least two chaperones should be present on every day trip. At least one chaperone of the sex of the participants should be present. The number of chaperones who must be present to supervise minors

should be decided on a case-by-case basis, giving consideration to the age of the participants and the nature of the activity. Locations with any questions should contact the Department of Catholic Schools or the Office of Religious Education.

17. Clergy/staff members/faculty/chaperones/volunteers while supervising minors or young adults, or who are group leaders of parish- or school-sponsored activities, may not be under the influence of alcohol or any substance that can cause impairment and may not offer alcohol or any controlled substance (except medication that is prescribed for a minor or young adult) to anyone under age 21.
18. Adult participants should fill out and sign the Adult Consent and Release Form.

2 Assessing Risk of Certain Activities and Excursions*: All activities present some degree of risk. Locations need to identify and evaluate the risks presented by their activities and, when necessary, take extra precautions or avoid certain activities that present greater-than-normal risk. Each location should be aware of which activities may involve additional risk and seek assistance if there is any question in this regard.

Generally, activities have greater-than-normal risk when:

- Participants are exposed to potentially significant risk of bodily injury.
- Property damage can be extensive.
- The location has no previous experience with the activity.
- The activity is not typical to the location's operations.
- The activity requires a license or other certification for operations.

It is not possible to list every activity that may expose locations to greater-than-normal risk. Locations should seek the assistance of the appropriate archdiocesan department before engaging in activities that may involve greater-than-normal risk and locations should use common sense at all times. See the basic risk management strategies below.

Seek Guidance Early in the Planning Process*: If a location is considering any activity or excursion that may involve greater-than-normal risk, the person in charge should seek guidance from the appropriate archdiocesan department early in the planning process. Early contact will allow for a determination if the event is, in fact, risky, and if so, provide time to assess options.

Avoid Taking on Outside Risks*: Occasionally, a location may be asked to collaborate on or cosponsor an activity with another organization. If a location is collaborating with an outside entity for such an activity, excursion or program, it is important that the location clearly communicates to the participants, as well as parents/guardians of minors participating, that the activity is not sponsored by the location or the archdiocese and that the location assumes no responsibility for the activity. For example, if the activities or trips are organized and coordinated by outside travel groups, participants and their parents/guardians must be informed that the outside entities, and not the location, are responsible for any consequences of participation.

Obtain Informed Consent and Follow Safe Environment Programs*: Irrespective of the degree of risk presented by an activity, the location needs to make sure that all program participants and parents/guardians of all participants under the age of 18 are fully aware of the nature of the proposed activity, including the mode of transportation, if any. Parents/guardians must sign standard permission slips and medical releases for all school students regardless of age and all participants under the age of 18; see the Student and Youth Activity Permission Form (English version and Spanish version) and the Medication Authorization and Permission Form. No exceptions are allowed.

Locations must adhere to archdiocesan safe environment programs and, during overnight trips, ensure proper adult oversight when participants are scheduled to be asleep.

Always Use Qualified, Insured Contractors and Vendors*: The use of experienced independent contractors, outside entities and vendors to provide services or sponsor activities can reduce the risk of liability to the location from an activity, by transferring some of the liability and insurance responsibility to the independent contractor, outside entity or vendor. Contractors should not be used, however, as a justification to engage in activities with a greater-than-normal degree of risk. See also Volunteers and Volunteer Construction Work.

Be Flexible*: Most activities that locations engage in do not exceed a normal degree of risk. Advance planning (especially for youth activities) and flexibility when selecting prospective activities can reduce frustration and allow

the location to meet its objectives while insulating it from an unacceptable level of risk.

Have an Emergency Plan*: All field trips, excursions, and activities require an emergency plan. These plans need to be responsive to reasonably foreseeable emergencies.

Be Aware of Insurance Coverage*: Archdiocesan liability insurance generally covers all locations, employees, and volunteers in the event of a loss, an injury, or a claim by a participant that is caused by the alleged negligence of the location, employee, or volunteer.

All Catholic school students and registered participants in religious education, confirmation, and youth ministry programs are covered under accident medical expense insurance policies administered by Myers-Stevens & Toohey Co., Inc. The program is meant to help families with eligible medical expenses resulting from school/parish related injuries that are not covered by other insurance (e.g., deductibles, co-pays, coinsurance obligations and out-of-network services). If no other insurance applies, the program pays on a primary basis. Coverage is provided without regard to any allegations of liability or negligence. See Student Accident Insurance.

Employees who are injured in the course and scope of employment may make a claim for workers' compensation benefits.

Adult participants and volunteers who are injured are not covered by any archdiocesan medical insurance programs. They must look to their own insurance policies to cover medical expenses for their own injuries, and/or they can file a claim against the location in the event that the location is at fault for the injury.

If you have questions, please contact the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Risk Management Hotline at 1-800-877-9300, extension 8610.

3 Policies for International Travel With Minors: General Requirements*

Any group traveling internationally under the sponsorship of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, or any parish or school, must have the approval of the person in charge who shall designate one participating adult as the group leader ("Leader") and a second participating adult as the assistant leader ("Assistant"). The Leader will have overall management responsibility. Should something happen to the Leader, the Assistant should be sufficiently familiar with the policies and procedures applicable to the trip to assume the Leader's responsibility if needed.

All trips must adhere to the Policies Applicable to All Field Trips, and Activities (Item 1 above), which contains the required release forms, medical forms, safe environment/fingerprinting requirements, and insurance requirements. Necessary forms are linked within this section.

Leaders should ensure all members of the group receive relevant information and training for traveling abroad, including (but not limited to) topics such as:

- Obtaining all necessary documents (passport, visas, vaccination documentation if necessary) in a timely manner.
- Being familiar with the itineraries, including all transportation, lodging and contact information (Leaders or travel agents must provide copies to all participants).
- Staying safe when traveling internationally.
- Packing, especially for first time international travelers. (Packing appropriately for weather and activities, mode of travel, etc. Poor packing can affect the group's ability to travel smoothly.)
- Medications and prescriptions. Members of the group who need to take medication during the trip, must consult with their physician prior to leaving, particularly if they rely upon access to particular medications or require some accommodation for their medications, and should carry with them a copy of their prescription(s). (For minors, these must be documented using forms found in Policies Applicable to All Field Trips, Excursions, and Activities).

When a group is traveling with minors, the Leader, Assistant and chaperones have supervisory responsibility at all times during the trip. Therefore, the Leader, Assistant and chaperones should not use alcohol, illicit substances or recreational drugs at any time. Other adult participants should not be under the influence of alcohol, nor illicit or recreational drugs in the presence of minors. Alcohol, illicit substances, and recreational drugs may never be given to minors.

Requirements for Adults Traveling in a Group With Minors*

Any group traveling with minors must ensure all adults in the group, including other participants, clergy, parish or school staff, volunteers, chaperones and parents:

- Are fingerprinted by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and verification of compliance is confirmed on SEP (Safe Environment Platform). Fingerprinting Office phone: (213) 637-7411.
- Comply with the VIRTUS® Safe Environment Training by:
 - attending a VIRTUS® "Protecting God's Children" Adult Awareness session, or
 - having a valid VIRTUS® Certificate dated within the past four years of their last session. Office of Safeguard the Children phone: (213) 637-7227.
 - reviewing and signing the Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Minors at Parish or Parish or Parish School Activities or Events. Handbook section 13.5.4.

Minors must not be roomed with anyone 18 years of age or older, unless they are with a parent or relative. However, if a participant 18 or over is still a high school student, it may be appropriate for that student to be roomed with another high school student who is not yet 18.

Copies of proof of Fingerprinting, current VIRTUS® Certificate, Guidelines for Adults, and Release of Liability must be on file with the sponsoring parish or school.

Requirements for Minors Under the Age Of 16*

The Archdiocese strongly discourages bringing minors under 16 years of age to international events. However, if the sponsoring archdiocesan entity allows minors under the age of 16 to participate, the minor must be accompanied by a parent/guardian, or another family member (grandparent, aunt, uncle, or sibling) who is 21 years of age or older and is designated by the parent/guardian in a written, notarized document stating that the designated person has the authority to act "in loco parentis". This document is required in addition to all the other required documents. The accompanying family member/legal guardian must comply with all policies and procedures established by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Requirements for Minors Aged 16 to 17 Traveling Without a Parent*

- A parent or legal guardian must sign the "Student and Youth Activity Permission Form" which gives permission for the child to travel with the designated group.
- A parent or legal guardian must sign the "Medication Authorization and Permission Form" if the minor needs to take medication.
- Each Leader, Assistant and chaperone traveling with the group must accept in writing that he/she will have responsibility for the minors in the group.
- Minors traveling with the group must be informed which adult to contact if a concern arises.
- All minors shall sign a conduct agreement, which must include an acknowledgement by the minor and his/her parent/guardian that if the minor is sent home for any breach of the conduct agreement, the parent/guardian will be responsible for any and all costs associated with the transportation home. No refunds will be issued if the minor is sent home.

Minors Aged 16 to 17 Traveling With a Parent*

- If a minor is traveling with a parent or adult family member, then the parent or other family member shall assume the normal legal responsibility for that minor.
- If a parent or other adult family member is traveling with minors as part of a larger group, the adults in the family (meaning all members 18 or older) shall abide by the Requirements For Adults Traveling In A Group With Minors.
- If a family with minors is traveling as a family and not as a part of the official parish/school trip, the parents or other adult family member(s) and not the group Leaders or chaperones, shall be responsible for the minors.

Age of Chaperones on International Excursions*

Chaperones and group leaders must be at least 21 years old (preferably 25).

Policies Related to World Youth Day*

All policies stated above apply to World Youth Day, with the addition of these particular instructions:

- Participants must be 16 by the date established by World Youth Day to be a registered pilgrim and may be registered as a pilgrim of a parish/school group if the minor is traveling as part of a registered group for the whole period of attendance at World Youth Day.
- World Youth Day offers a variety of registration packages. Groups with pilgrims 16-17 years old may only choose a package that provides for properly chaperoned accommodations that incorporate Safe Environment policies and may not participate in Days in the Dioceses.
- Minors may be registered as Pilgrims if they are traveling with one or both parents for the whole period of attendance at World Youth Day, including Days in the Dioceses (if they are participating).
- The adult/minor ratio must be at least 1 adult for every 5 minors.

Updated: 8-10-2021; 7-31-2025

Medical Immunizations and Exemptions*: The [California Health and Safety Code](#) requires students to provide proof of immunization for school entry and also requires schools with kindergarten or seventh grade to assess and report annually on the immunization status of students in these grades. Schools may report online at Shots for School. Issued annually by the State of California, all directives regarding immunization shall be implemented.

Up-to-date information on immunization requirements can be found at [Shots for School](#), the [County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health](#), and the [California Code of Regulations section on immunization](#).

School procedures pertaining to the health of students must be communicated in writing to parents/guardians, generally in the parent/student handbook. Students, with the permission of the parents/guardians, may be subject to routine examinations in school, including hearing, vision, dental, head lice, and scoliosis.

School Health Records*: Every school must comply with all department of public health requirements. Every school shall have on file a health record for each student enrolled in the school. Upon a student's transfer, student health records are forwarded with the student transcript to the receiving school. Schools shall comply with applicable [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) rules if they are recipients of certain funds from the U.S. Department of Education. Check with the [Office of Legal Counsel](#) for additional guidance.

For additional information on student records, see [Transfer of Records](#).

Updated: 4/12/21, 11-04-21

Medical Appointments*: [Early dismissal](#) or late arrival for medical or dental appointments shall be granted when the parents/guardians make a request. Parents/guardians shall be urged to keep such requests to a minimum and encouraged to make arrangements for care during vacation periods or after school hours. For additional information on student attendance, see [Attendance](#).

Updated: 4/12/21

Medications: Medications Administered at School*

Students may only be administered medications that are prescribed for them personally. Any medications they bring to school that are not prescribed for them will be confiscated and they may be subject to appropriate discipline.

The school shall not furnish medications. All medications administered at school shall be provided by the parents/guardians.

The Medication Authorization and Permission Form must be provided. This form, which states the nature of the medication, must be signed and dated by the doctor and the parents/guardians.

Medication administered at school must be in the original packaging or container and the original label and shall be stored in the school office, unless a student is required to carry the medication on his/her person.

Generally, the student shall come to the office for medication.

Because of the risk of students sharing medications, students may not carry medication of any kind to be self-administered at school. If a student is seriously at risk without an EpiPen or inhaler on his or her person, the student may receive special consideration.

A student may not be given medicine prescribed for family members.

These medication regulations apply to both prescription and non-prescription medications.

A student who is diabetic is allowed to test his or her blood sugar at school in the health room or office and self-administer medication as necessary. If a student is too young or otherwise unable to self-test his or her blood sugar, a location may make arrangements with the student's family or a trained staff member to assist with testing. All medications must be kept in the school office or nurse's office and appropriately labeled as described above. School employees may not administer injections to a diabetic student except in emergencies, unless other arrangements are made in advance.

If parents/guardians do not complete the Medication and Authorization Form by indicating the student's prescribed medication, the parents/guardians will have to come to school and personally administer that medication.

Updated: 4/12/21

Communicable Diseases*: When communicable diseases are identified at a location, the person in charge shall immediately refer to the reporting requirements of the county health department in accordance with local requirements. For schools and childcare centers see: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/ip/schoolchildcare.htm>. Guidance for all locations is available from county health departments:

- [Los Angeles County Department of Public Health](#)
- [Santa Barbara County Health Department](#)
- [Ventura County Communicable Disease Office](#)

If the location is unsure of the reporting responsibilities or needs guidance in responding to a public health hazard, contact the Office of the Legal Counsel or, for schools, the Department of Catholic Schools at 213-637-7300.

The person in charge shall cooperate with the local health officer on necessary measures to prevent and control communicable diseases.

A reported communicable disease may cause a staff member to miss work or a student to miss school. Before the staff member can return to the workplace or the student can return to school, he or she must have appropriate permission issued by the department of public health, a physician, a nurse or other appropriate health care provider.

Updated: 3-29-21

Allergies*: Some students may have severe, life-threatening allergies, such as a peanut allergy. While the school will make reasonable efforts to prevent or minimize an allergic student's contact with allergens, the school does not promise an allergy-free environment. All allergies must be made known in writing to the teacher and included in the Emergency Card.

