



Family Handbook
2019-2020
Saint Maria Goretti
Catholic School

1200 South Davis
Arlington, Texas 76013
817-275-5081
www.smgschool.org



Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School

1200 South Davis Dr. Arlington, Texas 76013

August 12, 2019

Dear Saint Maria Goretti Families,

Welcome to Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School! We are glad that you have chosen to be part of our wonderful Catholic school community during the 2019-2020 school year. In choosing Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

This is the official St. Maria Goretti Catholic School Family Handbook and it reflects the policies of Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School for the 2019-2020 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement. The signed agreement is due back to the school by August 30, 2019. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School during the 2019-2020 school year.

The faculty and staff of Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School looks forward to assisting parents with the education and formation of their children in Truth, Goodness, and Beauty through a Christ-centered environment, challenging academics, and hands-on learning so that each child becomes a disciple of Christ, prepared to respond to God's call. Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may help us carry it through to completion.

God bless each of you,

Laura Behee, M.Ed.
St. Maria Goretti Catholic School
Principal

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Calendar

2019-2020

First Day of School August 13	Last Day of School May 28
<u>Student Holiday Dates</u> Sept. 2 Oct. 24 Oct. 25 Nov. 25-29 Dec. 23-Jan. 6 Jan. 20 Mar. 9-13 April 10 May 25	<u>Student Holidays</u> Labor Day Parent/Teacher Conferences Diocesan In-Service Thanksgiving Break Christmas Holiday Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Spring Break Good Friday Memorial Day
<u>Student Early Dismissal Days (12:15 p.m.)/Staff Development In-service Days for Faculty</u>	Aug. 13, Oct. 4, Oct. 24, Dec. 20, Feb. 7, Mar. 6, April 9, May 27 Extended Day care will NOT be available on Dec. 20, April 9, or May 27
<u>Staff Workdays/Diocesan In-service Workdays</u> Aug. 1-2, 5-9, 12 Oct. 24 Oct. 25 Jan. 6 Aug 1 – July 31	Teacher Workdays Parent/Teacher Conferences Diocesan In-Service Day Teacher Workday 4 “Flex” Teacher Workdays
<u>PreK-8th Grade School Hours</u>	7:55 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
<u>Report Cards & Progress Reports</u>	Report Cards emailed: Oct. 24, Jan. 10, Mar. 20, Last Day of School (either sent home with student or mailed) Progress Reports emailed: Sept. 13, Nov. 15, Feb. 7, April 24
<u>School Makeup/Inclement Weather Days</u>	First makeup day to be used: April 14 Second makeup day to be used: April 13

The 1st Quarter and 1st Semester begin the first day of the school year.
 The 3rd Quarter and 2nd Semester begin the first day after the Christmas holiday.

SAINT MARIA GORETTI CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School leads prekindergarten through eighth grade students closer to Christ by offering a deeper connection to academics, spirituality, service to others, and a love of learning. Classrooms are staffed by qualified lay teachers interested in the total growth of the children through their daily care. The administration and faculty are dedicated to the Christian education of youth, which takes in the whole aggregate of human life in order to elevate, regulate, and perfect it in accordance with the example and teaching of Jesus Christ.

Today's child is tomorrow's citizen who must live a life in Christ and display it in all his/her actions. A partnership between the faculty, students, and parents is key to a Catholic education. The Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School faculty & staff have worked together to offer best practices and will continue to strive to help parents walk the journey of raising children in the faith and teaching their children gospel values.

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School is accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops Education Department Accreditation and is recognized by the Texas Education Agency. The school holds membership in the National Catholic Educational Association and the Institute for Catholic Liberal Education.

MISSION

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School is a living testament to our Lord's work in his youngest disciples, exemplified by academic excellence, spiritual formation, and compassionate service to others.

VISION

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth are committed to opening the doors so that our students can reach further than the walls that would otherwise enclose them and therefore are able to recognize and cherish the eternal and transcendental goods of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness.

