



Student/Parent Handbook 23-24

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Mission

Preparing and inspiring students to lead meaningful lives, rooted in the teachings of Christ in our Catholic tradition.

Advisory

The Advisor/Advisee Program meets multiple times a week, providing small groups of students with a supportive and enriching environment. Through the Character Strong curriculum, students engage in activities and discussions that promote self-awareness, empathy, and character development. The program aims to foster personal growth, build positive relationships, and develop essential life skills. By exploring their own identities, valuing others, and learning from diverse life experiences, students gain a deeper understanding of themselves, their peers, and the world around them. Ultimately, the Advisor/Advisee Program strives to nurture well-rounded individuals who appreciate and navigate life's challenges with resilience and compassion.

After School Care

The middle school does offer after school care from 3:15-5:15. Contact the school office for detailed information.

Arrival and Dismissal

Student supervision at SMCMS starts at 7:15 a.m. and concludes at 3:30 p.m. each day. School hours are from 7:50 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. To avoid being marked tardy, students must be present in their first class when the bell rings at 7:50 a.m. It is essential for students to be accompanied by a staff member or coach if they are in the building before or after supervision hours.

Athletics/Co-Curriculars

A separate [Co-Curricular handbook](#) can be found on the SMCMS website.

Attendance

It is the responsibility of the parents to make sure students attend school on time every day it is in session. *Wisconsin Statute 239 requires that parents/guardians provide a written excuse prior to a planned absence for personal or nonhealth-related reasons (such as a vacation). Every day or part of a day a student is absent for a planned absence counts as one (1) absence. The state law limits these, parent written excuses, to ten (10) per school year.*

Parents must provide a written excuse PRIOR to a planned absence. This does not apply to absence due to health issues or family emergencies.

- Absences Parents should call school at 920-727-0279 or email smcmsattendance@smcatholicschools.org no later than 8:30 a.m. to report a student's absence. If a call or email is not received by this time, the office will call to verify absence. A student is considered habitually truant (under WI 118.15) when a student is truant for all or part of five days in a semester. Habitually truant students will be referred to law enforcement.
- Planned Vacations Please ***DO NOT*** plan vacations during school time, **BUT if you must**, the school office must be notified in writing at least 48 hours in advance. This information will be shared with the student's teachers. The student must pick up a [pre-planned absence form](#). Forms can be found in the office. Once the form is signed by all of the teachers a copy will be made in the office. *If a student is given homework ahead of time, please make every effort for them to complete it upon return.* A student will also be given adequate time to complete missed work upon his/her return to school.
- Early Dismissal Parents are urged to make dental, medical, and other appointments after school hours. If it becomes necessary to check out during the day, a student must 1) bring a note **to the office** or email smcmsattendance@smcatholicschools.org **before first period**; 2) a SmartPass will be made 3) show the pass to the teacher at the time to leave; 4) sign out at the office; and 5) upon return to school that same day, sign in at the office and receive a SmartPass to return to classes.
- Tardy A student not in class at 7:50 a.m. will be considered tardy. When a student arrives after 7:55 he/she must report to the office for a SmartPass.

Bicycles

The school assumes no responsibility for bicycles. However, provisions have been made to store bicycles by providing a rack in which they can be parked and locked. Bicycles are never to be ridden on school grounds. Helmets should be worn.

Bus Routes and Operating Policies

Lamers and Kobussen bus companies plan bus routes and stops. Neenah and Menasha students who live more than two miles from school are eligible to ride a bus. Information from registration forms is forwarded to the public school and they, in turn, send SMCMS a roster of those eligible for busing. SMCS busing is available in Darboy and Sherwood area.

Bus Conduct

The bus companies have established the following rules to ensure the safety of all that ride buses.

- Use only the assigned bus and bus stop.
- Orderly behavior is required at the bus stop.
- Remain seated, facing front, when the bus is in motion.
- Talk quietly, make no unnecessary noise.
- Obey the driver's directions.
- Keep your head, arms, and all objects inside the bus.
- Do not litter the inside of the bus or throw anything out the window.
- Those waiting for buses after school may not leave the designated waiting area.
- Students are not allowed to bring friends home on the bus without a note from the parent and signed by the principal. Those who do not abide by these rules may be denied the privilege of riding the bus.

Campus Ministry

In addition to overseeing the religion curriculum, Campus Ministry provides spiritual guidance for students and staff. Liturgies, retreats, prayer services, and service activities are regularly scheduled to encourage Catholic, Christian development.