Student Sexual Conduct and Pregnancy*: Please [click on this link](#) to view the full policy provided by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

Research Projects and Rights of Parents/Guardians*:

Parents/guardians must be informed if a research project involving their child is to be conducted at the school and they must be provided with sufficient information about the research to enable them to give informed consent. Parents/guardians have the right to withhold permission allowing their child to participate in research studies. Parents/guardians have the right to withdraw their child at any time from a research project without reprisal.

Parents/guardians have the right to request to preview the materials to be used in a research study that involves their child. Requests to review the Research Materials should be made with appropriate written advance notification to the school and to the researcher.

Except in a limited range of research areas where an Institutional Review Board determines that a waiver of assent is appropriate, student assent to participation in a research project must be obtained. If a student reaches the age of consent applicable to the subject matter of the research project, the student must be given the opportunity to provide informed consent. Students have the right to withhold their assent and have the right to withdraw without penalty. Students who are not participants in research studies may not be singled out in any way or penalized. *Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-20-2024*

Students Who No Longer Live with Their Parents/Guardians: Students who are legally emancipated (other than students who have been in a foster home or guardian arrangement) and are not living in the home of parents/guardians may be precluded from continuing to attend an archdiocesan or parish high school. The principal is expected to confer with the assistant regional superintendent of the Department of Catholic Schools before making any final decision. *Updated: 7-16-2021, 10-28-2024*

Responsibilities of the School Administrator: Although a research project may have received prior approval from the Department of Catholic Schools, the principal, in consultation with the pastor, is responsible for determining whether to participate in the research project.

The researcher must provide the participating principal with a copy of the approval letter from the Department of Catholic Schools; a copy of any communication to teachers, parents/guardians, etc.; and a copy of all materials and/or instruments to be used.

The school and researcher must make every effort to minimize disruption to the daily school schedule.

If the subjects involved are students, permission for their participation must be obtained in writing from parents/guardians and Informed Consent Forms and Subject's Bill of Rights forms ("Disclosure Materials") must be provided to students and parents/guardians.

Informed consent requires that parents/guardians are given sufficient information about the research, prior to granting permission for their child's participation in the research project. Informed consent also implies that parents/guardians, upon written request to the school and to the researcher, may preview the Research Materials at the school. Except where the school is informed that the Institutional Review Board has waived the requirement, minor students who participate in the research project must give their assent.

If requested, all Disclosure Materials and, where possible, all Research Materials must be provided to the students and parents/guardians in the language with which they are most familiar.

Disclosure and Research Materials must be carefully supervised by the principal or the researcher, since appropriate ethical and professional standards must be observed in the use of copyrighted materials, such as test instruments. (Some tests are protected under copyright laws and ethical guidelines prohibiting prior review by test subjects must be observed.)

Appropriate educational activities for children in control groups or for children not participating in the research project should be considered and provided, if necessary.

Communication to parents/guardians about research projects should be handled in collaboration with the principal. The names and addresses of students or parents/guardians should not be given to the researcher without the prior consent of the parents/guardians.

The local school administrator, in consultation with the Department of Catholic Schools, retains the right to withdraw from participation in a research project.

Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-20-2024

Accident Procedures*: An Emergency Card for each child is sent home to be completed by the parent and is kept on file in the School Office. It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to return cards to school and keep them updated. When a child becomes ill or meets with an accident at school, the following procedure is followed:

1. The parent or guardian is contacted immediately. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, other persons listed on the emergency card will be contacted.
2. In case of a severe emergency, the paramedics or the school will transport the child to the nearest hospital or medical facility for treatment.
3. If parents/guardians can be reached within a reasonable time, the parents/guardians will determine the place and means of providing emergency care.

Students, who cannot participate in P.E. or other physical activities for any period of time, must present a note from the doctor stating the reason, limitations/restrictions, and length of time needed for the excuse.

Student Accident Insurance*: The Student Accident Insurance Program is provided for all full-time students in archdiocesan and parish schools. This program supplements other health insurance maintained by the family and assists only with medical expenses incurred because of accidental bodily injury sustained by students while attending school, while traveling to or from school, or while participating in school-sponsored and school-supervised activities, including school-sponsored sports, field trips, and extended school day programs. Information concerning the Student Accident Insurance Program should be provided to parents/guardians by each school.

In the event of a school-related injury, the archdiocese accident claim form should be used to make a claim under the Student Accident Insurance Program. See the Myers-Stevens Diocese Accident Claim Form (student insurance) and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Incident/Accident Report (Non-Automobile). Myers-Stevens offers other insurance that school parents/guardians are not obliged to purchase.

Section 4.12 - Privacy and Access to Records*

Pupil Records*: "Pupil records" means any record related to a student that is maintained by a school or one of its employees. It includes health records. It does not include directory information or a school employee's informal notes, if the notes remain in the sole possession of the maker and are not made available to others, except to a substitute teacher.

Only the principal, as custodian of the records, may authorize the release of pupil records. Only teachers, administrators and designated staff charged with student oversight have the right to view or use pupil records. A teacher's aide may view or use pupil records only with direct teacher supervision. Pupil records may be released by judicial order, such as a subpoena or search warrant. In specific cases, such as suspicion of kidnapping, police officers may be given access to records.

Parents/guardians of minors have the absolute right to access their child's pupil records in accordance with the school's reasonable procedures for providing such access. Parents/guardians may grant any specified person written consent to access specifically identified pupil records. In cases of legal separation and/or divorce, California state law gives both the custodial parent/guardian and non-custodial parent/guardian the right to access and examine pupil records. However, only the custodial parent/guardian may consent to the release of records and has the right to challenge the content of the records and to write responses to information regarding disciplinary action. Questions about releasing pupil records can be directed to the Office of the Legal Counsel.

Updated: 7-9-2021, 7-31-2024; 1-29-2026

Directory Information*: “Directory information” means one or more of the following items: a pupil’s name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous public or private school attended by the pupil.

Under California law, directory information is not subject to the same degree of confidentiality and privacy protection as pupil records. However, to the extent possible, the school will minimize access to student residence address, phone numbers and email addresses, unless the parents/guardians consent to broader access. To the extent possible, other users of directory information should also try to minimize access to and distribution of student phone numbers and personal email addresses, unless the parents/guardians consent to broader access.

Lists of room parents/guardians, students in each grade, phone numbers, email addresses, and any other personal information about families and students are considered confidential and may be used for official school purposes only. Those entrusted with this information may not use it for purposes that have not been approved by school administrator, including posting on social media. The [Code of Christian Conduct](#) and the [Acceptable Use Policy](#) apply to all uses of the personal information.

In no cases should commercial enterprises have access to directory information.

Release of Student Information for Tracking Purposes*: Catholic high schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles participate in programs in which student information is disclosed to school officials for purposes of tracking alumni throughout college. This data enables schools to better serve their alumni and helps evaluate the effectiveness of schools’ curriculum, instruction, and support services.

A school may disclose student information to school officials, including contracted individuals or organizations such as the National Student Clearinghouse, to assist the school in tracking its alumni throughout college. Unless a parent, student, or former student files a notice to prevent disclosure of student information, a student’s information may be released for such purposes.

Any parent or student over 18 (“eligible student”) wishing to prevent disclosure of student information for tracking purposes must file a written notification to this effect with the principal. If a parent or eligible student submits a request to the principal, it becomes effective on the day it is received by the principal, except for directory information that has already been disclosed.

Once a parent or eligible student places a hold on the release of student information, the restriction remains in effect permanently, unless rescinded by the parent or eligible student. For this reason, each parent and eligible student is encouraged to review the student’s demographic data periodically. For additional information, please see the [National Student Clearinghouse](#).

Updated: 7-9-2021, 8-20-24

Publication of the Image, Name, Voice, or Work of a Student or Minor*: Without the written permission of the parents/guardians of a student or minor, a location may not publish or use for noncommercial purposes the image, name, voice, or work of the student or minor. This policy includes but is not limited to publicity, exhibits, printed or electronic media, student publications, marketing, or research. The location must obtain the signature on the Parent/Guardian Release for Student or Minor (Noncommercial) ([English version](#) and [Spanish version](#)) before any such publication or use.

For additional information, please see the [Archdiocese of Los Angeles Privacy Policy](#) in Electronic Communications, Copyright, and Acceptable Use Policies.

Updated: 8-12-2021, 7-15-2025

Verbal or Written Confidences*: All school employees must respect the verbal or written confidences of students and adults, except in cases that involve the health or safety of students or others. If the confidence relates to a health or safety issue, the school must promptly notify the pastor, principal, other person in charge, or appropriate authorities, keeping in mind the privacy rights and Workplace Violence Prevention Plan rules that apply. The school must follow the archdiocesan policy on reporting suspected abuse of children or vulnerable adults.

Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-20-24

Section 4.13 - Transfer of Records*

Student Transfers, Withdrawals, and Graduation*: Whenever a student transfers, the former school shall provide a copy of the [Cumulative Pupil Record](#) and the original [health records](#) to the intended school when the intended school requests the information and the student's parents/guardians submit a release. STEP records may not be transferred without specific written authorization from the parents/guardians. The original Cumulative Pupil Record shall remain at the school.

The school grants credit for all work a student accomplishes up to the time of transfer, withdrawal, or expulsion. High school students may not be able to take final exams or receive diplomas if all financial obligations owed to the high school have not been paid. Schools should inform the parents/guardians and students of the requirements for graduation. The specifics may be conveyed in parent/student meetings, in written form, or a signed agreement such as the High School Graduation Agreement (sample).

The former school shall record the transfer, reason for the transfer, and name of the school where the student is transferring or entering after graduation.

A school will not give official transcripts to students or parents/guardians. Principals may be required by the county office of education to report the transfer, withdrawal, or expulsion of any student.

For the policies on withholding student records see: [13.4.2 - Withholding of Records](#)

Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-20-2024

Withholding of Records*: Under California law, a private school cannot refuse to provide student records to a requesting elementary school or high school because of any outstanding charges, including tuition or fees that the student or parents/guardians owe. However, in accordance with school policy, the school may withhold from parents/guardians the grades, diploma, or transcripts of a student pending the payment of certain amounts for damaged property, the return of loaned property, or unpaid tuition or fees.

Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-20-2024

Cumulative Pupil Records*: Schools shall maintain a Cumulative Pupil Record that contains full and accurate information for each student. The Cumulative Pupil Record should include only the following information:

- Student name, date of birth, residence address and other identifying information
- Parent/guardian name, address, identifying and contact information
- Sacramental information (baptism, first communion, confirmation)
- Enrollment information (entrance, withdrawal, re-entrance, graduation)
- Standardized test results
- A current transcript and, for a student who has graduated, the full final transcript
- Attendance information
- A record of the location that receives a copy of pupil records
- Verification of or exemption from required immunization (recorded through high school graduation)

Cumulative Pupil Record forms are kept on file permanently as hard copies in secure fireproof containers or as electronic copies (see "Student Cumulative Records" in the Record Retention Schedule, sorted by category and record type). Only authorized personnel may have access to these records. The school must maintain health records and STEP records in separate files.

Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-20-2024

Section 4.14 - International Students*

International Students*: The Archdiocese of Los Angeles welcomes international students. Through the cultural exchange of learning, praying, playing, and growing together, the presence of these international students enriches the educational and religious experiences of everyone in the school community. All international students who do not live with a relative must live in approved housing identified on the student's I-20 forms. The school is not involved in the selection of host families. A letter from the student's parents/guardians that identifies and approves the host family and place of residence is required. The parents/guardians, host family, and/or Agency, if used, shall notify the school if there is any change in the student's host family or residence. Faculty, staff, coaches, and/or their spouses may not serve as host families or guardians. Host families are required to meet with the school for orientation and periodically thereafter. Host families must attend meetings and functions required of domestic parents/guardians. Host families that are not contractually required to attend safe environment training are nevertheless encouraged to do so. All international students are required to be enrolled in a religion course for a grade/credit each semester (see Knowledge of the Faith). The international student will be expected to participate, as appropriate, in religious functions and events. The school is not permitted to waive all or part of international students' tuition, or grant them any type of scholarship or financial aid. The full international student tuition must be listed on the I-20 form and the school is bound by federal regulation to collect the specified amount

Chapter 5: Academics

Section 5.1 Curriculum*

The curriculum at Archdiocesan Catholic schools integrates the mission of Christ to teach the Gospel message to all. The archbishop and archdiocese are committed to providing strong academic experiences for students in school communities that reflect two purposes: the teaching mission of the Church and the need to educate youth for life in a way that relies on academic skills and requires sound preparation.

The curriculum consists of all learning experiences that are planned and organized under the principal's leadership, implementing the school's educational goals in a manner that reflects a commitment to Catholic teachings. The curriculum must be consistent with the philosophy of the school, the educational policies of the Archdiocese, and the requirements of the applicable sections of the California Education Code. The commitment to ongoing academic excellence, personal growth, leadership, and service as components of Catholic identity extends to all aspects of the academic program.

The curriculum in elementary schools is planned at each school to meet these overall objectives and the particular needs of the individual school community. The Department of Catholic Schools provides support for curriculum matters. In parish elementary schools, the pastor and principal consult on these matters. While the principal may raise curriculum issues with consultative school boards and groups, the principal reserves responsibility for curriculum matters.

Saint Mary School provides the basic curriculum prescribed by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles for Elementary Schools. The curriculum includes the following:

- Religion
- Family Life
- Social Studies
- Science
- Language Arts
- Reading and Literature
- Spelling
- Handwriting
- Mathematics
- Physical Education
- Music
- Art

Non-Catholics who are accepted at Saint Mary School must participate in all school-time activities, including prayers, liturgical worship, and religious instruction in a spirit of reverence and respect.

Homework: The purpose of homework is to reinforce material already taught and to foster habits of independent study. Homework assignments consist of a combination of written work, reading, research, and study for mastery. Homework is assigned Monday through Friday. Students have a homework planner where assignments are to be written on a daily basis. Teachers may request that parents/guardians review the homework and sign the homework planner indicating that all work has been completed. The following are average nightly homework time allotments:

TK:	Optional: not to exceed 20 minutes
Kindergarten:	Optional: not to exceed 20 minutes
Grade 1 – 2:	Not to exceed one hour
Grade 3 – 6:	Not to exceed 60 – 90 minutes
Grade 7- 8:	Not to exceed two hours

Students work at an individual pace and assignments are not finished in the same amount of time. The above are average times needed. If problems arise, consult the teacher. Students may be given long-term assignments which include projects, preparation of an oral presentation or a research paper. These assignments may make it necessary for students to work on weekends or holidays.