PHILOSOPHY

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School's philosophy is to partner with our parish and parents to provide an authentic Catholic education to our diverse student body. A Covenant has been formed among the school, parents, students, and parish to ensure a quality experience that educates the whole child in academic and faith formation.

Teachers and Staff

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School provides teaching through both traditional and innovative methods infused with Catholic Social Teachings. The school seeks to help the child grow in faith and fulfill the promise of Baptism by becoming believing, trusting, loving, and participating members of the Catholic community and of the world. Saint Maria Goretti aspires, along with the vital help of parents, to graduate students who are critical thinkers, productive moral citizens, and faith-filled spiritual leaders.

Parents

In choosing this type of education, parents commit themselves to partner with the school and parish to carry the message of Christ and sustain such values at home by word and constant example. Parents are expected to take the lead as primary teachers of their children in Christ, participate in the life of both the school and parish through gifts of time, talent, and treasure. The partnership between the parents, school and parish helps teach the “whole child” the foundations of the Catholic faith in an academically challenging environment. Families fulfill their role by worshipping on weekends and Holy Days of Obligation in a Catholic parish, or their respective churches if not Catholic.

Parents As Partners

As partners in the educational process at Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School, we ask parents to comply with the following guidelines:

Set rules, times, and limits so that your child:

- Gets to bed early on school nights
- Arrives at school on time (7:40AM) and is picked up on time at the end of the day (3:15PM)
- Is dressed according to the school dress code
- Completes assignments on time
- Eats breakfast and has lunch money or nutritional sack lunch every day
- Actively participates in school activities such as Parent/Teacher Conferences and Home and School Meetings
- Sees that the student pays for any damage to schoolbooks or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student.
- Call the school on the morning of a child’s absence and send the child back to school with a written note when the student returns to school. (Note goes to homeroom teacher.)
- Notify the school office of any changes of address, important phone numbers, and/or e-mail addresses.
- Meet all financial obligations to the school.
- Inform the school of any special situation regarding the student’s well-being, safety, and health.
- Complete and return promptly to the school any requested information.
- Read school e-mails, notices, FACTS/RenWeb and the school website on a regular basis.
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school.
- Attend weekend Mass and observe Holy Days of Obligation with your family.
- Support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school.
- Treat teachers, faculty, and staff with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems.

Students

Students should strive to live up to their potential by actively participating in academic, social, and spiritual formation offered by the parish and school. As an active member of the school, students should follow the policies, rules, and procedures of the school so as to promote respect for all individuals. Students are expected to represent the parish and the school well in the sight of others by following the moral teachings of the Church. Each student is also expected to learn habits of good sportsmanship and fair play, as well as develop healthy and sound bodies.

Parish

The parish fulfills the role of spiritual guidance and exercises good stewardship in the allocation of resources to support the school through finances, materials, personnel, spiritual formation, and cooperative leadership. The Friars and staff provide leadership in worship, celebration of the sacraments, and visits to the school and classrooms. The mission of the church and Saint Francis is highlighted through the support of the parish.

In the spirit of working together for the advancement of the Gospel message in the name of Saint Maria Goretti, our covenant guides the school's philosophy to form the next generation of leaders in our global society.

OUR STORY

The Sisters of Saint Mary of Namur founded Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School in 1954 and provided all the principals and many of our teachers for SMG's first 36 years. The moral guidance, Catholic atmosphere, and expectation of academic excellence they instilled are very much a part of our educational experience at SMG. We are forever grateful to these special women and owe their religious community a tremendous debt of gratitude.

ASBESTOS

To the best of our knowledge, St. Maria Goretti Catholic School does not contain any identified asbestos-containing materials. All documentation regarding asbestos in St. Maria Goretti Catholic School is maintained in the business office.

ADMISSIONS

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

The following admission order and criteria will be considered in accepting the application.