Emergency Closings and Delays

Living in Wisconsin, it is inevitable that we sometimes experience delays or cancellations due to weather. Sometimes weather conditions change quickly, and our decisions are made accordingly. If either the Neenah or Menasha public school district is delayed or closed due to weather, SMCS follows suit.

Text Message Notifications

As soon as a delay or cancellation is determined, the information is posted on the [SMCS Facebook page](#) or on the homepage of this website, and local TV and radio stations are alerted. It is also sent directly to the phones of people who have signed up for our emergency notification system as a text message.

How to Sign Up for the SMCS Emergency Alert System

You may subscribe, at no cost, to the SMCS emergency alert system. To enroll your phone number, please text SMCS to (844) 9475948. You will receive a confirmation text and a text indicating that when you want to opt out of this service you simply need to reply STOP. You may enroll multiple cell phone numbers using that same process (text SMCS to (844) 947-5948

We do our best to immediately notify SMCS families and staff members when cancellations or delays are determined, but please understand that we do not have control over how quickly a TV or radio station gets the information worked into their own notification systems.

You can prevent being unpleasantly surprised by a change in schedule by doing the following:

- Be aware of potential weather conditions that may impact the next day's SMCS schedule, such as an expected sustained wind chill factor of approximately -35 degrees, icy conditions or significant snowfall.
- Sign up for the SMCS emergency notification system
- Check the [SMCS Facebook page](#)
- Check with another SMCS parent or employee.
- Check on multiple radio or TV stations if you don't see/hear it on the first one; if we are not listed, check to see if anything is listed for Neenah or Menasha schools.

SMCS contacts the following television & radio stations to help share notifications:

- Television: WBAY, WFRV, WLUK, WGBA
- Radio: WIXX (101.1 FM), WNCY (100.3 FM), all other area Midwest Communications affiliates

If you cannot find anything posted for SMCS, Neenah or Menasha schools, SMCS is operating on a normal schedule.

Important Notes

While inconvenient for all of us, being unprepared for a delay or cancellation can be of great concern for families with younger children. If you have a child in elementary school, please be extra vigilant about keeping yourself informed, and be aware of the following:

- A school delay or cancellation is a delay or cancellation for everyone, not just students. Please do not assume that the school building will be open or that there will be an employee present at the school building to supervise your child before the designated start time.
- A delay is a delay in the start of the school day. Even if a school normally provides before-school care, it will not be available on days with an unplanned late start. All students should arrive at the designated time.

- If your child rides a bus to school, please be especially mindful of potential delays on days when either Neenah or Menasha has a late start, and the other does not. Although we do contact the bus companies that serve SMCS families in the event of delay or cancellation, the message that SMCS students should not be picked up does not always make it through to the drivers.

Change of Address / Telephone

It is very important that an up-to-date address and telephone number are kept at the school office. Parents are responsible for updating their contact information in PowerSchool.

Cheating

SMCMS upholds the core values of honesty and trust, and students should be honest in all interactions. This includes honesty with their schoolwork, writing projects as well as assessments. Cheating will not be tolerated and will result in a zero for all work, tests, etc. connected with the occurrence. A student who knowingly allows another to cheat will receive the same consequences. Parents will be notified when a student receives a zero for cheating. This includes plagiarism; a student hands in class work that is not his/her own, that student has plagiarized. At SMCMS, the penalty for plagiarism is a reduced grade on the test, quiz, assignment, work sheet or research project.

Communication

- Website Information, including newsletters, permission slips, etc., can be found at www.sm Catholicschools.org
- Bi-Weekly Update A school newsletter, bi-weekly update, containing items of interest to students and parents is posted on the SMCMS website each week and an email link is sent to all parents.
- Telephone calls from parents Please make every effort to communicate with your student before school and limit phone call messages to a minimum. **Please do not text your student during the school day.** *Students' phones must be turned off throughout the day and are left in their lockers, we can get messages to students before 3:15 pm.* Students can check their phones at the end of the day, at 3:15, for messages about the end of the day.

Computer Program/Internet Security

St. Mary Catholic Middle School has a one-to-one iPad program. Through the one-to-one iPad program, every SMCMS student is issued a digital device. These iPads are property of SMCS, and a nominal user fee is charged to each student for this service. Each SMCMS student is assigned an iPad that he or she uses every day for class work, group projects and homework. Be sure your child understands that their iPad is school property. The iPad must be in the provided case and all school labels remain on computers and chargers. No stickers should be placed on the case or the iPad at any time.