Religion Curriculum: See Chapter 3 - Catholic Identity

Graduation: To graduate from Saint Mary School, a student must have maintained a minimum of a 2.0 G.P.A. Students who do not achieve a 2.0 G.P.A. will not receive a diploma but will receive a certificate of completion. To participate in graduation activities all fees, service hours and tuition payments must be completed.

The school, at the time of registration for the 8th grade year, sets a Graduation Fee. The Graduation Fee includes: graduation gown, diploma, graduate ribbons and pins, awards, gifts, and flowers.

The following awards are presented to qualifying graduating 8th graders:

- **Paraclete High School Scholarships:** Determined by Paraclete High School
- **Knights of Columbus Scholarships:** Determined by the Knights of Columbus
- **Salutatorian:** Student with the 2nd highest GPA in the 8th grade class. If there is a tie, grades from 6th and 7th grade will be used.
- **Valedictorian:** Student with the highest GPA in the 8th grade class. If there is a tie, grades from 6th and 7th grade will be used.

Please Note: 8th graders who have received a suspension throughout the school year, will not be eligible to receive any of the awards listed above or added throughout the year.

Section 5.2 Grading Policies

Grade Integrity and Grade Books*: The teacher of each course determines the grade that each student receives, subject to the school's grading policy and expectations. Except in cases of clerical or mechanical error, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence, the grade is final. If an administrator suspects fraud or bad faith, he or she must consult with the Department of Catholic Schools before any action is taken. If a grading error is discovered after grades are submitted, the grade may be corrected only with the written consent and collaboration of both the teacher and elementary school principal.

A teacher's grade book (either a hard copy or electronic copy) is to be confidential and inaccessible to students.

At the end of each school year, or upon a teacher's termination or resignation before the end of the school year, the teacher's grade book (either a hard copy or electronic copy), along with its legend or explanation of the grading scale, becomes the property of the school and will be retained by the school for at least five years.

Updated: 7-21-21

Grading Scale*:

Transitional Kindergarten receives a report card twice a year. Progress is indicated with the following marking code:

- **M** Demonstrates mastery of skills or standards

- **X** Demonstrates development of skills or standards
- **T** Needs more time to develop
- **N** Not expected at this time

Kindergarten progress is indicated with the following marking code:

- **M** Demonstrates mastery of skills or standards
- **X** Demonstrates development of skills or standards
- **T** Needs more time to develop

Primary Grade progress is indicated with the following marking code:

- **O** 95-100
- **O-** 93-94
- **G+** 89-92
- **G** 85-88
- **G-** 81-84
- **S+** 77-80
- **S** 73-76
- **S-** 69-72
- **NI** 65-68
- **NI-** 0-64

Intermediate and Junior High progress is indicated with the following marking code:

- **4.0** A (95-100)
- **3.75** A- (93-94)
- **3.5** B+ (89-92)
- **3.0** B (85-88)
- **2.75** B- (81-84)
- **2.5** C+ (77-80)
- **2.0** C (73-76)
- **1.75** C- (69-72)
- **1.0** D (65-88)
- **0** F (0-64)

The transition from the primary to intermediate report card takes place in Grade 3. Intermediate report card to Junior High transitions in grade 6.

Progress Reports: Progress Reports are given midway through the marking period. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to check their student's grades on **Gradelink weekly**. Parents/guardians are to contact the teacher if there is a concern about the progress of the student.

Report Cards: Report Cards are issued to parents/guardians, at the end of each trimester for grades kindergarten through eighth. Transitional kindergarten receives report cards twice a year. Parents/guardians are to review report cards, sign the report card envelope in the appropriate place and return it to school within three (3) days indicating that they have received and reviewed the card. Parents/guardians are to contact the teacher within two (2) weeks if there is a concern about grades.

Make-Up Work/Absences: If a student has been absent due to an excused illness or family emergency, he/she may complete missed work within the allowed time frame established by the teacher. If a student does not complete the work within the established time frame, this may affect his/her grade. Each teacher will inform parents/guardians and students of their make-up work policy at the beginning of the year.

Course Deficiency/Failure*: The decision to promote a student to the next grade or to retain him/her in the present grade is based upon a consideration of the overall welfare of the student. This is accomplished carefully by weighing academic, emotional, and social factors. The principal, in consultation with the parents/guardians and faculty, shall make the final decision regarding retention. In the event that retention is considered, the following guidelines are applied:

1. The teacher is responsible for consistent evaluation, early diagnosis, and effective remediation of learning problems. Initially, the teacher will provide remedial help to the student within the school setting. If such help proves inadequate, the teacher will advise the parents to arrange for outside remedial help.
2. The teacher will make the principal aware of any student with significant learning or work habit problems no later than the end of the first trimester. The principal, teachers, parents, and students will participate in the Support Team Education Plan (STEP) process throughout the duration of the school year. Parents/guardians will be informed of the student's progress or possibility of retention. Copies of these meetings and reports are kept on file.
3. Retention is more successful in the primary grades; therefore, the primary grade teacher will diligently observe the struggling student so that problems may be corrected before the student reaches the middle and upper grades.
4. Students in 5th through 7th grade who achieve a cumulative GPA of 1.99 or below could be retained in the current grade for the following academic year and/or placed on an academic contract.
5. If a student is absent more than 15 times in a trimester, or a total of 45 days throughout the school year, he/she may be retained.

In the case of a pupil with severe learning difficulties it may be necessary to recognize that the Catholic School is not equipped to meet the needs of every child and therefore, a recommended transfer might be necessary

Conduct/Citizenship Grades*:

Kindergarten and 1st Grade:

- **M** Demonstrates mastery of skills or standards
- **X** Demonstrates development of skills or standards
- **T** Needs more time to develop

Primary, Intermediate and Junior High Grades:

- **O** Outstanding
- **G** Good
- **S** Satisfactory
- **NI** Needs Improvement

Section 5.3 Standardized Testing*

Saint Mary's provides a comprehensive testing program to ensure a constant evaluation of pupil progress.

- STAR Renaissance Testing is administered in Grades K-8 three times a year
- ARK Test (Religion) is administered in Grades 2-8 in the Spring

Section 5.4 Recess and Lunch/Nutrition

As of October 1, 2024, Saint Mary School is participating in the Archdiocesan Sponsored National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. This program is offered through a partnership between the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the USDA, Revolution Foods, and Saint Mary School. Through this program, families can receive breakfast and lunch at a reduced cost. Parents/guardians can submit an application to see if they qualify for free or reduced-cost meals. This support is based on family income and size. We encourage all parents to submit an application. Applications can be requested in the school office. The following are the expected costs for the school year:

- Full-Price Breakfast: \$2.50 | Reduced-Price Breakfast: \$0.30
- Full-Price Lunch: \$4.00 | Reduced-Price Lunch: \$0.40

Breakfast and lunch are available in the school cafeteria daily, with the exception of holidays, no school days, and vacation days. Breakfast and lunch will be provided during the assigned times (TBA). The monthly breakfast and lunch menus with pre-order forms can be found in the [Documents Section](#) of the school website and mobile application. They are also emailed at the beginning of each month to parents/guardians. The daily menu can also be found in the [Dining section](#) of the website and mobile application. Parents/guardians must submit the pre-order form with payment for the following month. Due dates will be posted in the [Calendar/Events Section](#) of the website and mobile app. If parents need to drop off lunch for their child(ren), it must be brought to the office no later than **11:15 AM**, regardless of whether students eat during 1st or 2nd lunch. **No exceptions** can be made to this policy.

If students require dietary accommodations, parents/guardians must fill out the forms found in the Documents Section. A licensed healthcare provider must sign the [Meal Accommodations form](#) to validate a medical need. Milk substitutes can be made by submitting the [Milk Substitute form](#).

Section 5.05 - Supplies and Textbooks

Families are provided a school supply list for the beginning of each year. Fulfilling the list helps keep costs down and ensures that students and teachers are prepared for instruction. Textbooks and iPads with school-issued covers are given to students at the beginning of each school year. Students are expected to keep textbooks neatly covered at all times. Students will be required to replace textbooks and/or iPads and iPad covers that are lost or damaged. Damaged iPad replacement or repairs take approximately 3 weeks from the date of payment.

Section 5.06 - Awards and Honors

Angel of the Month: Once a month, students who have shown outstanding achievement are selected to receive an Angel of the Month award. This event recognizes students who have shown outstanding progress throughout the month in achieving the SLE's. Students are recognized during Morning Assembly and receive a certificate and/or prize. Below are the awards students may receive:

1. Saint Mary Award: For being a model of faith and compassion; showing a gentle spirit of faith, compassion, and devotion; following the example of our Blessed Mother, Mary. *"Your example reminds us all what it means to walk in the light of Christ with love and gentleness of spirit. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."* Matthew 5:8
2. Saint John Bosco Award: For being a model of joyful leadership and encouragement; radiating joy and encouraging others through your positive example and servant leadership. Your cheerful heart inspires your classmates to grow in faith, friendship, and love for learning. *"Let us serve the Lord with holy cheerfulness."* St. John Bosco
3. Saint Joseph Award: For being a student Model of Integrity & Responsibility - demonstrating honest, diligence, and respect in daily actions, and serving as a faithful example of quiet strength and steadfast integrity. Your commitment to doing what is right blesses our school community and honors the spirit of St. Joseph. *"Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."* 1 Corinthians 10:31

Trimester Awards: Student achievement and effort are acknowledged at the end of each trimester. Any suspensions will preclude a student from receiving honors for that trimester. GPAs are calculated based on the following academic subjects only: Religion, Math, Reading, Language, Social Studies, and Science. It does not include Music, Art, and P.E. Honors are awarded to students in Grades 3 -8 based on the following:

- 1st Honors: 4.0 GPA and no more than 3 demerits and no suspensions
- 2nd Honors: 3.99 - 3.75 GPA and no more than 7 demerits and no suspensions
- 3rd Honors: 3.74 – 3.5 GPA and no more than 7 demerits and no suspensions
- Honorable Mention: 3.49 – 3.0 GPA and no more than 7 demerits and no suspension

Recognition Awards may be given to students in transitional kindergarten through second grade based on student achievement, behavior, and effort at the end of the year.

Cumulative Awards are presented at the end of the year: Students may receive the following awards:

- 1st Honors: 4.0 GPA and no more than 3 demerits for the entire year and no suspensions
- 2nd Honors: 3.99 - 3.75 GPA and no more than 7 demerits for the entire year and no suspensions
- 3rd Honors: 3.74 – 3.5 GPA and no more than 7 demerits for the entire year and no suspensions
- Honorable Mention: 3.49 – 3.0 GPA and no more than 7 demerits for the entire year and no suspensions

Honors Societies: Saint Mary School maintains charters in the National Junior Honor Society. Junior high students may qualify for and maintain membership in the honor societies with the following requirements:

National Junior Honor Society (NJHS): 6th, 7th, and 8th graders maintaining 2 trimesters of a 3.5 Grade Point Average (GPA) or higher qualify to apply for NJHS Membership. Membership in the Saint Mary School Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society is earned by the effective demonstration of the five qualities held in high esteem by the Society: Scholarship, Service, Leadership, Citizenship, and Character.

Therefore, qualifying students must complete an application demonstrating these characteristics. The application will go before a review board consisting of at least 5 teachers. Qualifying students will be notified of their application status in a timely manner. Accepted candidates will be inducted into the NJHS. Membership in the NJHS is conditional upon maintaining a 3.5 GPA and high standards of character. All members must perform 18 hours of community service. Under the direction of the Faculty Moderator, they participate in service projects in the parish and community. Failure to observe Christian values/conduct and follow school rules are ground for dismissal.

NJHS members in good standing will earn honor chords and a seal upon their diploma at graduation. NJHS membership does not transfer to high school. However, membership in the NJHS is held in high regard when applying for membership in high school honor societies.

Graduation Awards: The following awards are presented to qualifying graduating 8th graders:

- **Paraclete High School Scholarships:** Determined by Paraclete High School
- **Knights of Columbus Scholarships:** Determined by the Knights of Columbus.
- **Salutatorian:** Student with the 2nd highest GPA in the 8th grade class. If there is a tie, grades from 6th and 7th grade will be used.
- **Valedictorian:** Student with the highest GPA in the 8th grade class. If there is a tie, grades from 6th and 7th grade will be used.

Please Note: 8th graders who have received a suspension throughout the school year, will not be eligible to receive the awards listed above or added throughout the year.

Section 5.07 - Tutoring*

If a student requires private tutoring or parents/guardians wish to have a student tutored in school subjects, the parents/guardians are responsible for engaging the tutor and paying all tutoring costs. The school may assist the parents in identifying tutoring resources.

Teachers may not be paid for tutoring students attending the school in which they work. In rare occasions, with prior permission from the principal and regional superintendent, teachers may tutor students who attend the same school but are not in their class, and be paid for such tutoring by the parents/guardians.

A school may arrange with independent contractors or entities not employed as teachers or staff at the school to provide tutoring on a fee basis. For individuals hired by the school as tutors, the [Professional Services/Contractor Agreement](#) may be used; for tutoring companies, the [Independent Contractor Agreement](#) is appropriate. To use archdiocesan facilities, the independent contractors or entities must have appropriate licenses, sign agreements to use the premises, and obtain liability insurance.

All tutors and entities must comply with the procedures and policies of the extended school day program and the safe environment policies and vendor policies of the archdiocese. See [Safe Environment](#). For the 2026-2027 school year, Saint Mary School will contract tutor services through Catapult Learning for students identified by teachers.

Updated: 8-12-2021, 7-15-2025, 7-31-2025

Section 5.08 - Academic Probation, Retention/Transfer

Academic Probation: Academic probation is an intervention intended to assist a student in returning to satisfactory academic standing. It is not, in itself, a disciplinary consequence. A student may be placed on academic probation when his or her academic performance demonstrates a significant or continuing risk of not meeting grade-level expectations. Indicators may include, but are not limited to:

- a cumulative GPA of 1.99 or below in grades 5–8;
- two or more grades of D or F in core academic subjects;
- a failing grade in a core academic subject;
- insufficient progress toward essential grade-level standards as demonstrated through multiple measures of student performance; or
- persistent missing work, incomplete assignments, or work habits that substantially interfere with academic progress.

If a student is placed on academic probation, he/she may need interventions such as participation in the STEP program, tutoring, individual/group support with the academic interventionist, counseling, etc.