Order:

1. Currently enrolled students /siblings
2. St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church parishioners
3. Open enrollment

Criteria:

1. All tuition, fees, and other auxiliary balances at the time of application must be current
2. Students must have shown appropriate growth in academic and behavioral standards.
(Summer school / tutoring may be a requirement for re-registration.)
3. All students and parents jointly agree to abide by the following:
 - Administrative Policies and Regulations
 - School Policies and Rules
 - Classroom Procedures

Entrance Assessment

Entrance assessments are administered to all new students entering K through 8th grade at a non-refundable cost of \$30.00 per child. New families will be interviewed by either the Principal or Assistant Principal, prior to admission.

Registration

Students entering Pre-K must be 4 years of age on or before September 1st.

Students entering Kindergarten must be five years of age by September 1st. Students will be conditionally accepted into Kindergarten with full acceptance contingent on displayed readiness on the Kindergarten entrance test and teacher recommendation.

At the time of registration, all new students (K-8th grade) seeking admission to Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School are assessed based on current standardized test scores, report cards, and teacher recommendations.

For all new students, the following documents must be provided to the administration before enrollment is complete:

- Admission Application
- Verification of active parish affiliation/stewardship
- Ongoing Directory Release/Permission for Publication Form
- Use of weekly envelopes or automatic deposit

- Health Records
- Immunization Records
- All students entering Saint Maria Goretti must have current immunizations. The only exemption to the policy is in the event of a student with an illness that would compromise his/her life by being immunized.
- Information about special health needs
- Documentation regarding psychological, medical, or educational evaluations
- Birth Certificate (original)
- Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- Sacramental record of First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, where applicable for Catholics
- Report Cards
- Standardized Test Results
- Record of Specialized and Formal Plans (optional)
- Registration fee paid in full
- Assessment fee paid for all new students entering K through 8th grade

All new students will be given a trial period of not less than one semester in which to prove himself/herself both socially and academically. If during this trial period there are any problems, a student may be asked to withdraw his/her attendance at Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School. The recommendation and decision of the school is final.

Saint Maria Goretti is limited in its human capital resources and will make **reasonable** accommodations for learning differences when possible. Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School cannot accommodate students who have **extraordinary** learning differences.

Non-Catholic students whose parents accept the philosophy of Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School will be accepted on a space available basis. Non-Catholic students are expected to attend all religious observances.

Re-Enrollment

For all re-enrolling students, the following is required prior to admission:

1. Completed Online Admission Application
2. Current on financial obligations to the school
3. Registration fee paid in full
4. All applicable fees

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School is in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal statutes for non-discrimination in its employment and admissions practices.

FACTS/RenWeb

Parents and guardians of St. Maria Goretti Catholic School are authorized to establish an account with FACTS/RenWeb, our learning and financial management system. At this website, you can check grades, homework assignments (may change at teacher's discretion), record service hours, check the school calendar, and access other functions. Please follow these steps to establish your account:

1. Enter www.renweb.com into your browser.
2. Click the Logins tab, then ParentsWeb Login.
3. Enter the District Code: SMGT-TX.
4. Click the link for Create New ParentsWeb Account.
5. Follow directions for setting up your own FACTS/RenWeb account.

An email from FACTS/Renweb will be sent to your email address with your password. After you receive your password, return to FACTS/RenWeb, click on ParentsWeb Login. Complete the requested information to log in to your account.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES

Participation in many school-sponsored activities are privileges that must be earned. They are not rights. These activities include but are not limited to athletics, academics, parties, and field trips. Students earn these rights by meeting academic and behavioral expectations. Students who do not meet these expectations may not be allowed to participate in these and similar activities. In principle, anytime a student is representing SMG in word or deed, that student must as a minimum meet all school standards.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students in grades 5-8 who have no failing grades and whose conduct is in good standing (as determined by teachers/administration) are eligible to participate in activities such as Sports, Yearbook, Student Council, Robotics, Private School Interscholastic Association, National Junior Honor Society, and any other extracurricular activity.