Internet security is an area of strong concern for parents and school administrators alike. The technology in the middle school is regulated by a strong filtering program and teacher-controlled monitoring features. Strict expectations are enforced, and teachers can see, on their own screens, what individual students are viewing, as well as the capability to turn off anything inappropriate. This ability to simply "click out" a student from a site unrelated to the class allows an instructor to carry on without taking the time to reprimand or single anyone out. It is the responsibility of all parents to monitor their child's iPad activity after 3:30 pm.

Conferences

Student/parent/teacher conferences occur once per semester (twice a year) at SMCMS. These conferences aim to proactively address each student's ability to meet classroom expectations. If there is a need to discuss a student's progress at any other time, individual conferences can be arranged by the student, parent, and/or teacher. Open communication between students, parents, and teachers is encouraged to ensure ongoing support and success in academic endeavors.

Counseling Program

At St. Mary Catholic Middle School, our counseling program is overseen by a certified counselor who plays a crucial role in supporting our students' well-being. Serving as the director of the Advisor/Advisee Program, the counselor is available to all students and parents for individual and small group counseling sessions. We encourage parents to reach out to the counselor for any concerns regarding their child. The counselor's expertise and dedication ensure that our students receive the guidance and support they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Calendar for the School Year

A [SMCS calendar for the school year](#) can be found on the website. You can also find a specific middle school calendar on the website.

Student Behavior

St. Mary Catholic strives to build a community of learning excellence. To build a community of learning excellence, SMCMS has expectations for student behavior that align with the [Catechism of the Catholic Church \(CCC\)](#):

- Respecting others as they are made in the image and likeness of God and created with the fundamental rights that flow from the dignity intrinsic of the person. (CCC 1944) This means respecting the dignity of each person and their right to feel safe while learning in our school.
- Understanding the role of students in the classroom and allowing those trusted with their care to teach and direct students toward their common good. This includes promoting human dignity, developing intellectually, spiritually, and emotionally, and maintaining peace within the school. (CCC 1925)
- Applying the virtues of temperance and justice, as well as the practice of solidarity towards the property of SMCS and others. (CCC 2407) This means respecting the rights of the school property, resources, tradition, and good reputation, as well as the property of others.

As active and engaged members of the St. Mary Catholic Middle School community, we are all expected to act in conjunction with the core Catholic teaching taken from Genesis that we are made in the “image and likeness of God.” Actions, both inside and outside the classroom, should reflect that truth and should support the Catechism of the Catholic Church’s teaching that we are all born with a certain dignity. The dignity of the human person will guide our actions to move all those we come into contact with towards the common good. Our actions should be a result of the voice of God which urges us to do what is good and avoid what is evil. (CCC 1706) Acting in this way is morally good, which requires that both the intention and the way the action is carried out are good. (CCC 1760)

Classroom Misbehavior/Violations

We believe in fostering a classroom environment that values both the rights and responsibility of teachers and students to enhance student learning and uphold human dignity. To ensure clarity and understanding, teachers will communicate classroom expectations at the beginning of each academic year. These expectations will be shared with all students, emphasizing the importance of creating a supportive and respectful atmosphere where everyone can thrive academically and personally. By collectively embracing these expectations, we cultivate a positive learning community for the benefit of all.

Hazing/Harassment

Hazing and harassment at any age can be extremely harmful and are particularly troubling at the middle school level because the developmental stages of adolescence create a situation in which students are more vulnerable to peer pressure. St. Mary Catholic takes these issues very seriously.

Serious Disciplinary Action

The administration deals decisively with violations that seriously affect the safety and/or good order of SMCMS. Actions that warrant consequences such as in-school or out-of-school suspension or expulsion* may include, but are not limited to:

- Possessing a dangerous weapon on campus or at a school-sponsored activity
- Belonging to a gang or engaging in criminal, gang-like activity
- Having serious criminal charges reported to the school by authorities, engaging in any act that is grounds for arrest or citation in the criminal or juvenile court system
- Engaging in serious insubordination, or verbal or physical abuse of a faculty/staff member or any adult on the school premises
- Using, selling, or possessing chemicals, drugs, tobacco, alcohol, steroids or chemical paraphernalia on campus or at a school sponsored activity
- Physically assaulting another student