Retention: The decision to promote a student to the next grade or to retain him/her in the present grade is based upon a consideration of the overall welfare of the student. This is accomplished carefully by weighing academic, emotional, and social factors. The principal, in consultation with the parents/guardians and faculty, shall make the final decision regarding retention. In the event that retention is considered, the following guidelines are applied:

1. The teacher is responsible for consistent evaluation, early diagnosis, and effective remediation of learning problems. Initially, the teacher will provide remedial help to the student within the school setting. If such help proves inadequate, the teacher will advise the parents to arrange for outside remedial help.
2. The teacher will make the principal aware of any student with significant learning or work habit problems no later than the end of the first trimester. The principal, teachers, parents, and student will participate in the Support Team Education Plan (STEP) process throughout the duration of the school year. Parents/guardians will be informed of the student's progress or possibility of retention. Copies of these meetings and reports are kept on file.
3. Retention is more successful in the primary grades; therefore, the primary grade teacher will diligently observe the struggling student so that problems may be corrected before the student reaches the middle and upper grades.
4. Students in 5th through 7th grade who achieve a cumulative GPA of 1.99 or below could be retained in the current grade for the following academic year and/or placed on an academic contract.
5. Students who are absent more than 15 days in a trimester may be retained.

In the case of a pupil with severe learning difficulties it may be necessary to recognize that the Catholic School is not equipped to meet the needs of every child and therefore, a recommended transfer might be necessary.

Section 5.09 - Counseling*

Counseling Policy*: The mission and purpose of the school is education. Schools may not assume the responsibility for psychological counseling or therapy because they are not qualified or licensed to do so.

In addition to providing classroom instruction, schools may engage in the following limited counseling activities:

- Provide advice and counseling regarding academic subjects, class selection for high school students, and student progress in school
- Give limited guidance to students who present with non-academic personal issues or situations
- Provide families with referrals to child psychologists, licensed educational psychologists, marriage and family therapists, psychiatrists, and similar professionals for diagnosis and treatment; if the school provides referrals to parents/guardians, the list must include at least three names of qualified people or entities
- Provide career counseling through career information centers and plan periodic career days or career sessions during which students meet representatives of different professions
- Retain, where necessary, appropriate professional individuals or service providers to offer psychological counseling services for the school, including educational testing to assess a student's academic ability, learning patterns, achievement motivation, and personality factors that are directly related to academic learning problems (prior to a contractual relationship, the principal will ensure that the professional is appropriately credentialed, licensed, insured, or otherwise properly qualified); as appropriate
- Refer a student for specific or additional testing, generally through the public school where the student resides or at the expense of the parents/guardians should they so elect
- Provide high school and college counseling, sharing information with parents/guardians and students about application procedures, entrance exams, scholarships, and financial aid; schools may also provide information sessions

In cases of actual or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, please see [Legal Responsibility to Immediately Report Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect](#).

Updated: 8-12-2021; 7-31-2025

Additional Counseling Information: Saint Mary School works with [Counseling Partners of Los Angeles](#) to provide individual and group counseling to students. There are numerous reasons why students may want to speak to a counselor such as:

- anxiety

- depression
- stress management difficulties
- anger management difficulties
- attention difficulties
- difficulty adjusting to school
- parental divorce
- peer/family relationships
- grief/loss

Counselors work with students to address their feelings and help them achieve their goals. Counselors can also work with parents to improve communication and provide interventions and guidance. Counseling services are free of charge. Parents and school staff may refer a student at any point via a verbal request or written referral. Students may also self-refer at any point. Below are the links to the referral forms:

English - <https://forms.gle/6KsA4FitnPqW1ZhD7>

Spanish - <https://forms.gle/kHShTW1eKVA8peVT6>

In order for a student to be seen by a counselor, parents/guardians must complete the consent form which can be found in the [Documents section](#) of the school website and mobile app. We highly encourage all parents/guardians to fill out a consent form at the beginning of the school year so it is on file; this expedites the process and allows counselors to see students much faster if needed. Parents/guardians will be informed of student referrals and will work in partnership with the school counselors to best support students. This is a critical service offered to our students and we hope that families will see this as an opportunity to support the social, emotional, academic, and spiritual development of their children. Please contact the school office or one of the school counselors with any questions.

Section 5.10 - Video/Film Policy*

[Click on the link](#) to view the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Video/Film Policy as related to educator use of video and copyrighted materials for academic purposes.

Section 5.11 - Summer School

Saint Mary School provides an academic and recreational summer program to support currently enrolled students and families. Information is provided to parents in a timely manner. The summer programs are an additional cost and not included in the tuition/school year fees.

Chapter 6 - Co-Curricular Activities and Athletics

Section 6.01 - Before and After School Policies and Programs

Extended Day Programs

- The school requires an extended school day agreement with participating parents/guardians
- Archdiocesan student insurance covers students during the time of the program
- Programs under the auspices of elementary schools may only serve those students presently enrolled in the formal school program
- The school requires up-to-date family information and emergency contact, and maintains a record of arrivals, and departures
- The school may arrange with independent contractors or entities to provide extended school day programs

Students enrolled at Saint Mary School in grades TK-8 are eligible to participate in the Extended Care Program. Extended Care is provided from 6:30 – 7:30 AM, from 3:15 – 5:30 PM on regular school days, and from 12:45 – 5:30 PM on minimum school days. Information, enrollment, and regular fees and registration forms are available at the beginning of the school year. Students who are not picked up by 3:15 PM on a regular school day and 2:00 PM on a curriculum day report to Extended Care; families will be billed for the service. Children who are not picked up at the end of after-school activities will report to Extended Care and families will be billed for the service.

Section 6.02 - School Field Trips and Excursions*

Each class may be afforded the opportunity of going on up to two (2) field trips during the course of the school year. One field trip will enhance some specific area of the curriculum being studied by the class. The second field trip will support a Christian service project appropriate to the grade level. No student may go on a class field trip unless he/she has a signed school permission slip. PARENTS/GUARDIANS MAY NOT GIVE PERMISSION FOR THEIR CHILD TO GO ON A FIELD TRIP OVER THE PHONE. Virtus trained and fingerprinted parents/guardians may volunteer as chaperones. Siblings of pupils are not appropriate chaperones unless they are 21 years of age or older and are Virtus trained and fingerprinted. Chaperones may not bring preschool-aged children or siblings from other grades. Chaperone spaces are limited and are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Chaperones must adhere to school, classroom, and site policies/procedures at all times. Chaperones that do not follow policies/procedures will not be allowed to participate in future field trips. Buses are to be used in transporting students to and from field trip locations.

^Field trips are a privilege and students may forfeit them due to their behavior or financial obligations not met by parents.

Section 6.03 - Transportation*

Transportation Arranged by Parishes and Schools*: Transportation arranged by locations for their own purposes and activities may include personal motor vehicles, on-demand transportation services, vans, buses, boats, or airplanes.

Personal Motor Vehicles*: Although discouraged, school and parish staff, and volunteers (including teachers, religious education instructors, and coaches) may use their personal motor vehicle to drive two or more minors to and from athletic, youth, and other trips or events. School and parish staff and volunteers may not be alone in a vehicle with a single minor who is not their own child.

School and parish staff, parents/guardians, and volunteers who drive minors in their own vehicles must be at least 25 years old, have a clean driving record for the past three years, possess a valid California Class C driver license, and have current and valid California automobile insurance. The location must keep on file a copy of that driver license and proof of current insurance.

Use of personal vehicles for travel to foreign countries is discouraged. Commercial auto insurance available in the United States does not generally include coverage in foreign countries; therefore, before beginning a foreign trip, locations using personal vehicles for international travel must check with a commercial automobile insurance agent to obtain appropriate coverage for the country or countries where the vehicles will be used.

Archdiocesan-owned vehicles may not be driven outside the State of California, because archdiocesan vehicle insurance does not include out-of-state travel.

On-Demand Transportation Services*: The archdiocese discourages the use of on-demand transportation services by minors.

Parents/guardians who wish to use an on-demand transportation service to transport their child(ren) are solely responsible for determining if the service allows its drivers to transport unaccompanied minors. Note that, for example, neither Uber nor Lyft permits drivers to pick up children under the age of 18 unless accompanied by an adult account holder.

If the location restricts the release of minors from its custody only to certain authorized individuals, parents/guardians must sign the Minor Pickup Permission Form and Release for Parishes and Schools, giving permission for their child(ren) to be picked up by a transportation service and absolving the location and the archdiocese of any liability. These forms must be kept on file by the location. Licensed day care centers and preschools are required to maintain these documents by state regulation.

Parents/guardians who have submitted a signed permission form must call the location each day of pickup and inform the location that the transportation service is picking up the child(ren). If possible, the parents/guardians must give the name of the driver who will be picking up the child(ren).

At time of release, the transportation service driver must identify himself or herself to the person in charge, showing a valid driver license and proof of his or her relationship to the transportation service. The driver must sign the child(ren) out. Drivers must be instructed by the parents/guardians that transportation service drivers may not pick up students in the car line of the location.

The child(ren) are then released to the driver.

Vans*: Schools and parishes may transport school students in vans or other vehicles designed for 10 passengers or fewer, including the driver. Vehicles designed for more than 10 passengers may not be reconfigured to seat only 10 passengers, including the driver.

A driver of a vehicle designed for 10 passengers or fewer does not need a commercial driver license.

Youth Buses*: Schools and parishes may use vehicles designed for 15 persons or fewer to transport school students within 25 miles of the school or parish. Individuals who drive these vehicles must have a commercial driver license with a youth bus certificate. Every youth bus must have on the front and rear a plainly visible sign with the words "YOUTH BUS" in letters at least eight inches high.

A school may not use a youth bus without the consent of the Department of Catholic Schools.

School Pupil Activities Bus*: A school pupil activities bus (SPAB) is any motor vehicle other than a school bus that is operated by a common carrier for the purpose of transporting K–12 school students to or from a school activity. SPAB drivers are subject to the school bus regulations promulgated by the California Highway Patrol, except that SPAB drivers do not have to take first aid courses and are not allowed to drive school buses.

School Buses*: Locations should make sure that drivers of school buses that are transporting K–12 school students inside the State of California have the appropriate driving certificate, which must be a SPAB driver's certificate or a school bus driver's certificate issued by the California Highway Patrol.

Commercial Buses and Other Commercial Vehicles*: Locations may only hire buses, vans, or other passenger carriers from transportation companies that have valid permits, licenses, or charters approved by the State of California and that maintain current insurance on their vehicles. Locations must verify this information through the California Public Utilities Commission and its list of passenger carriers.

Prior to signing any contracts with bus companies or other transportation vendors, locations must submit the contracts to the archdiocesan Office of the Legal Counsel for review.

Minors Leaving On Their Own: Parents/guardians may grant permission for their children to leave school, the parish, or another location, or a location-sponsored event on their own. Persons in charge of the location must obtain from the parents/guardians a written, signed, and dated [Permission to Walk/Bike/Drive from Location and Location's Sponsored Events form](#) and file it with other permissions and waivers.

Updated: 8-12-21

Section 6.04 - Student Government

Student Council gives students the opportunity to provide input and actively participate in creating an extraordinary learning environment. Students in Grades 5-8 are eligible to participate in Student Council. This is an effective means of developing leadership, a sense of responsibility and good citizenship among pupils. Under the direction of the Principal and a Faculty Moderator, Student Council proposes, organizes, and directs activities to enhance the school community.

Section 6.05 - Clubs/Organizations/Honor Societies

The extra-curricular programs available at St. Mary School depends on the availability of staff/volunteers. Potential activities include:

Student Council (5th - 8th grade)	National Junior Honor Society (6th-8th grade)
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John Bosco Club (K-8th grade)	Marian Club (K-8th grade)
Youth Choir (3rd-8th grade)	Decathlon (6th-8th grade)
Mock Trials (7th-8th grade)	Robotics (TBD)
Cheerleading (6th-8th grade)	Sports Program (6th-8th grade)

In order to participate in any of the above extra-curricular activities students must adhere to the following:

- Conduct grades: No grade lower than a G
- Academic Average: No grade lower than a C
- Attendance at all scheduled events: Students will no longer be able to participate after one (1) unexcused absence.

Activities and programs are started or discontinued according to student interest and availability of staff/volunteers. Coaches are responsible for promoting the qualities necessary for healthy athletic competition and good sportsmanship: self-discipline, teamwork, emotional control, hard work, and good citizenship. Coaches are responsible for ensuring that all team members are supervised at all times. [Field Trip Policies](#) apply to all off-site games. Coaches shall not accept payment from student-athletes or their families for private coaching. This prohibition does not apply to coaches' employment by clinics that are open to student athletes generally and are approved by the administration.

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting their children to and from the activities sponsored by the school (games, etc.) or making arrangements for their children's transportation. Parents/guardians are expected to pick up students at the end of each activity.

Student Council: Student Council gives students the opportunity to provide input and actively participate in creating an extraordinary learning environment. Students in Grades 5-8 are eligible to participate in Student Council. It is an effective means of developing leadership, a sense of responsibility, and good citizenship among pupils. Under the direction of the principal and a faculty moderator, the Student Council proposes, organizes, and directs activities to enhance the school community.

Choir: Students in grades 3-8 may participate in the Youth Choir. Under the direction of a staff moderator, the Choir leads the school and community in song during the liturgy, provides musical entertainment at school community functions, provides an enjoyable and educational musical experience for members, and instills a sense of structure and discipline through respect, accountability, and consistency in following guidelines.

Cheerleading: Students in grades 6-8 may participate in Cheerleading. Under the direction of a coach, students cultivate the discipline of group mechanics through concentration, rhythm, and squad cheers, strengthen self-confidence, and promote/build school spirit.

Sports: Students in grades 6-8 may participate in the Sports Program. Under the direction of a sports moderator and parent volunteers, students learn good sportsmanship and the skills required to be effective team members. Sports available include coed volleyball, girls and boys football, girls and boys basketball, coed softball, cross country, and coed soccer. Saint Mary School belongs to the Antelope Valley Christian Athletic League. The league includes Sacred Heart, AV Adventist, Grace Lutheran, and Bethel Christian.

Section 6.06 - Publication of the Image, Name, Voice, or Work of a Student or Minor*

Without the written permission of the parents/guardians of a student or minor, a location may not publish or use for noncommercial purposes the image, name, voice, or work of the student or minor. This policy includes but is not limited to publicity, exhibits, printed or electronic media, student publications, marketing, or research. The location must obtain the signature on the Parent/Guardian Release for Student or Minor (Noncommercial) before any such publication or use.