Students participating in extracurricular activities are considered to be in one of the following categories: eligible, on probation, or ineligible. A student is eligible to participate when his/her grades are 76% or higher and he/she demonstrates good conduct. A student is ineligible if any grade is 69% or lower and/or his/her conduct does not meet expectations. A student is on probation if any grade is between 70%-75% or the student's conduct does not meet expectations. A student's eligibility status is reviewed each week during the school year and the extracurricular eligibility requirement applies any time an activity is sponsored by SMG, or a student wears the SMG uniform or requires administrative approval to participate in any event such as a tournament or competition. Students who are ineligible may not participate in the sport or activity until the assigned grade(s) has been brought to passing. **Ineligible students may not participate in either games or practices.**

Parents are urged to keep track of their child(ren)'s grades on FACTS/RenWeb at all times.

Students who have been suspended from school may not participate in extracurricular activities.

Students must be picked up promptly following extracurricular events such as practices and/or games. No unsupervised students may be on campus or in the gym at any time.

ATHLETIC COACHES

The administration reserves the right to approve all coaches and assistant coaches of athletic teams sponsored by the school. Coaches/assistant coaches must apply in writing to the athletic coordinator for permission to coach. The athletic coordinator will conduct an orientation for coaches and then give approval to coach to those adults who have been determined can best satisfy the athletic philosophy of the school and the diocese. All coaches and assistant coaches must have a background check. Coaches must attend *Virtus Training*, formerly *Safe Environment* or *Keeping Children Safe* training, when offered as a condition for coaching. Coaches are expected to understand and implement the diocesan athletic philosophy and participate in training for *Play Like A Champion Today*.

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

As our school continues to compete in the Diocesan sports league, it is important that each of you understands the school's athletic philosophy. This philosophy guides our thinking. If you know what it is, it is easier to understand why certain decisions are made.

Athletics are an important part of our school program. They help promote good health, instill confidence, and develop athletic skills. The idea and value of teamwork is learned. Teamwork and confidence are transferable skills that will help students be successful in the classroom today and in the future business world. Positive athletic experiences that are gained at school lead to lifelong interests in certain sports.

Competition and pressure to succeed is natural and it can be a positive experience if handled in an appropriate manner. However, if the competition and pressure that is inherent with athletics is not handled in an appropriate manner, it can have a very negative impact on children. Too much pressure from adults to win is not healthy and can negate most if not all of the benefits of athletics.

We participate in the Diocesan Sports League, which emphasizes the recreational aspects of athletics. It is not a competitive or select league. Its purpose is to teach skills, have fun, and to learn sportsmanship. This means that we prepare our athletes to compete to the best of their ability. We ask them to play hard and fairly. Everyone gets to play. We emphasize what they can do, not what they can't do. We want their athletic experiences to be positive and developmental, while encouraging good sportsmanship and teamwork.

See Athletes' Handbook and Contract for additional details regarding athletics.

RECESS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students are expected to dress properly to go outside for recess. If a student is unable to go outside for recess or participate in physical education (PE) due to medical reasons, a written note from a physician is required stating the reason(s) your child is unable to participate in recess or PE.

TUITION

The prompt payment of tuition facilitates the sound financial operations of our school. Therefore, it is necessary that parents be faithful in meeting their financial obligations.

A FACTS payment plan must be in place for the upcoming school year. Payment can be made in a lump sum, or in two, ten, or 12-month installments.

It is the responsibility of the parents to notify the school administration of temporary financial difficulties, so that a financial arrangement may be agreed upon with the administration. Unless financial obligations are satisfied promptly, the child/children may not be allowed to continue as students at St. Maria Goretti Catholic School.

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School reserves the right to withhold official student records and/or not allow a student to register for the next school year until the payment of tuition, fees, and other financial responsibilities are satisfactorily fulfilled.