- Excessively inappropriate or offensive conduct such as assaulting staff or students, or gross insubordination (talking back or refusing to cooperate with authorities)
- Stealing or vandalism of school or others' property
- Serious hazing or harassment, including sexual harassment, of anyone (this includes group conduct and internet bullying or sexting)
- Representing oneself or others unlawfully or inappropriately on the internet (on blog sites, instant messaging, on-line profiles and/or social networking sites, etc.)
- Igniting fused or incendiary devices (fireworks, stink bombs, etc.)
- Engaging in misconduct (during or outside the school day) that is seriously detrimental to the reputation of SMCS
- Engaging in any situation or problem not specifically covered herein that may be viewed by the administration as seriously threatening

In all cases where expulsion is being considered, the SMCS/SMCMS policies and the Green Bay Diocesan policies must be followed before expulsion is finalized. In very serious situations this process may jump right to number three. The process is as follows:

First Violation

The administration meets with the student. After investigation, the parent(s) will be asked to attend a conference with the student and administration at which consequences and plans to prevent a repeat violation will be determined. If the violation is serious enough, a suspension or expulsion may occur at this level. * *Second Violation*

The administration meets with the student. After investigation, the parent(s) will be asked to attend a conference with the student and administration, at which a consequence of a one- to three-day suspension (in-school or out-of-school) may be imposed. The student will be required to submit a written plan as to how behaviors will be rectified in the future. If the violation is serious enough, expulsion may occur at this level. * *Third Violation*

The administration meets with the student. After investigation, the parent(s) will be asked to attend a conference with the student and administration, at which extended suspension of no more than five days, expulsion or dismissal may be imposed. * ***Parent(s) are always involved in this process.**

Social Media

1. Students must remember that they are representatives of St. Mary Catholic Middle School, and as such are expected to keep the following recommendations in mind as they participate on social networking websites:

Before participating in any online community, students must understand that anything posted online is available to *anyone in the world*. *Any text or photo placed online becomes the property of the site(s) and is completely out of your control the moment it is placed online - even if you limit access to your site.*

Students should not post any information, photos, or other items online that could embarrass the student, his/her family, or St. Mary Catholic Middle School. **This includes information that may be posted by others on the student's page.**

Students must never post his/her home address, phone number, birth date or other personal information. Anyone doing so could be a target of predators.

The SMCS administration will not seek out students' social media violations. It is the administration's expectation that each student's online activity is monitored by a parent or guardian. If an alleged violation is brought to the attention of the administration, after investigation, the following considerations will be made:

Anything that appears to be "only" inappropriate or in bad taste will be handed over to the parents of the parties involved. It is the hope of the administration that the issue will be resolved by those parents in a timely manner.

The malicious use of online social networks such as threats to any third party, incriminating photos or statements depicting hazing, sexual harassment, vandalism, or stalking, as well as underage drinking, illegal drug use or other prohibited behavior *will be subject to disciplinary action* by the administration and may include a report to law enforcement.

Inappropriate photos and/or comments that are directly linked to SMCMS will be handled as school issues and will be punishable as if the behavior occurred at St. Mary Catholic Middle School.

Any action that appears to be of an illegal nature will be reported to legal authorities.

Dress Code: Also posted on the website

St. Mary Catholic Middle School reserves the right to determine a norm of appearance for students. Preparing for school in an intentional way can lead to a frame of mind that is different from casual life. Appropriate dress reflects the virtues of modesty and self-respect and is essential to maintaining a positive atmosphere for learning.

Academic Dress Code

Dress Code Bottoms

- Solid colored or patterned dress pants with a finished/hemmed bottom. Athletic pants with elastic bottom (athletic jogger) are not allowed.
- Pants must be cotton or cotton/poly non-denim fabric, colored jeans, including black, are not allowed.
- Pants may not be torn or tattered and must fit appropriately -- not be too baggy or too tight. Spandex / elastic /tight fitting leggings, jeggings, exercise pants, etc. are not allowed.
- Dress/cargo/khaki shorts of appropriate length (no shorter than fingertips when the arms are fully extended down the leg) or capris may be worn during August, September, May, and June.
- Skirts and dresses of appropriate length (no shorter than the fingertips when the arms are fully extended down the leg) are allowed on liturgy days as well as during August, September, May, and June.

Dress Code Shirts

- SMCS/Zephyrs approved hooded sweatshirt, crewneck sweatshirt, ¼ zip or full zip, and T-Shirts from the Spirit Stop may be worn.
- Non SMCS/Zephyrs approved shirts must be polo shirts or Oxford-style button down shirts with long or short sleeves.
- Shirts and sweaters with a modest neckline must be full length with no skin showing at the waist when arms are raised above the head.
- Shirts with buttons must be buttoned.