For additional information, please see the [Archdiocese of Los Angeles Privacy Policy](#) in [Electronic Communications, Copyright, and Acceptable Use Policies](#)

Forms: [parent_guardian_release_for_student_or_minor_noncommercial_es.pdf](#)

Chapter 7 - Tuition and Fees

Section 7.1- Tuition and General Fees

Families attending Saint Mary School agree to pay the contracted tuition rate and participate in the published annual fees, service hours, and fundraisers. Parents/guardians agree to pay an annual registration fee per child. The fee supplements the cost of educational supplies and operational costs. Fees are established annually based on enrollment and costs. Parents/guardians will be informed of registration fees in February. More information about tuition and fees can be found on the [school website](#) or by clicking this [link](#).

Section 7.2 - Tuition Collection

St. Mary School utilizes [Blackbaud Tuition Management](#) to collect tuition. Payments are automatically deducted from accounts on the agreed-upon date each month. The tuition collection agency has easy payment options of electronic debit or credit card payment. They provide a secure website and customer service staff, which are available to families who have questions regarding their account. Tuition can be paid in 10, 11, or 12 installments.

It is the responsibility of each family to notify Saint Mary School if they are experiencing financial hardship that may affect their ability to make tuition payments. Families who are two (2) months behind in tuition payments must contact the school to discuss their financial situation. Students may not return to school until all outstanding tuition payments have been made.

Section 7.3 - Tuition Assistance

The school's Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) is sponsored by the [Catholic Education Foundation](#) and the Shea Foundation. Saint Mary School also offers assistance through our Sponsor-An-Angel Program. The Tuition Awards Program (TAP) provides financial assistance for economically disadvantaged students so they can attend Catholic school. We are committed to helping families attend our school despite financial restrictions and encourage current and new families to speak with our principal to see what options are available.

Applications for the Catholic Education Foundation (CEF) tuition award are available in February in the school office. The Shea Foundation New Student Initiative tuition assistance application is available for new families year-round and can be found online in the documents section of the website/mobile app. The Sponsor-An-Angel tuition award is also available year-round, but the total amount of funds available depends on the donations raised by the school. Families who would like to apply for the Sponsor-An-Angel tuition award should make an appointment with the school principal, as these are awarded on a case-by-case basis. Tuition assistance is based on the following criteria:

- Income
- Number of children within the family

Completed applications must be returned to the Saint Mary School office by the established deadlines. After applications are submitted, parents/guardians must schedule an appointment to meet with a CEF or a school representative for a brief interview. Families will be notified via a letter, email, or phone call if they have received the tuition award.

Section 7.4 - Parent Service and Fundraising Requirements

Service Hours: Each Saint Mary School family is required to complete 40 hours of service. Five (5) of the 40 hours must be completed in the school cafeteria from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm (one-day commitment). Five (5) of the service hours must be completed during the annual major school fundraising event. Up to 20 hours may be completed in a parish ministry. Unserved hours will be billed at \$25.00 per hour.

If parents cannot or do not wish to complete the service hours, they may opt to pay a monetary fee of \$25.00 per hour of service (example: 40 hours x \$25 p/h = \$1,000).

All hours must be recorded and submitted to the school office via Gradelink. Additional service hour opportunities include:

- Coaching a sports team
- Moderating a club
- Serving on the PTO or as a room parent
- Volunteering in the classroom or during school events
- Volunteering during fundraisers organized by the PTO
- Chaperoning field trips
- Volunteering during beautification days at the school

The school will inform parents regularly of service hour opportunities. Parents may contact the school office or their child's teacher with questions regarding the completion of service hours. Volunteers must complete the following before being able to volunteer in classrooms, during school events, or on school field trips:

- 1) Completion of Virtus Training
- 2) Completion of Fingerprinting

All parents and family members are welcome and encouraged to volunteer their time on campus. Volunteers may assist in the cafeteria, classroom, office, or with the parish and receive service hour credit. Click on this [link to view the full volunteer policy](#).

Fundraisers: The tuition and fees charged do not cover the entire operating expenses of the school. In an effort to keep costs at a minimum and allow all Catholic children access to a Catholic education, fundraisers are necessary for the successful management of the school, and all parents/guardians are required to participate in the following fundraisers. Parents are required to make a \$50 donation, or its equivalent in donated items, for the annual major school fundraising event. This event may vary annually and will be announced each school year.

Throughout the school year, St. Mary's organizes various fundraisers and events that families may choose to attend or support through donations. Events such as Shakey's Night, Breakfast with Santa, the Father/Daughter Dance, the Scholastic Book Fair, Move Night, Food Drives, and Trunk or Treat are all optional. Funds collected go towards school improvements or to help community members in need.

7th Grade Fundraiser: \$140 (7th grade families are required to raise a total of \$140 for the 8th grade banquet).

SCRIP: Families are required to purchase enough SCRIP (gift cards) to raise \$150 in profit (rebates) by January and again by May for a total of \$300 due in 2 installments. Most families purchase SCRIP for their weekly shopping at grocery stores, gas stations, department stores, movie theaters, restaurants, and online shopping.

Families may opt out of the SCRIP program by paying \$500 or 2 installments of \$250. Please visit the [SCRIP page on the school website](#) for more information.

Section 7.5 - Costs/Fees

Fees/expenses may change on an annual basis. Please [click the link to see a complete list of fees for the 2026-2027](#) school year. General financial commitments can also be found in the [What to Expect as a Parent](#) page on the school's website. Below are some general fees charged annually.

- Registration Fee: \$500 per child annually
- Family Fee: \$80 per family annually (includes PTO membership & Blackbaud online tuition management fee)
- Application Fee (new families): \$25 per child
- TK - 3rd Grades Supply Fee: \$120 per student annually
- Graduation Fee: \$175 per student (8th graders only)
- Sacraments of First Reconciliation & First Holy Communion Fee: \$100 per student (first communicants only)
- Uniforms: Approximately \$150 per child annually (as needed from year to year)
- School Supplies: Approximately \$100 per child annually (4th-8th grades)
- Field Trip Fee: Will vary depending on the field trip (\$5-\$20 per child)

- Sports/Clubs Fee: Will vary depending on the extra-curricular activity the student wishes to participate in (\$50)

Chapter 8 - Discipline*

Discipline in the Catholic school is considered an aspect of moral guidance and not a form of punishment. The purpose of discipline is to provide a school climate that is conducive to learning and promotes character development and the common good. Each school must publish its discipline policy in its parent/student handbook.

Discipline is maintained in a classroom or school when students work cooperatively with the principal, the teachers, and their classmates towards class and school objectives. However, the legitimate interest of the school extends beyond the school day and school hours.

Updated: 7-16-2021, 9-12-2024

Section 8.1 - Discipline and Procedures*

Learning Environment: In order to maintain a focused, orderly, and safe environment in the classroom, students are:

- To keep the contents of the student desk neat, clean and orderly.
- To pick up papers which have fallen to the floor.
- To keep book shelves in order.
- To put away books and supplies and clean the surface of the desk before leaving the room (with the exception of a Fire Drill).
- To push chairs under the desk before leaving the room.
- To hang clothes in the proper area.
- To keep aisles clear.
- To put backpacks in the area designated by the teacher.
- To keep textbooks neatly covered at all times.
- Not to eat or have food in the classroom during class time including candy and snacks.
- Not to drink or have juice or soda during class time.
- Not to chew gum.
- In hot weather, students may keep a water bottle with water in a place designated by the teacher.

Students will be required to replace textbooks and/or iPads and iPad covers that are lost or damaged.

In order to maintain an orderly, clean, and sanitary environment outside of the classroom students are:

- To put clothing neatly on the benches in front of the classroom after lunch.
- To put lunch containers neatly on the benches in front of the classroom after lunch.
- To throw garbage in trash cans only.
- To put aluminum cans and recyclable plastic bottles in recycle bins.
- Not to chew gum.

Incentives: Saint Mary School promotes the importance of citizenship, trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness and compassion through the Character Counts program. Students earn Character Counts Coupons for positive actions that demonstrate the behavioral expectations of Saint Mary School. Students have the following options for redeeming coupons:

- Save 15 coupons for Free Dress
- Save 20 coupons for Sub Way lunch with a friend

Students can also earn behavior awards, earn the privilege of field trips, and participate in extracurricular activities as a result of embodying the Character Counts program traits through words and actions.

Maintenance of Effective Discipline*: Teachers and school staff are required to hold students to strict account for their conduct in the classroom, in school buildings, on school and church grounds, during recess, or at any school event regardless of location. Teachers and staff may exercise the same degree of physical control over a student that a parent would be legally privileged to exercise, provided that it does not exceed the amount of physical control reasonably necessary to:

- protect the health and safety of pupils and other persons
- maintain order
- protect property, or
- maintain proper and appropriate conditions conducive to learning

No teacher or staff member may inflict corporal punishment on a student. However, corporal punishment does not include an amount of physical control or use of force that is reasonable and necessary to:

- quell a disturbance that threatens physical injury to persons or damage to property
- engage in self-defense, or
- obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects within the control of the student.
- All incidents of the use of physical control or use of force on a student must be documented promptly and provided to the person in charge.

Section 8.2 - Disapproved Disciplinary Measures*

The following disciplinary measures are disapproved:

- All corporal punishment, including shaking and slapping
- Language that belittles or ridicules a student, his or her parents/guardians, or his or her family background
- Using religious exercises as punitive measures. Encouraging contemplation or similar spiritual practices as a means of reflection is acceptable.
- Bizarre and unusual punishments
- Withholding or altering rightfully earned academic grades
- Any disciplinary action that isolates a student without proper supervision

Updated: 7-16-2021, 11-17-2024

Section 8.3 - Detention*

1. No student shall be required to remain in the classroom during the lunch break, or during any recess. All students are required to leave the school rooms at recess and lunchtime, unless it would occasion a danger to health.*
2. Detention before or after school hours is considered an appropriate means of discipline.*
3. A student shall not be detained in school for disciplinary or other reasons for more than one hour after the close of the school day.*
4. The school must give notice of the detention to the parents/guardians verbally by phone, in writing (hard copy or electronic), or in person during a conference. Under no circumstances shall a student be detained at school without the knowledge and consent of the parents/guardians, who should also be informed of the reason for the detention and the exact time the period of detention will begin and end.*
5. Students may be required to attend before or after school detention or come to school on Saturday, for failure to observe school rules, disobedience, inappropriate behavior, disruptive behavior, failure to complete assignments, and any other causes determined by the teacher in consultation with the Principal and Dean of Discipline. Before school detention will last sixty minutes. Saturday school will be from **8:00AM to 12:00PM**. Saturday detention will be for a period of two to four hours depending on the infraction. Parents/guardians will be given at least 24-hour notification of an assigned before or after school detention or Saturday school detention. The notice must be signed and returned to the school no later than the day following the incident or parents/guardians will be called at work/home. During detention, the student will complete a reflection form and do assigned work.*
6. If the parents/guardians wish to discuss an assigned detention, please call the School Office and leave a message asking the teacher to contact you. It is inappropriate to interrupt detention sessions to discuss the infraction.*
7. Students may not postpone a detention without written communication from a parent to the principal and must obtain approval from the principal in order to reschedule. Detention takes precedence over extra-curricular activities, appointments, meetings, games, lessons, etc. In case of illness or unforeseen emergencies, parents/guardians must contact the school if the student will miss detention and provide a written note the following day. Students must make up the detention the following week. ***Please see the consequences for multiple detentions found below.***

Updated: 7-16-2021, 9-12-2024

Conduct Demerit Slip: Students are given the typical reminders and behavioral warnings deemed appropriate for their age level. However, some offenses and repeated offenses require the issuance of a demerit(s). Demerit slips inform parents/guardians of the following infractions of a school rule or any repeated unacceptable behavior:

- Rough Behavior on Playground (2 demerits)
- Defiance of School Authority (5 demerits)
- Disruptive Class Behavior (2 demerits)
- Inappropriate Language (2 demerits)
- Chewing Gum (3 demerits + \$10 cleaning fine if gum is found on furniture, etc.)
- Bathroom misuse^ (5 demerits)
- Eating Food in Class (3 demerits)
- Damage to School Property (5 demerits)
- Throwing Food/Objects (3 demerits)
- Play Fighting (2 demerits)
- Misuse of Cell Phones/Smartwatches/Electronic Devices in School (automatic detention + \$75 fee)
- Not following the uniform and/or hygiene/grooming policy (1 demerit)
- Bullying/Threatening (5 demerits + detention)
- Plagiarism/cheating (5 demerits + automatic suspension + zero credit for the assignment). In the case of cheating, both parties will be held accountable to the same degree.
- Fighting (automatic suspension or expulsion)

^Bathroom misuse includes but is not limited to misuse of bathroom supplies, littering in bathrooms, etc.

Three or more missing assignments may result in demerits or detentions. Depending on the grade level, students will receive a zero "0" or reduced grade for late or missing assignments per the teacher's discretion.

Consequences for multiple demerit slips and detentions:

- Students earning a total of five (5) demerits in one trimester will receive detention.
- Students earning a total of three (3) detentions in one trimester will receive a suspension.
- Demerits and detentions will be counted cumulatively.

Procedures when demerits and detentions are issued:

- The teacher or principal will discuss the situation with the student.
- The demerit slip or detention form will be sent home with the student.
 - It must be signed by the parent(s) or guardian(s) and returned on the next school day to the person who issued it.
 - Parents/guardians will be notified if the slip/form was not received the following day.
 - Parents/guardians will be informed of the infraction, and are required to comply with any procedures suggested by the teacher/principal, sign the slip/form, and return to the school.
 - The parent signature does not indicate an admission of guilt but rather verification that the parents/guardians are aware of the demerit or detention.
 - Demerits are accumulated and detentions are given once students have a certain number of demerits. In some instances, detentions are given automatically.
 - Students must attend the detention on the assigned date.

Section 8.4 - Probation*

A school may decide to place an enrolled student on probation as a disciplinary matter. Disciplinary probation occurs when the student's behavior has reached a point where a more serious response from the school is required. If the student's behavior does not improve while on probation, the disciplinary process may lead to [suspension](#) and/or [expulsion](#) or [withdrawal](#).

The probationary status of the student and the terms of the probation must be clearly documented in writing and signed by the parents/guardians.