Withdrawal Policy

- Families must notify the school in writing if a student is withdrawn from the school.
- If the withdrawal is due to a change in job location, a letter from his/her employer will be necessary for consideration when determining adherence to this policy.
- Registered students who withdraw before the first full day of school are responsible for 1/3 of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw between the first day of school and December 15th are responsible for ½ of the full tuition amount.
- Registered students who withdraw after December 15th are responsible for the full tuition amount.
- The school will not forward records for students who withdraw with an outstanding balance.
- All decisions regarding the withdrawal policy are at the discretion of the Principal.
- Diocesan policy requires families currently enrolled in a diocesan school to get an Exit Report from their current Catholic school before seeking enrollment at another school within our same diocese.

A RETURN FEE OF \$50.00 WILL BE ASSESSED TO YOUR ACCOUNT FOR ANY RETURNED TUITION PAYMENT.

PLEASE ADDRESS ALL TUITION QUESTIONS TO THE SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER at 817-275-5081.

OFFICE RECORDS

Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, custody, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up to date.

SCHOOL ENDORSEMENTS

Occasionally during the school year, SMG sends home flyers advertising various events, services, and items that are available to our school community. The inclusion of these flyers does not constitute an endorsement of the event, service, or item by the school. Our intent is to provide information for you to evaluate and use as you determine appropriate.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

An explanation of the grading system can be found below and on the report card for each grade level. No grade in excess of 100 for a nine-week grading period, semester exam, or the semester average shall be recorded on the report card.

<i>Grading System Used for grades 4th-8th and for core subjects for grades 1st-3rd</i>	<i>Grading System Used for special subjects K-3rd and by primary grades 1st-2nd Social Studies and Science:</i>
A=100—94	S=Satisfactory 86-100
B =93—86	I=Improvement Needed 70-85
C =85—76	N =Not Satisfactory 0-69
D = 75 — 70	Pre-K and Kindergarten have their own distinct card.
F = 69 — 0	

Student grades should be a true reflection of academic success. Teachers should provide just opportunities for a child to show proficiency of a skill. Within a category, there should be at least 3 test/assessment project grades each quarter.

In Grade 1 - science and social studies will follow the Satisfactory, Improvement Needed, and Not Satisfactory criteria, and numeric grades will be given in core subjects (reading, English, math, religion).

In Grade 2 – 8, numeric grades are given for core subject classes (including Spanish for grades 3-8). Satisfactory, improvement Needed, and Not Satisfactory grades will be given in grades K-5 Music, Library, Art, PE, Band, Spanish, and Computer classes. Students in grades 6-8 receive a numeric grade in these Specials classes.

Report Cards & Progress Reports

Students are evaluated during a grading period that ends every nine weeks. There are four grading periods in an academic year. There is a mandatory Parent/Teacher Conference to receive the first nine-week Report Card. Progress reports will be emailed to parents and available for viewing on FACTS/RenWeb at the end of the fifth week for each grading period for Grades 1-8. Grades are given for academic achievement, effort, and conduct. After the first quarter, report cards for Grades 1-8 are generated at the end of each nine-week period and will be emailed to parents and available for viewing on FACTS/RenWeb. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten report cards are designed to inform parents of specific skill areas and concepts mastered and are sent home at the end of each nine-week period. At the end of the school year, final report cards for Grades PreK-8 will be mailed home. (NOTE: If a family has an outstanding account balance, report cards may not be released until all financial debts are paid.) An explanation of the grading system can be found on the report card for each grade level. No grade in excess of 100 for a nine-week grading period, semester exam, or the semester average shall be recorded on the report card.

Students in Grades 6-8: If a student is absent during mid-terms or final exams, report cards will have an "INC" (incomplete) for each subject in which the exam was not taken. Upon returning to school, the student will have 5 days to make up the exam and have the INC replaced with the appropriate grade. **No exams will be administered prior to exam week.** Please check the classroom calendar for specific exam dates.