Footwear

- Footwear must be always worn.
- During the months of September, May, and June students may wear sandals.
- Crocs may not be worn on liturgy days.
- For safety reasons, heels must be modest in height (approx. < 2 in.).
- Flip flops, moccasins, athletic slides, and slippers are not allowed.
- Separate non-marking athletic shoes worn ONLY INDOORS are required for physical education class.

Jewelry/Makeup

- One non-gauged earlobe stud per ear is allowed.
- Extremes in jewelry and makeup are not allowed.
- Clear fingernail polish only.

Hair/ facial hair

- Hair must be clean, neatly combed, out of the eyes, and of reasonable style and a natural shade.
- Mohawks, intricate cut lines, or undercuts are not allowed.
- Extremes in hair styles and accessories are not allowed.
- Boys must be clean shaven.

Liturgy Days

Preparing for liturgy both internally and externally in an intentional way can lead to a frame of mind that is different from normal academic life.

Females

- Skirts or dresses of an appropriate length and modest style. Skirts and dresses must be longer than the student's fingertips when arms are fully extended down the leg.
- Dress pant, navy, black, khaki, or gray. (Black jeans are not dress pants)
- Collared blouse, button down dress shirt, or sweaters with a neckline that is modest and appropriate for the school / church environment, are required.
- Crocs are not allowed on liturgy days

Males

- Dress pant, navy, black, khaki, or gray, with belt loops, zipper, and button closure. (Black jeans are not dress pants)
- Button-down dress shirt with a collar and an appropriate tie. The tie must be tied and worn at the traditional collar level, and shirttails must be tucked in. Cargo pants are not allowed.
- Sweaters or solid colored, non-logo fleece may be worn over the dress shirt and tie.
- Crocs are not allowed on liturgy days

Relaxed Dress Days

- Jeans, sweatpants, leggings, and shorts may be worn. Shorts of any type must be no shorter than the student's fingertips when arms are fully extended down the leg.
- Shirts and any outerwear must be modest and appropriate with inappropriate language or advertising, including clothing that promotes musicians, music groups, alcohol, video games, social media influencers or apps, drugs, inappropriate messages, or sexual references are not allowed at any time.

Clothing Never Allowed

- Clothing that is very tight or very loose.
- Visible tattoos, body art/writing never allowed
- Hoods/ hats inside the building
- Clothing that are not in agreement with Catholic teachings are not permitted at school or any school-sponsored event.
- Clothing displaying alcohol, drug, inappropriate messages, or sexual references.
- Tattered, torn or frayed clothing.
- Tank tops or shirts without sleeves.
- Any other non-SMCS school (K-12) logo wear.
- Winter jackets.
- Visible undergarments.
- Pants below the waistline.
- Crop Tops

All students' attire must comply with the dress code. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure students are dressed according to this dress code before leaving for school. Parents will be notified regarding non-compliance to the dress code and asked to bring a change of clothes to school or request student to wear clothing provided by SMCMS. Individual restrictions may be placed on students who do not comply with the dress code. SMCMS Administration reserves the right to make final interpretations or changes in the dress code above.

Emergency

Threats to students and faculty safety (fire, tornadoes, bomb threats, hazardous spills, etc.) are taken very seriously at SMCMS. Drills are conducted monthly. For fire drills, escape plans are posted inside the door of each classroom. For

tornadoes, classes have a designated area in the building. Students are to move to designated areas in a safe, silent, and orderly manner and maintain silence throughout the emergency/drill.

Emergency Information

Students are required to have the following information available to staff on PowerSchool:

- Parent/Guardian name(s)
- Complete and up-to-date address, and email
- Parent/Guardian home, work, and cell phone numbers
- Emergency phone numbers for at least two relatives and/or friends
- Medical alert information

Field Trips

- Parents are required to sign a permission slip before each scheduled field trip. Only the school issued permission slip is acceptable for participation.
- Students are expected to ride to and from school field trips on the transportation provided by SMCMS.
- Parents who want to pick up their child from a field trip may do so by notifying the office at least 24-hours in advance.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that best represents themselves, their class, school, family, and community.
- Students will not be allowed to participate for the following reasons: suspension from class, chronic misbehavior, and/or lack of academic progress (i.e. missing assignments or permission slips). These students are expected to attend school as usual and will be supervised by staff members.