If a school decides to place a student on disciplinary probation, it must insure that the seriousness of this status is communicated to the student's parents/guardians. Due to the great variety of student offenses that can result in disciplinary probation, a school has many options in determining the extent of a student's probation (limiting

activities, no athletics, community service, etc.). At the high school level, a High School Disciplinary Probation Agreement (sample) must be completed and signed by parents/guardians.

Updated: 7-16-21

Section 8.5 - Suspension*

Any of the listed reasons for expulsion with mitigating circumstances are adequate cause for suspending a student. The suspended student shall be responsible for all academic assignments while on suspension.

No student shall be suspended from school for more than two consecutive weeks, unless there is an ongoing archdiocesan investigation or a police investigation of a possible crime, in which case the student may be suspended during the entire investigation.

The school must give notice of the suspension to the parents/guardians verbally by phone, in writing (hard copy or electronic), or in person during a conference. A telephone or in-person notice of suspension should be confirmed in writing to the parents/guardians.

The principal shall schedule a conference with the suspended student's parents/guardians to discuss matters pertinent to the suspension, especially the means by which the parents/guardians and school can cooperatively encourage the student to improve his or her behavior. The suspended student may be present at the conference.

In no case will a teacher on his or her own authority suspend a student.

Updated: 7-16-2021, 9-12-2024

All suspensions make the student ineligible for honor roll per trimester. In certain cases, the gravity of the situation may warrant an automatic detention, suspension or expulsion as in the case of bullying or threatening. All incidents are evaluated accordingly. In such cases, the procedures indicated below will be followed.

In-School Suspension: Students will be given an in-school suspension for behavior that seriously violates school policies but does not warrant a suspension from school or expulsion. The following procedure is followed:

- Student is referred to the principal for a conference
- Parents/guardians are notified by telephone and/or written notice of the in-school suspension
- Student completes a reflection form
- A written notice goes home with the student, is signed by the parents/guardians, and is returned the following day.

Section 8.6 - Expulsion*

Reasons for expulsion include but are not limited to the following offenses:

- Actions that are gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students
- Habitual profanity or vulgarity
- Assault, battery, or any [threat of force or violence](#) directed toward any student or school personnel
- [Harassing, bullying, or hazing](#) other students or school personnel
- Open, persistent defiance of the teacher's authority
- Continued willful disobedience
- Use, sale, distribution, or possession of [narcotics, drugs, or any other controlled substance](#)
- Use, sale, distribution, or possession of any [alcoholic beverages](#) on or near school premises
- [Smoking, possession of tobacco](#), vaping or possession of vaping devices
- Theft
- Forgery of signatures
- Cheating or plagiarism
- Willful defacement or damage of school property, real or personal
- [Habitual truancy](#)
- Possession of weapons (e.g., knives or guns)

- Membership in, active involvement in, or affiliation with a gang or group responsible for coercive or violent activity
- Actions in or out of school that are detrimental to the school's reputation
- Violations of the [electronic acceptable use policies and guidelines](#)
- Inappropriate conduct or behavior unbecoming a student in a Catholic school
- Violations of the [Code of Christian Conduct](#) by parents or students

Procedure for Expulsion*: A grave offense may include a violation of law or actions so outrageous as to shock the conscience of the community and the continued presence of the student at school (even for a short period of time) will pose, in the reasonable judgment of the principal, a serious threat to the health and welfare of students, faculty, or staff. If a student has committed a grave offense, the student is immediately removed from the school premises; if the student is not on campus, the student and parents/guardians are informed that the student may not return to campus. When expulsion is probable, the school should describe the grave offense to the student and his or her parents/guardians and its potential consequences while the matter is being investigated.

Except in cases involving grave offenses, the school must take the following steps prior to expelling a student:

- The principal, teacher, parents/guardians, and student must attend a conference. The principal will advise the family that the student could be expelled unless the student's behavior improves immediately. In parish schools, the pastor should be notified of the conference, given an opportunity to attend, and provided a report of the discussion.
- If the student's behavior does not improve, the school may decide to expel the student. A decision to expel will be communicated at a second conference attended by the principal, teacher, parents/guardians, and pastor (if applicable). If the parents/guardians fail, without cause, to attend the conference, the decision will stand and the parents/guardians will be notified. In a parish school, the decision to expel rests with the pastor in consultation with the principal.
- Teachers are prohibited from expelling a student on their own authority.
- The school should give full credit for all work the student completed before being expelled.
- Parents/guardians of high school students who disagree with the decision to have their student withdraw or be expelled may request or be referred to a disciplinary review board which listens to the facts of the case, discusses the matter, and makes a recommendation to the principal.
- If parents/guardians believe that the school has abused its discretion or violated its policies and procedures in expelling their child, they should follow the procedure set out in the [Complaint Review Process for Parents/Guardians and Students](#).

Written Records*: The school must keep on file a written record of the steps leading to an expulsion, with copies of all pertinent communications and reports. This record should be maintained for one year following the expulsion.

Time of Expulsion*: A school may immediately expel a student if the reasons are urgent. Only in exceptional cases shall a school be allowed to expel a graduating student who has been in the school one or more years.

For elementary schools, if an expulsion happens during the last quarter of the school year or during the last semester in the case of a graduating student, the school needs prior approval of the Department of Catholic Schools before the expulsion can take effect. It is recommended that high schools consult with the [Department of Catholic Schools](#) before expelling a graduating student.

Reporting of Expulsions*: Even if they occur at the end of the school year, all expulsions are to be reported by phone to the assistant superintendent at the Department of Catholic Schools within 24 hours and subsequently submitted in writing.

The school shall immediately notify the county office of education when a student who is an individual with exceptional needs or who is a qualified handicapped person is expelled. In this circumstance, a copy of the [Cumulative Pupil Record](#) should be held until requested.

Right to Make Exceptions*: The principal, in consultation with the pastor (for a parish school), retains the right to make exceptions in cases where mitigating circumstances call for a different response than policy suggests.

Home Study*: Certain circumstances may dictate that a student, at the discretion of the principal, be excluded from school attendance for a period of time. This is a remedy for unusual situations and is not considered a suspension. The school may give students tests, etc., outside school hours so that grades can be reported. A student placed on home study is expected to pay full tuition. Parents/guardians are responsible for supervising a student on home study.

At the discretion of the principal, any student may be placed on home study until the concern is resolved.

Updated: 7-16-2021, 9-16-2024

Section 8.7 - Academic Dishonesty Policy

Please see sections on Detention, Suspension, and Expulsion

Section 8.8 - Harassment, Bullying, and Hazing Policy*

This policy, which is intended to protect students, encompasses all inappropriate behavior, including harassment, bullying, and hazing. This policy shall be communicated clearly to faculty, staff, volunteers, parents/guardians, and students.

The school is committed to providing a safe and comfortable learning environment that respects Christian values and is free from harassment, bullying, or hazing in any form. Harassment, bullying, or hazing of any student by any other student, lay employee, religious, clergy, school volunteer, or parent/guardian is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of any such conduct seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential manner that is appropriate to the claim.

Complaints about alleged bullying, harassment or hazing made by students and/or parents/guardians should be documented by the individual conducting the investigation into the complaint; the documentation should be maintained for future reference.

Credible acts of harassment, bullying, or hazing by a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion of the student. Students who make false or frivolous complaints will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Harassment and Bullying*: Harassment or bullying occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment that is hostile, demeaning, intimidating, or threatening, and communicated in person, in hard copy, or electronically, including on social media. A determination that a student has engaged in harassment or bullying does not require that the conduct meets applicable legal standards. Examples of harassing or bullying conduct, which can occur once or habitually, include:

- Derogatory, demeaning, humiliating, inflammatory, intimidating, or threatening words spoken to, written to, or written about another person
- Unwanted physical touching, contact, or assault
- Deliberate impeding or blocking of another's movement
- Intimidating interference with normal work or movement
- Derogatory, humiliating, demeaning, inflammatory, intimidating, or threatening gestures, posters, cartoons, drawings, images, photos and videos
- Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexual content on social media, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature

Bullying typically consists of direct behaviors, such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, shoving, and stealing that are initiated by one or more students against another person. In addition to direct attacks, bullying may also be indirect, such as spreading rumors that cause another person to be socially isolated through intentional exclusion.

Cyberbullying or cyber harassment occurs when students bully or harass another person using electronic devices. This can include but is not limited to:

- Sending inappropriate or falsified posts, texts, emails, instant messages or any other communication
- Posting or sharing inappropriate or falsified pictures, videos, or messages about others on blogs, social media, or websites

- Using someone else's username to spread rumors or lies about another person

Read about cyberbullying on [StopBullying.gov](https://stopbullying.gov).

Hazing*: Hazing is any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to any student or other person. All hazing is prohibited.

Note*: Harassment of [employees](#), by [parents/guardians](#), and [other adults](#) in the school community is addressed elsewhere in separate policies.

Updated: 7-16-2021, 9-30-2024

Section 8.9 - Student Threats*

The school will take all threats made by students seriously. These include threats to inflict serious harm to themselves or others; to destroy valuable property; making offhand comments or practical jokes. Whoever hears or becomes aware of such threats made by a student should immediately report it to the pastor, the principal, or a teacher.

If the student making the threat is present at school or at a school-sponsored event, the person in charge should question the students involved to determine whether the threat is imminent. Depending on the gravity of the threat, the person in charge should contact law enforcement and the [Department of Catholic Schools](#) immediately. [See 13.7.1 - Student Interviews by Law Enforcement \(la-archdiocese.org\)](#) for the policy when law enforcement interviews a student.

The parents/guardians of the student who has made the threat will be notified by the school. Any student or adult who has been identified as a potential victim, or mentioned in writing as a potential victim, should also be notified promptly.

The student who has made the threat shall be [suspended](#) until law enforcement and/or school investigation is completed or the investigators determine that the suspension may safely be ended. In addition to suspension, the student may face other disciplinary sanctions, up to and including [expulsion](#).

On a case-by-case basis, the pastor and principal will make any decision to re-admit a student who has been withdrawn or expelled because of threatening conduct.

This student threat policy shall be communicated clearly to students, parents/guardians, faculty, staff, and volunteers.

Updated: 7-16-2021, 10-21-2024

Section 8.10 Substance Abuse and Possession of Alcohol or Controlled Substances*

Alcohol, Tobacco, Narcotics, or Other Controlled Substances*

Guidelines Related to Possession and Use*: All school policies must comply with state and federal laws that prohibit the use, consumption, sale, or delivery of alcohol, tobacco or controlled substances without a prescription (including cannabis and cannabis-containing products that could be physically or mentally impairing) to persons under the age of 21. The policy should be clearly articulated in the parent/student handbook. The school should notify the Department of Catholic Schools and consult law enforcement agencies when an alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, cannabis-containing product that could be physically or mentally impairing, or other controlled substance violation occurs or the school learns of a violation, with each case judged individually.

The archdiocesan "[No Smoking](#)" policy also applies to vaping and the use of e-cigarettes, which may not be sold or used by persons under age 21, except for active duty military personnel over age 18.

If students or their friends experience problems related to the use of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, cannabis-containing products that could be physically or mentally impairing, or other controlled substances, the students should be encouraged to seek help from a school counselor for themselves or their friends. School personnel should have access to public or private resource agencies for substance abuse rehabilitation so that they can offer help to students and parents/guardians.

If a student is known to be dealing in controlled substances or providing alcohol, tobacco, cannabis or cannabis-containing products that could be physically or mentally impairing, on or off campus, or if a student is convicted in court for sale, possession, or use of controlled substances, the student may be [asked to withdraw](#) from the school or [may](#) [be](#) [expelled](#).

Procedures in the Case of Suspected Possession or Use*: In cases where school administrators suspect a student's possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, cannabis-containing products that could be physically or mentally impairing, vaping devices or other controlled substances on campus, school administrators should follow these procedures:

- Evaluate observable symptoms.
- Attempt to determine if the student is in possession of alcohol, tobacco, vaping devices, cannabis, cannabis-containing products that could be physically or mentally impairing, controlled substances, or other harmful substances.
- Interview the student in the presence of an adult witness.
- Request the student's cooperation in [conducting a search](#) of his or her person and possessions (the search may include the locker, other locations on the school grounds, or the student's car, backpack, or purse if administrators suspect that controlled or other harmful substances may be hidden).
- Determine if the student needs medical attention; if the student requires emergency medical treatment, contact the parents/guardians and follow the instructions on the [student's Emergency Card](#).
- Recommend that a physician examine the student.
- Provide information to parents/guardians regarding the availability of public or private resource agencies for rehabilitation.

In cases where school administrators verify a student's sale or possession of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, cannabis-containing products that could be physically or mentally impairing, vaping devices or other controlled substances, school administrators should follow these procedures:

- The administrator should confiscate all physical evidence obtained as a result of the investigation: seal the evidence in a container bearing the date and time of confiscation, the name of the student from whom it was confiscated, and the signature of the person who confiscated it.
- The administrator should consult police. The degree of police involvement will be determined in each case.
- If the [student is arrested and removed](#) from school, the law enforcement agency notifies the parents/guardians prior to the time that the student would normally return home from school. However, the school principal shall take immediate steps to notify the parents/guardians about the release of the student to the officer and where the student is reportedly being taken. See [Removal of a Student from School during School Hours](#). Even if an arrest does not occur, the student may be [suspended from school](#). The school should promptly arrange a conference with the parents/guardians and student.

Updated: 7-16-2021, 9-4-2024

Section 8.11 - School Searches*

School Searches*: Students' legitimate expectation of privacy in their person and in the personal effects they bring to school must be balanced against the school's obligation to maintain discipline and provide a safe environment for the school community. School officials may conduct a search of a student's person and personal effects only upon a reasonable suspicion that the search will disclose evidence that the student is violating or has violated the law or a school rule.

If school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating the law or a school rule, school officials do not need a warrant or permission from parents/guardians to conduct the search.

A "reasonable suspicion" may be established in many ways, including but not limited to personal observations, information provided by third parties or other students, or tips provided by law enforcement. An alert from a trained

and certified detection dog is sufficient to establish a reasonable suspicion and serve as the basis for a warrantless search of the student's person, locker, car, or personal property and effects.

Whenever a school official conducts a search of a student's person or personal effects, an adult witness should be present. The school should notify the student's parents/guardians after any search of a student's person or personal effects.

Expectations of Privacy*: A student does not own a locker or other school property. The school makes lockers available to the student. The student does have some expectation of privacy in his or her locker from other students. However, a student does not have a high expectation of privacy in his or her locker from the school and may not prevent school officials from searching the locker if the school official has a reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating a law or school rule.