Families with outstanding account balances will be disabled from FACTS/RenWeb until their account is paid in full. This includes disabling the gradebook and report card features.

Honor Roll

Students who achieve superior grades will be recognized with appropriate awards and honors. Students in grades 4-8 are honored in the areas of both academic achievement and outstanding effort. For the academic Honor Roll, all core subjects are considered as well as foreign language for grades 6-8.

Honor Roll qualifications are as follows:

- High Honors: all grades must average 94-100
- Honors: all grade must average 86-93

ACADEMIC HONESTY & ACADEMIC IRREGULARITY

Students at Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School need to understand the importance of the virtue of integrity. They should strive to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and be willing to provide appropriate help to their peers. It is the student's duty to abide by the teacher's instructions both inside and outside the classroom, and to avoid any unauthorized use of sources that could constitute cheating or plagiarism. Cheating on tests, copying homework, and all forms of plagiarism constitute serious offenses.

A student athlete or student involved in extra-curricular activities who is involved in cheating will also be unable to participate in sports/extra-curricular competition. Talking or any non-verbal communication at any time during the administration of a test, even if a student's paper has been turned in, except in an emergency defined by the teacher, will result in a grade of zero for the students involved, no matter the subject of the conversation.

CONTACTING TEACHERS

Teachers work very long hours in order to serve our families and students. Each of them has a life outside of school. Please respect their privacy and personal time. Contact them on school matters only at school. Call them at school or e-mail them at school to discuss your child. Teachers are not required to discuss business with parents while they are at home. There is ample time to do this during the school day.

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Families are required to perform 40 hours of volunteer (20 each semester), called Spirit hours, to St. Maria Goretti Catholic School each school year. The school policy dictates the monetary amount each service hour is worth. Spirit hours that are not performed will be billed at this amount. Bills will normally be sent in December and May and must be paid before school records such as report cards are provided. Service hours are recorded on the Spirit Hours form (found in this handbook and on the school website) and submitted to the Spirit Coordinator (spirit @smgschool.org) or turned in to the front office. Details of Spirit hour requirements can be found on the school website (smgschool.org).

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION FOR CONCERN

1. Contact the teacher regarding questions about instruction, discipline, learning materials, class work, or homework. The principal will not discuss teacher-related situations with parents until the parent has contacted the teacher and attempted to resolve/discuss the problem.
2. Contact the principal regarding questions about school procedures and day-to-day operations of the school.

3. Contact the Advisory Council concerning policies and long-range planning of the school. The council is an advising body only and does not become involved in the day-to-day administration of the school.
4. Any grievance that is not satisfied in one of the above three procedures will be handled in accordance with Diocesan policy.

NOTE: The Catholic Schools Office at the Diocese of Fort Worth is not involved in the day-to-day administration of the school.

The teacher will never question your authority as a parent. Never, under any circumstances, question the authority of a teacher when your child is present.

Parents cannot expect the school to be effective in communicating Christian values if these values are not lived at home. Children lose respect for their school and the faculty when they listen to parents speak adversely or negatively about the school and the parish community. St. Maria Goretti Catholic School families are expected to live as mature Christians and to refrain from gossip in all of its forms.

Constructive criticism of the school is welcome when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program and to equip the school to perform its task more effectively. Any misunderstanding that arises should be presented to the teacher first, when it pertains to his/her class and then to the principal.

OFFICE HOURS

The school office hours are from 7:30AM to 3:45PM weekdays. On early dismissal days, the office will be open from 7:30AM until 12:30PM. At any other time, a parent may leave a message on the answering machine.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Curriculum

To address the needs of all students, St. Maria Goretti Catholic School focuses on the spiritual, academic, emotional, and physical needs of the child. Developmentally appropriate teaching strategies are used in the curriculum. A hands-on approach fosters greater involvement and motivation in all areas of study, as does a variety of student/teacher interaction through individual, small group, and larger group activities. The curriculum includes Religion, Literature, English, Phonics, Spelling, Handwriting, Mathematics, Science, History, Library Skills, Music/Performing Arts/Band, Art, Physical Education, and Foreign Language. The school follows TCCB ED accreditation guidelines for time allotments for each subject area as well as skills to be mastered at each level. Grade level curriculum guides, based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) Standards, the Archdiocese of Hartford Curriculum Standards for religion, and St. Jerome Classical Educational Plan are available in the school office for review.