Food Service

- SMCS Food Service offers a nutritionally sound, reasonably priced hot lunch daily.
- All students must eat lunch. (If a student cannot eat lunch for whatever reason, a parent must send a dated, signed note to the office).
- A computerized debit system will track lunch charges and payments. Click on the [link](#) for the policy addressing *overdue balances* on food service accounts.
- Balance notifications are sent via email.
- All checks should be made out to SMCS Food Service. All food service monies will be taken care of by SMCS. Money can be sent to the school office, and it will be processed by our middle school front office.
- Should a student forget to bring a lunch, a lunch can be charged.
- Food from lunch may not be taken to lockers or classrooms.

Fundraising

Funds are raised for both the system and our school. A percentage of the profit generated by a family from SMCS fundraisers is deducted from that family's tuition account. SMCS joint fundraiser, **All Aboard**, allows us to work on needed projects within the building that are not funded by the system budget.

Grading Scale

A	95 - 100	C	82 - 79
A-	94 - 93	C-	78 - 77
B+	92 - 91	D+	76 - 75
B	90 - 87	D	74 - 72
B-	86 - 85	D-	71 - 70
C+	84 - 83	F	Below 70
		I	Incomplete

Honor Roll

The SMCMS Honor Roll is a special recognition for academic achievement. It is based on the total grade point average of all assignments/tests for the preceding quarter and is posted four times a year. Receiving SMCMS's Highest Honors

are those with a GPA of 3.75 to 4.0. Receiving High Honors are those with a GPA of 3.5 to 3.74, and receiving Honors are those with a GPA of 3.0 to 3.49.

An “F” disqualifies a student from being on either honor roll.

PowerSchool/Google Classroom

[PowerSchool](#) is an easy way for parents and students to keep up to date online. Once an account is activated, and SMCMS has posted information, parents can use PowerSchool to check their children’s latest grades, receive email alerts when new grades are posted, receive emails with school or class information, verify assignments, see what assignments are missing and read notes from their children’s teachers.

Google Classroom is an electronic tool for teachers to use to communicate with students in their class. Teachers can post assignments, rubrics, quizzes, educational videos, lesson plans, etc. This is primarily for electronic communication between the students and teacher. Students may communicate to the entire class or send a private message to the teacher. All school expectations/rules apply while students use Google classroom. Parents may create a parent account to view their child’s information or ask their children for the Google classroom username and password.

PowerSchool is where students’ assignments & grades are posted, Google Classroom is how the teacher communicates with the class and may post assignments or rubrics, quizzes, etc.

Power School	Google classroom
Parent and student log ins	Student log in (Parents use students log in)
Student graded work	Teacher communication with students and class
Missing or late assignments	Upcoming assignments
Lunch balances	Rubrics
Email alerts when grades are updated	Study guides, quizlets
Updated weekly	Assignment directions
	Uploading assignments
	Gain access to textbook pages or copies of teacher notes
	Ask questions, of teachers or classmates, for clarification on assignments
	Project updates

Probation - Academic and Athletic

Academic eligibility for all students will be determined by multiple grade checks during the nine-week grading period, as well as appropriate school and classroom behavior. Students must maintain a minimum of a C- average with no failing grades to be considered a student in good standing. Possible social and/or athletic restrictions may be imposed. (Also refer to the [SMCMS Co-Curricular Handbook](#))

Homework

Homework serves as an extension of classroom learning, offering valuable practice and reinforcement. It fosters independent study, research, and creative thinking skills. To ensure a balanced workload, the suggested maximum time for schoolwork at home ranges between 30 and 90 minutes. Students are expected to complete and submit homework punctually, recognizing its role in their academic growth. By engaging responsibly with homework, students enhance their understanding, self-discipline, and overall success in their educational journey.

Illness or Injury

A student who becomes ill at school should inform the teacher and receive permission to report to the office. The student's condition will be assessed, and proper action taken. In case of an injury, school personnel will render first aid treatment only. If other treatment is deemed necessary, a parent will be contacted. If parents or other contacts are not available in an emergency, the student will be transported to the emergency room at Theda Clark Hospital (by ambulance, if deemed necessary, or by car).

Immunizations

State law requires that students have evidence on file of an up-to-date vaccination program.

Library

The library is open on a regularly scheduled basis and is supervised by the librarian, volunteer, or teacher. Students may check out up to three books for a period of two weeks each. Books are always due on a Friday. Fines will be assessed for overdue books. Full payment must be made for lost or damaged books.