A student has a greater expectation of privacy regarding his or her person and personal effects. A school official who conducts a search of a student's backpack, purse, clothing, cell phone, or other personal effects must have a reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating a law or school rule. Searches which expose underwear (except socks) are considered strip searches that may not be conducted by a school official.

Every student is subject to the [Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy for Electronic Communications \("Archdiocesan AUP"\)](#) and [Archdiocese of Los Angeles Privacy Policy](#) of the archdiocese and school; these types of policies concern cell phones and other electronic devices, whether the devices belong to the student or the school.

Student Cooperation: If a student refuses to cooperate in a reasonable search of school or student property (including electronic devices), the school may call the student's parents/guardians and/or the police for assistance or referral.

Confiscating a Student's Personal Property: If any of the student's items are confiscated, the person in charge should document the confiscation and when possible, take a photograph of the place where the confiscated object was found and of the object itself. It is also recommended that the school obtain a signature from the student acknowledging that the item was in his or her possession at the time it was found.

Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-26-2024

Chapter 9 - Law Enforcement*

Section 9.1 - Interview and Removal from School of Students by Police Officers*

When investigating matters involving child abuse or neglect, law enforcement and child protective agencies are entitled under law to interview students and other minors at school or during parish activities. The person in charge must confirm that the person seeking the interview is properly authorized and presents appropriate identification and must also confirm that the interview is being conducted as part of his or her professional duties. The person in charge should document the identity of the interviewer, the student interviewed and, if disclosed, the purpose of the interview. If the purpose is an interrogation of a potential suspect of a crime, the student has the right to a lawyer before being questioned; therefore advise the student not to talk to the law enforcement officer until the student has spoken to a lawyer. Further guidance is in [13.7.1 - Student Interviews by Law Enforcement](#) (la-archdiocese.org).

In the archdiocese it is the policy to inform parents/guardians that such an interview will take place except when law enforcement or the agency has a specific reason to not inform the parents/guardians. In all events it is the policy of the archdiocese that an adult, either a parent/guardian or school or parish staff member, will be present for any interview unless the minor being interviewed elects otherwise.

Updated: 8-25-2021, 9-4-2024

Section 9.2 - Interview of a Student during School Hours by a Police Officer*

Student Interviews by Law Enforcement*: In performing their official duties and upon presenting proper identification to the principal or his or her designee, duly authorized representatives of law enforcement agencies

and [Child Protective Services](#) shall be allowed to interview students in those cases where an interview outside of school hours is impossible or impractical or would duly interfere with the enforcement of law.

Law enforcement officers have the right during the school day to interview students who are potential suspects, victims, or witnesses. Child Protective Services representatives may conduct interviews to investigate reported child abuse or neglect.

If the interview is a custodial interrogation -- i.e., the student believes that leaving or not cooperating in the interview is not an option -- the student must be read "Miranda rights" before being questioned. [California Welfare & Institutions Code § 625.6](#) does not permit a minor under age 17 or a parent to waive the minor's Miranda right not to speak to law enforcement without legal consultation. This means students or their parents cannot tell the police officers they can go ahead with the interview without first talking to an attorney.

If a student is 17 or older and in custodial interrogation, the student may legally waive Miranda rights. Therefore, the person in charge should advise the student not to respond to questioning until the student has consulted with parents/guardians or an attorney.

Before releasing a student for an interview, the person in charge must confirm that the person seeking the interview is properly authorized and presents appropriate identification as well as confirm that the interview is being conducted as part of the interviewer's professional duties. The person in charge should document the identity of the interviewer, the student interviewed and, if disclosed, the purpose of the interview.

In the archdiocese it is the policy that the person in charge should inform the parents/guardians that such an interview will take place, except when law enforcement or the agency has a specific reason to not inform the parents/guardians. In all events, it is the policy of the archdiocese that an adult, either a parent/guardian or a school staff member, will be present for any interview unless the student being interviewed elects otherwise.

See [Interview of Students by Child Protective Agencies](#)

Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-26-2024

Section 9.3 - Informing the Parent or Guardian When a Student Has Been Removed from School by a Police Officer*

Informing Parents/Guardians about Removal*: While it is primarily the role of the law enforcement officer to notify the parents/guardians that a student has been taken into custody, the person in charge shall also take immediate steps to notify the parents/guardians about the release of the student to the officer and where the student has reportedly been taken. See [Removal of a Student from School during School Hours](#).

When a student has been removed from school as a victim of suspected child abuse the officer will determine whether to notify the parents/guardians that the student has been removed from school. See [Removal of a Student from School during School Hours](#). The person in charge shall ask law enforcement if the parents may be informed. The person in charge shall provide the officer with the address and phone number of the student's parents/guardians.

The person in charge at the location should always obtain the following information:

- The name of the law enforcement officer or Child Protective Services representative
- The officer's badge or ID number
- The phone number of the police station
- Instructions from the officer regarding parent/guardian inquiries concerning the whereabouts of the student

For a case involving child abuse, see [Interview of Students by Law Enforcement or Child Protective Agencies](#).

Updated: 7-14-2021, 8-26-2024

Chapter 10 - Electronic Usage Policies*

Section 10.1 - Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy for Electronic Communications (Archdiocesan AUP)

The complete Archdiocesan AUP text is comprised of this section page and all topic pages under this section.

Definitions and Coverage: The Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy for Electronic Communications ("Archdiocesan AUP") applies to all archdiocesan users of technology, whether adults, children, or youth, and whether they are students, parents, paid staff or volunteers, clergy, or members of religious orders in the archdiocese or at any Location. All users are expected to adhere to the morals and values of the Catholic Church, to respect others, to consider the potential audience and their expectations, and to follow the Archdiocesan AUP and the other policies, standards, and procedures of the archdiocese. Electronic information and communications require particular safeguards and impose unique responsibilities on all users.

The Archdiocesan AUP covers:

- Using devices appropriately from a social and moral perspective
- Maintaining data confidentiality
- Protecting proprietary, confidential, and privileged data, and personally identifiable information
- Maintaining the integrity of security controls and passwords
- Immediately reporting any suspicious conduct or actual violations
- Other activities implicated in the use of electronic devices
- The archdiocese prohibits the improper use or alteration of data and/or information technology. Systems of information security are required to protect proprietary data. All users must adhere to the Archdiocesan AUP.
- All materials and information created and used, in any medium, in the course of activities for or on behalf of the archdiocese or Location are assets of the archdiocese and/or the Location, as appropriate. This policy also applies to the seminary.

Definitions:

Electronic communication **systems** include but are not limited to email, telecommunications systems (including telephone, voicemail, video conferencing, virtual messaging and meetings, social media and video), stand-alone or networked computers, intranets, the Internet, and any other communication or data storage or transmission systems (including "the cloud" or cloud-based services) that may be created in the future.

Electronic communication **devices** include but are not limited to wired and wireless telephones, smartphones or smartwatches, computers, laptops, tablets, photographic, audio and video equipment, hard drives, flash drives, memory sticks, media players, facsimile machines, scanners, copiers, printers, two-way radios, and other communications equipment that may be created in the future.

Electronic communication **materials** include but are not limited to emails, text messages, instant messages, postings on social media, audio and visual recordings, photographs, films, microfiche, audio and visual broadcasts, computer operating systems, software programs, electronically stored data and text files, computer and web applications, and all other electronic content that is created, downloaded, uploaded, retrieved, opened, shared, saved, forwarded, printed, or otherwise accessed or stored.

Person in charge refers to the department head, manager or supervisor of an archdiocesan department, entity or corporation; the pastor, administrator, parish life director, pastoral associate, deacon or other person designated as in charge of a parish; parish director of religious education, as designated by the pastor or administrator; the superintendents of elementary schools or high schools, or a principal, president, or head of school, as applicable.

Personally identifying information includes but is not limited to names or screen names; photographs; telephone numbers; work, home, or school addresses; email addresses; or web addresses/URLs of social networking sites or blogs.

Location refers to any parish, school (whether parish or archdiocesan), the Archdiocesan Catholic Center, any Catholic cemetery and mortuary, and any other operating unit in the archdiocese.

Electronic Communication Systems, Devices, and Materials and the Users Covered

Electronic communication systems, devices, and materials and the users covered include:

- All electronic communication systems, devices, and materials used at any Location
- All electronic communication devices and materials taken from a Location for use away from the Location
- All electronic communication devices and materials provided to users by Locations, including devices issued in the IGNITE, Clergy Connect, Sisters Connect, PCL Connect, and similar programs
- All personal devices and materials brought from home and used at a Location
- All personal devices and materials, regardless of where they are situated, that are used in such a manner that the archdiocese and/or a Location may be implicated in their use
- All users of electronic communication systems, devices, and materials, including but not limited to volunteers, clergy and religious, students, parents, employees, staff, or contractors, when those contractors are associated with any activity of the archdiocese and/or the Location

Ownership and Control: All electronic communication systems, devices, and materials, provided to users by the archdiocese or the Location, are to be used primarily to conduct official Location and/or archdiocese business, not personal business, whether during or outside regular business hours.

With permission from the person in charge of the Location, individuals may use archdiocesan systems, devices, and materials to access and use the Internet for personal business and web exploration outside regular business hours or during breaks. The Archdiocesan AUP applies to all uses.

The archdiocese and Locations, as applicable, reserve the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read, edit, redact, remove, and/or disclose all content created, sent, received, or stored on archdiocese and/or Location systems, devices, and materials (including connections made and sites visited). The archdiocese also cooperates with law enforcement officials or others, without prior notice. **Users can have no reasonable expectation of privacy in use of archdiocesan systems, devices, or materials.** The archdiocese reserves these rights with respect to systems, devices, and materials not owned by the archdiocese when they are used under circumstances that implicate the archdiocese.

Updated: 4-6-21

Section 10.2 - Internet Safety Policy (Compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act)*

The [Children's Internet Protection Act](#) applies to the use of any device accessed or used by minors at a school or library that receives E-rate funding. The archdiocesan AUP requires all schools and libraries, even those without E-rate funding, to use functioning and properly configured content filters to preclude access to prohibited content, including obscene, sexually explicit materials; adult or child pornography; and materials including applications that are otherwise harmful to minors or in violation of this [Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy for Electronic Communications \(Archdiocesan AUP\)](#).

Content filters for minors may NOT be disabled or turned off without obtaining prior permission from the person in charge at the school or library.

No unauthorized personal identifying information regarding minors may be disclosed, used, or disseminated without proper authorization by the person in charge at the school or library.

Minors' use of email, chat rooms, social networks, applications, and other forms of direct electronic communication on electronic devices at the school or library must be monitored.

No person may engage in unlawful activities online, including hacking any system while using archdiocese or Location devices or while at any school or library.

Updated: 4-8-21

Section 10.3 - Prohibited Practices*

Users of all electronic communication systems, devices, or materials covered by the [Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy for Electronic Communications \(Archdiocesan AUP\)](#) shall NOT:

1. Access or manipulate devices, services, or networks without permission or express authority
2. Create any internet presence (e.g., website or social media account such as for TikTok, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube or GoFundMe) that uses the name of the Location or the archdiocese unless the presence is owned or controlled by the Location or the archdiocese
3. Use the name, logo, identifying photograph, mission statement, or other singularly identifying information of the archdiocese or a Location on a website or other social media in such a manner that readers/viewers are lead to believe that the website or social media are official sites or media controlled by the Location itself
4. Post or cause public distribution of any personally identifying information without authority, permission of, or review by a responsible adult person (in the case of [information about a minor](#)), or without permission or review of a person in charge. Personally identifying information includes but is not limited to names or screen names; telephone numbers; work, home, or school addresses; email addresses; or web addresses/URLs of social networking sites or blogs
5. Post or distribute any communications, videos, music, or pictures that a reasonable person, according to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, would consider to be defamatory, offensive, harassing, disruptive, derogatory, or bullying
6. Post, distribute or knowingly view or access pornographic, indecent, or brutally violent materials
7. Post or distribute sexual comments or images, racial or ethnic slurs, or other comments or images that would offend a reasonable person on the basis of race, creed, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, age, political beliefs, mental or physical disability, or veteran status
8. Engage in [improper fraternizing or socializing between adults and minors](#)
9. Engage in [cyberbullying](#), sexting, shaming, or other abusive online behavior
10. Post or send chain letters or engage in spamming (sending annoying, unnecessary, or unsolicited commercial messages)
11. Record any telephone, video, online meeting, remote learning session, or other conversation or communication without the express permission (e.g., by prior announcement of recording) of the other participants in the conversation or communication, except where allowed by law
12. Engage in "pirating" or unauthorized use, copying, acquisition, or distribution of [copyrighted materials, music, videos, film, or software](#) (regarding copyrighted materials, certain exceptions are given for educational and liturgical purposes; see the [Archdiocese of Los Angeles Copyright and Video Screening Policy](#))
13. Upload, download, view, or otherwise receive or transmit trademarked, patented, trade secrets, or other confidential, private, or proprietary information or other materials to which the user does not have access rights
14. Transmit confidential, proprietary, or sensitive information unless the transmission falls within the scope of the user's job duties or the assignment as given by a responsible adult
15. Damage, alter, disrupt, or gain unauthorized access to devices or systems (e.g., use another person's passwords; trespass on another person's folders, work, or files; or alter or forward email messages in a manner that misrepresents the original message or message chain)
16. Give unauthorized persons access to archdiocese or Location systems, provide access to confidential information, or otherwise jeopardize the security of the electronic communication systems (e.g., by unauthorized use or disclosure of passwords)
17. When conducting business or ministry for a Location or the archdiocese, use any email service, file storage/file-sharing services, or other communications and collaboration service that has not been explicitly approved by or is not, either by written agreement or other documented means, under the control of the archdiocese or Location (i.e., do not use personal Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail or social media accounts for official Location or archdiocesan business or ministry)
18. Introduce or install any unauthorized software, virus, malware, tracking devices, or recording devices onto any device or system
19. Bypass (via proxy servers or other means), defeat, or otherwise render inoperative any device or network security systems, firewalls, or content filters
20. Allow any minor to access the Internet on archdiocese or Location communication devices that do not have active, monitored filtering of prohibited materials (see [Internet Safety Policy](#))
21. Allow any minor to use email, chat rooms, social networking sites, applications, or other forms of direct communications at the Location without monitoring (see [Internet Safety Policy](#))

22. Use electronic communication devices or systems to transmit any radio frequency signal that is not permitted and/or licensed by the [Federal Communications Commission](#) (FCC) or that would violate FCC rules or policies
23. Violate any other applicable federal, state, or local laws or regulations

Updated: 4-8-21

Section 10.4 - Consequences of Violations*

Violations of this policy may result in suspension of electronic communication privileges, confiscation of any electronic communication device or materials, and disciplinary action up to and including [termination of employment](#), removal from parish or school activities, expulsion from school, canonical review, referral to local or other law enforcement, and other appropriate action.

Updated: 4-8-21

Section 10.5 - General Security and Email Policies*

General Privacy and Security Policies:

1. All users should use care in creating email, text, video, still images, instant or voicemail messages, or any postings on any social networking site. Even when a message has been deleted, it may still exist on a backup system; it may be restored, downloaded, recorded, or printed; or it may have been forwarded to someone else without its creator's knowledge. The contents of email and text messages are the same as other written documentation.
2. As with paper records, proper care should be taken in creating and retaining electronic records for future use, reference, and disclosure, as applicable. See Document Retention.
3. Mass emails, group texts, or postings to groups such as "All Employees," "All Parents/Guardians," "All Seminarians," "All Parishioners," and the like must be approved by the person in charge of the Location before the messages are distributed.
4. Archdiocese and Location systems, devices, and materials are not private and security cannot be guaranteed. User IDs and passwords are intended to enhance system security, not to provide users with personal privacy.
5. User account passwords for systems that are not controlled by a centralized user directory or authentication system must be on record with the person in charge of the Location. At least two authorized persons should have access to these accounts, one of whom should be the person in charge.
6. Do not disclose User IDs and passwords to unauthorized parties or share with other employees, students, or volunteers. User accounts, including those for group meeting platforms, are intended to be used only by the assigned party/host.
7. Change passwords to user accounts regularly. Avoid using the same password for user accounts with different providers.
8. All information systems that create, store, transmit, or otherwise publish data or information (e.g., a website) must have authentication (ability to verify the identity of the user) and authorization systems (e.g., individualized user accounts) to prevent unauthorized use, access, and modification of data and applications.
9. Any electronic medium that is intended for use by the general public may allow access as long as the medium does not allow unauthorized posting and modification of the official information.
10. All files downloaded from the Internet, all data received from outside sources, and all content downloaded from portable memory devices must be scanned with current virus detection software. Immediately report any viruses, malware, tampering, or other system breaches to the person in charge of the Location.
11. Back up critical information periodically onto backup storage. Store backed-up information in a safe place or the cloud that is available for recovery in case of a loss of the original information. Depending on the complexity of a Location's information systems, a detailed disaster recovery plan may need to be developed.
12. Protect computer networks, physical hardware and backup media from unauthorized use. Both local physical access and remote access must be controlled.
13. Complete archdiocesan information is accessible exclusively through the Archdiocesan Community Email Services (ACES) and all employees, clergy, volunteers and similar users are encouraged to obtain and use an ACES account as their preferred business and ministry account.

Electronic or Digital Signatures*: Locations wishing to reduce their use of paper forms may choose to rely on electronic forms for applications, registrations, acknowledgments of receipt, contractual agreements, etc. When deciding to use electronic forms, locations should keep in mind that editing software can enable users to make changes, which may compromise the integrity of the documents.

Nonetheless, documents created and stored electronically, and "signed" electronic documents such as email messages may be legally binding, if the parties' communications demonstrate an intent to be bound. However, locations should exercise great caution in relying on electronic or digital signatures for documents that are intended to be binding, such as tuition agreements, employment contracts, health authorizations, or liability waivers. For such documents, locations must heed the following guidelines:

An electronic or digital signature can have the same force and effect as a handwritten signature provided that it is:

1. Unique to the person using it
2. Capable of verification
3. Under the sole control of the person using it
4. Linked to data in such a manner that if the data are changed, the digital signature is invalidated, and
5. Uses either Public Key Cryptography (PKC) or Signature Dynamics to encrypt the data.

All five requirements must be met for the electronic or digital signature to be considered authentic and legally binding by California courts. Commercial services that meet these requirements are available that offer electronic/digital signature authentication.

Webmasters for locations must ensure that the "socket" used for linking to a signature portal is appropriately secure.

The use or acceptance of an electronic or digital signature is at the option of the parties to the transaction; in other words, one party or the other can insist on a "wet" handwritten signature.

For documents that do not call for binding legal effect, such as sign-ups for Eucharistic adoration, co-curricular activity registrations or parent volunteer assignments, locations may choose simple accept and click "signatures" or email or other electronic responses, with the understanding that the authenticity and validity of such signatures can be challenged.

Updated: 4-8-21

Section 10.6 - Bring Your Own Device Policy (BYOD) for Students*

All parish elementary schools, parish and archdiocesan high schools, and religious education programs are committed to assisting students in becoming responsible digital citizens. They can do so by giving students authentic experiences that build their skills in collaboration, creativity, communication, and critical thinking and that prepare them for their current and future educational experiences and careers. The Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies are designed to meet this objective for students who bring or use their own electronic devices in schools or parishes or as part of their studies and faith formation.

Students may bring personal electronic devices to Locations for educational purposes with the approval of the school administration. While at school, students are required to connect to the school's filtered network connection that is compliant with the [Internet Safety Policy](#).

Responsibility for Personal Devices and Their Use

All students and their families are required to follow the [Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy for Electronic Communications \(Archdiocesan AUP\)](#).

Students are solely responsible for their own personal devices and are to permanently label devices with identifying information.

The Location assumes no financial or other responsibility for personal devices if they are lost, loaned, damaged, or stolen.

Personal devices are subject to investigation in accordance with the [Archdiocesan AUP](#) and the Archdiocesan Administrative Handbook (see [School Searches](#)).

Students are expected to keep their devices safe and secure at all times.

If a student uses a personal device or any of its functions in a manner that intentionally violates the Location's policies or the [Archdiocesan AUP](#), the student will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Each Location may develop its own additional BYOD guidelines to accommodate its individual situation, but all guidelines must be consistent with the policies in Communications Policies and [Students and Families](#). Parents/guardians must sign the [Bring Your Own Device Policy Acknowledgement Form](#) indicating their agreement with the Location's BYOD Policy.

Updated: 4-13-21

Section 10.7 - BYOD Policies for Staff and Volunteers*

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policies for Clergy, Religious, Staff, and Volunteers*: This policy applies to any electronic communications devices not issued or owned by a Location or the archdiocese and used on Location or archdiocesan premises during business or school hours for business or school purposes; it also applies to any personal electronic communications device that is used in such a manner that the archdiocese may be held responsible for its use.

Responsibility for Personal Devices and Their Use*: All users of personal electronic communications devices are required to follow the Acceptable Use and Responsibility Policy for Electronic Communications (Archdiocesan AUP).

Users are solely responsible for their own personal devices. The archdiocese or Location assumes no financial responsibility for personal devices if they are lost, loaned, damaged, or stolen.

Personal devices are subject to investigation in accordance with the Archdiocesan AUP.

Users are expected to keep their devices safe and secure at all times.

Each Location may develop its own additional BYOD guidelines to accommodate its individual situation, but all guidelines must be consistent with the policies in Communications Policies.

Updated: 4-13-21

Chapter 11 - Parent-Student Policies Agreement Form

Handbook Amendments

The Principal retains the right to amend this Handbook for just cause. Parents/guardians will be notified if changes are made.

We hope you find this handbook helpful and informative. Some of these policies are specific to St. Mary School; some are based on the Archdiocesan Handbook, and some on California State Law. They represent our effort to make St. Mary School a safe and happy place to be, as well as a school where learning is a way of life.

ACCEPTANCE OF SAINT MARY SCHOOL PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

Parent/Student Policies Agreement Form

Our family has received or accessed online and read the Saint Mary School Parent/Student Handbook. We are aware of, understand, and agree to follow the policies and procedures stated in the Handbook. We acknowledge

that the school has the right to amend the Handbook during the school year as needed and notify us of any amendments, and we agree to follow the policies and procedures as may be added or amended.

We understand that we may be asked to withdraw our child(ren) from the school or our child(ren) may not be invited to return the following year, if we fail to fulfill our responsibilities under the Handbook and any additions and amendments that may be made. Our signatures below indicate our commitment to fulfill our obligations according to the requirements of the Handbook.

(Please print except where signatures are required)

Father's or Guardian's Signature _____ Date _____

Mother's or Guardian's Signature _____ Date: _____

Print student names and grades (all children; one form per family is accepted):

Student's First Name _____ Grade _____

Student's First Name _____ Grade _____

Student's First Name _____ Grade _____

Student's First Name _____ Grade _____

Student's First Name _____ Grade _____

Please return this signed form promptly to the School Office.

This form will be placed in the students' permanent files

The form can be downloaded from this [link](#).

APPENDIX

1. [Acceptance of Saint Mary School Handbook](#)
2. [Autorización de Padres/Guardianes Para Estudiantes o Menores \(Con Fines No Comerciales\)](#)
3. [Parent/Guardian Release for Student or Minor \(Noncommercial\)](#)
4. [Archdiocese of Los Angeles Boundary Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Middle and High School Youth Working or Volunteering with Children or Youth](#)
5. [Student And Youth Activity Permission Form](#)
6. [Medication Authorization and Permission Form](#) [Archdiocese of Los Angeles](#)
7. [iPad Acceptable Usage Policy](#)

CALENDAR

Please visit the [documents section](#) of the website for any revisions to the master calendar. Calendar updates and additions can be found in the [Calendar/Events](#) section of the school website and mobile application.

SAINT MARY SCHOOL
 2026-2027 MASTER CALENDAR

Educating with Reason, Religion, and Loving Kindness

Every Friday 12:30 Dismissal

Dates and events are subject to change. Please refer to school communications and the online calendar for the most current updates.

JULY 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

- 1-2, 6-10, 13-17, 20-24 Summer School
- 22 Pastor/Principal Meeting
- 25-26 Campus Clean Up
- 27-31 Daycare/Camp

AUGUST 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- Staff returns to work in Aug. Faculty Meetings on Fri
- 1-4 Campus Clean Up
- 3- Faculty Retreat / PD
- 11 First Aid/CPR Renewal
- 19, 20, 21 Welcome Back!
- 12-30 Dismissal & Supply Drop off
- 19 School Resumes 12:30 Dismissal
- Mandatory PTO Meeting 6pm (Parish Hall), Back to School Night (Classrooms)
- 21, 28 School Mass
- 26 Pastor/Principal Meeting
- 27 Wear Jeans for St John Bosco

SEPTEMBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

- Window STAR Testing 9/1-9/15
- 4, 6, 11, 18, 25 School Mass
- 7 Labor Day - No School
- 11 Grandparents Day
- 11 School Adoration
- 23 Pastor/Principal Meeting
- 21-25 Digital Citizenship
- 24 Wear Jeans for St John Bosco
- 28 No School - Teacher In-Service

OCTOBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

- 1 Progress Reports
- 2, 4, 9, 16, 23 School Mass
- 9 School Adoration
- 12 Indigenous Peoples Day - No School
- 13 No School - Teacher In-Service
- 26-27 Parent-Teacher Conf - No School
- 28 Pastor/Principal Meeting
- 29 Halloween Costume/Class Breakfast
- 29 Halloween Costume/Class Breakfast
- 30 All Saints Day Dress Up for Mass
- PTO Trunk or Treat

NOVEMBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

- 6, 8, 13, 20 School Mass
- 11 Veterans Day - No School
- 13 School Adoration
- 19 Pastor/Principal Meeting
- 20 Thanksgiving Feast
- 23-27 Thanksgiving Break
- 30 No School - Teacher In-Service

DECEMBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- 7-11 Santa's Secret Shop
- 1 Reconciliation Service
- 2 1st Trimester Awards
- 4, 6, 11, 18 School Mass
- 6 School Adoration
- 11 School Adoration
- 17 Christmas Program / Posadas
- 18 Class Parties
- 21 Christmas Vacation Begins

JANUARY 2027

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- 6-8 Faculty / PD
- 5 No School - Teacher In-Service
- 9 School Resumes
- 8-8 Empowering God's Children
- 9 School Adoration
- 15, 22, 29 School Mass
- 18 MLK Day - No School
- 22 Progress Reports
- 27-29 Book Fair
- 26-29 Catholic Schools Week
- 27 Pastor/Principal Meeting
- 28 Wear Jeans for St John Bosco
- 31 Open House 9-11 am
- 11-25 STAR Testing

FEBRUARY 2027

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

- 1-5 Book Fair
- 1-4 Catholic Schools Week
- 5, 7, 12, 19, 26 School Mass
- 9 Mardi Gras
- 10 Ash Wed Mass 8:30 am/11:00 Dismissal
- 12 School Adoration
- 12, 19, 26 Stations of the Cross
- 15 Presidents Day - No School
- 23 Reconciliation Service Church 9:30-11:30am
- 24 Pastor/Principal Meeting
- 25 Wear Jeans for St John Bosco

MARCH 2027

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- 2 Read Across America/Seuss Day
- 5, 7, 12, 19 School Mass
- 5, 12, 19 Stations of the Cross
- 5 End of Trimester 2
- 12 School Adoration/Report Cards
- 16 2nd Trimester Awards
- 24 Pastor/Principal Meeting
- 24 Seder Meal
- 25-28 Holy Thurs & Good Fri - No School
- 28 Easter Break

APRIL 2027

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- Window ARK Testing 4/12-4/16
- 1, 5 Faculty / PD
- 5 No School - Teacher In-Service
- 2, 4, 9, 16, 30 School Mass
- 9 School Adoration
- 10 Movie Night
- 23-26 No School - RE Congress
- 27 First Sacrament of Reconciliation 2nd Gr
- 28 Pastor/Principal Meeting
- 28 Spring Art Event
- 29 Progress Reports
- 29 Wear Jeans for St John Bosco
- 30 PTO Middle School Dance After School

MAY 2027

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- Window T3 STAR Testing 5/3-5/17
- 2, 7, 14, 28 School Mass
- 7 May Crowning
- 14 First Communion Mass
- 31 Memorial Day - No School
- 26 Pastor/Principal Meeting
- 27 Wear Jeans for St John Bosco
- 31 Memorial Day - No School

JUNE 2027

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

- 3 8th Grade Banquet
- 4 8th Grade Graduation Mass
- 6 School Mass
-