Lice Protocol

It is not uncommon for elementary/middle school children to contract head lice. Please contact the school office immediately if your child has head lice. Your identity will remain confidential. Notification allows us to take the necessary precautions to prevent the further spread of the lice.

While we understand that having lice in one's home is a concerning thing, we also need to follow the CDC's recent recommendation that lice not be considered to be on the same level as a serious illness. They state that students should not be unnecessarily excluded from class for a condition that does not cause illness or physical harm. So, while we will continue to monitor situations concerning lice as they occur in our school, our main goal and objective will be to return students to the classroom as quickly as possible after being identified as having lice.

Recommendations by the CDC and the State of Wisconsin

It is no longer recommended that students be excluded from school unnecessarily because of head lice. The likelihood of transmittal in a school setting is quite low. For this reason, we will generally follow the guidelines as described by the CDC and the Wisconsin DPI, with one exception. We will inform parents whose children have live head lice about the situation and ask that they take their child home early to be treated for the condition. Students with no evident live lice or with nits further than ¼ inch from the scalp need not be sent home from school. Parents will, however, be notified by phone call or note of this finding so that they can discuss this situation with their caregiver or treat as they see fit. We will work with the family to monitor the situation.

Returning to School

Children who have been diagnosed with live head lice will be allowed to return to school on the day following proper treatment of the condition. Children who have not been treated, or who receive insufficient treatment may not return to the classroom until it can be shown to office personnel that there are no live lice or nits close to the scalp. As a general rule and following the advice of the CDC and State of Wisconsin, entire classes will no longer be screened for head lice because a child in the classroom has been identified as having lice. Notification letters may be sent home to alert parents so that they may check their own children, if desired.

Liturgy/Prayer Services

As liturgy and prayer are central to our faith, our students and faculty participate in liturgies and/or prayer services. Family members are invited and encouraged to participate in the scheduled liturgy/prayer service with the students.

Liturgy days are dress-up days for all. Dress code passes may not be used. SMCS or any other sweatshirts are not allowed on these days. Please see the dress code for specifics.

Lockers

A locker is issued to each student at the beginning of the school year. Students may not change lockers. Locks are available in the office. Only school-issued locks may be used. The locker is not a student's private property and may be opened by school authorities if there is reason to believe that the locker contains prohibited items. The school is NOT responsible for valuables left in lockers. Under limited circumstances and with special permission, leaving cash or valuables in the office may be possible. Students will be charged for lost or damaged locks and/or damaged lockers.

Personal Electronic Device (PED) and Smartphones/ Smart watches

A personal electronic device (PED) is a device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays a message, or otherwise summons or delivers a communication to the possessor. The following devices are examples of PEDs: cellular and wireless telephones, pagers/beepers, smart-watches, personal digital assistants (PDAs), smartphones, WIFI-enabled or broadband access devices, two-way radios or video broadcasting devices, tablets, laptops, and other devices that allow a person to record and/or transmit (on either a real-time or delayed basis) sound, video or still images, text, or other information.

Students may bring PEDs to school, however **PEDs may NOT be carried during the day** and must **be turned off** and kept in their lockers during school hours. During school hours, parent(s) wishing to contact students must call the school office.

If a student fails to follow the guidelines for PEDs, the consequences are as follows:

- 1st offense – confiscation of the PED, which can be picked up from administration after school.
- 2nd offense – confiscation of the PED, which can be picked up from administration after school by parents will be notified. Student will then need to keep their PED in the school office daily.

No expectation of confidentiality will exist in the use of PEDs on school premises/property. Administration reserves the right to check the content of confiscated PEDs. If the PED is password protected, the student must enter the password for administration and unlock it. If the PED was used to cheat or if inappropriate material is found on it, consequences may be imposed.

PEDs, including but not limited to those with cameras, may not be possessed, activated or utilized at any time in any school situation where a reasonable expectation of personal privacy exists. These locations and circumstances include but are not limited to locker rooms, shower facilities, restrooms, or any other areas where students or others may change clothes or be in any stage or degree of disrobing or changing clothes. The principal has authority to make determinations as to other specific locations and situations where possession of a PED is absolutely prohibited. Violation of this rule may involve the police.

Students are prohibited from using PEDs to capture, record or transmit the words (i.e. audio) and/or images (i.e. pictures/video) of any student, staff member or other person during the school day, without express prior notice and explicit consent for the capture, recording or transmission of such words or images. Using a PED to take or transmit audio and/or pictures/video of an individual without his/her consent is considered an invasion of privacy and is not permitted, unless authorized by administration.

Students are prohibited from using a PED in any way that might reasonably create in the mind of another person an impression of being threatened, humiliated, harassed, embarrassed or intimidated.

Students are prohibited from using a PED to capture and/or transmit test information or any other information in a manner constituting fraud, theft, cheating or academic dishonesty. Likewise, students are prohibited from using their PEDs to receive such information.

Students are personally and solely responsible for the care and security of their PEDs. SMCS assumes no responsibility for theft, loss, damage or vandalism to PEDs brought onto its property, or the unauthorized use of such devices.

Lost and Found

Clothing, money, jewelry or other articles that are found are to be given to the office staff.

Make-up Work

Assignments will be posted online. Parents may pick up a student's books from his/her locker when that student is absent from school for more than one day.

Medications

If a student needs medication during the school day, the following requirements must be met •

- A parent must fill out a [school medication form](#) before the office can dispense medication.
- Prescription medication must have the original label with the student's name, drug identification, dosage instructions, doctor's name, and a current date.
- ALL non-prescription medications (e.g. aspirin, Tylenol, Advil, etc.) must be sent in the original bottle, kept in the office, and given to a student only with a signed medical form on file in the school office.
- Medication will be given and documented by office personnel.
- Cough drops and inhalers may be carried and used by a student with written permission. A parent and a member of the office staff must sign a permission note.
- A student MAY NOT self-medicate, nor may he/she give medications to others. Such action can result in suspension/expulsion.

Physical Education Classes

If an illness or injury prevents a student from participating in a physical education class, parental notification is necessary. A doctor's excuse is required for non-participation for any length of time over two class days.

Pictures

Individual student pictures are taken each fall. Class pictures are taken in the fall. Parents may purchase these after viewing the pictures.

- Registration in an SMCS school grants permission for photos, publicity & inclusion in a participant list unless the SMCS Advancement Office is notified in writing prior to September 1st of each school year. The Advancement Office can be contacted at 920-722-7796. [Media Opt-Out](#).

Progress Reports

Report cards are sent home at the end of each nine-week period. Students' weekly progress can be checked on PowerSchool. Students and parents should carefully review the student's progress and contact the teacher/school if there are questions regarding grades. Grades are updated on PowerSchool weekly. Parents and students have individual accounts on PowerSchool.

Release of Records

1. The school will maintain records on all students. A parent/guardian wishing to review his/her student's file must give a 24-hour notice by way of a written request and set an appointed time with the administrator to review the file.
2. The school abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order, the school will provide the non-custodial parent access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

Religious Instruction

Religion is a required class at each grade level. Catholic sacramental preparation is a parish responsibility and is coordinated with the students' parish religious education administrators.

St. Mary Catholic Middle School provides for students, faculty, and staff a faith-filled environment. Faith is expressed in personal prayer, liturgy, Reconciliation opportunities, devotions, etc. All who enter SMCMS are encouraged to use

the school chapel as a place for personal prayer, meditation, and reflection. Students may use this space as time and availability permit. Weekly school Masses and other worship activities are a regular part of the school schedule.

Schedule Changes

Students may request schedule changes within three school days after the beginning a quarter if: 1) the student receives written approval from a parent and the classroom teacher; 2) there is space available in the class into which the student wishes to transfer; and 3) the student obtains approval from the administrator.

School Colors / School Mascot

The St. Mary Catholic Middle School mascot is the Zephyr train, personified in The Zephynator. School colors are Columbia blue, white, navy and gold.

Textbooks

Textbooks and workbooks are provided for student use. If a book is lost, misused, or damaged beyond reasonable wear, the student will replace the book according to the following guidelines

New (1st year of use)- 100% of replacement cost

2nd year of use - 80% of replacement cost

3rd year of use - 60% of replacement cost

4th year of use - 40% of replacement cost

5th year of use or older - 20% of replacement cost

A minimum fee is charged for the following damages, up to the replacement value of the book

Damaged bindings \$10.00

Damaged pages \$1.00 each

All fines must be paid prior to receiving the final report card.

Visitors and Parent Meetings

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the school. All parents and visitors must to sign in at the office. Parents wishing to speak with teachers should set up appointment times to meet with them and should not just show up.

Yearbook

A yearbook is available for a fee. Yearbooks are distributed at the end of the current school year.

The administrator reserves the right to waive and/or deviate from any and all disciplinary regulations for just cause at his or her discretion. Parents/students will be given prompt notification if changes are made.