Tutorials

Teachers may offer before or after school sessions in their classroom for students who are struggling with specific concepts or assignments. The teacher will arrange the tutorial with the student and parent.

Faith Formation

The faith formation of our students is at the core of our mission at Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School. Our curriculum is centered on Catholic Christian vision and values. Children must see faith valued and practiced in the family before it can become a meaningful part of their lives. It is strongly suggested that the family model to their children the privilege of prayer and worship, especially the Sunday and Holy Day celebrations of the Eucharist with the parish community.

Students in grades K-8 attend Mass each Wednesday morning at 8:00AM. Mass on Holy Days of Obligation is celebrated at 10:00AM. Second grade students prepare to receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and Eucharist. On Fridays, K-8 students spend silent time with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration and opportunities for students to go to Confession are offered throughout the year. Families are welcome and encouraged to attend these celebrations with the school.

Virtues in Practice is a program for children in grades pre-kindergarten through eight to grow closer to Jesus by imitating His life and virtues. It is set up in such a way that a whole school studies the same virtues each month, to provide a whole-school (and at home, whole-family) focus. The program covers 27 virtues over a three-year cycle, with 81 saints held up as models of the virtues. Information about *Virtues in Practice* can be found by visiting: <https://www.nashvilledominican.org>.

Students at each grade-level are members of their homeroom *Households*. Households come together each Friday afternoon to pray, read the Gospel that they will hear at Mass on Sunday with their families and reflect on that Gospel, and work on service projects and other activities as a class family or Household. Each Household has a Household name and a banner, and a special Household Mass will be celebrated at least once a quarter. Households develop a stronger sense of belonging in students and creates stronger bonds and a stronger faith-filled school community.

Church Etiquette

Please keep in mind this is a reverent service and not a performance. If you wish to attend Mass:

- Sit with the parishioners
- NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY
- Please remain seated rather than approaching the front of the church to get a better photo shot during Mass
- Pictures may be taken of students after Mass
- Stay for the entirety of the Mass
- Please refrain from applauding at any point during the Mass unless invited by the Priest
- No food or beverages

HOMEWORK AND RESPONSIBILITY

Homework is defined as any work or task planned by the teacher to be completed by the student outside of the regular classroom without immediate and direct teacher interaction. Homework provides practice, enrichment, and extension opportunities with already taught skills and concepts. Homework also encourages students to take initiative and responsibility and allows families to provide a supportive role in their child's education.

Homework should be assigned:

1. To help the student become more self-reliant
2. To learn to work independently
3. To improve the skills that have been taught in class
4. To complete certain projects that require individual and creative effort
5. To encourage parents to become involved in the education process with their child
6. To assist the teachers in assessing individual and group readiness in order to move to the next concept.

It is suggested that parents check student assignment books (student planners grades 2-8), and/or FACTS/RenWeb daily. Teachers in all grades will have classroom information and information about assignments in FACTS/RenWeb, but this does not relieve the student of any responsibility to copy their assignments from the board if that is a procedure of the classroom teacher. Lower grades (PreK4-1) do not use planners. Communication for these grade-levels is primarily sent through the daily folder, FACTS/RenWeb, and email. Please inform the teacher if your child is experiencing difficulty. Homework should reinforce classroom learning objectives and be related to individual student needs and abilities.

Students are responsible for collecting work missed due to an absence. Students have the responsibility to check with each teacher for class work and homework missed. This is needed even if a homework sheet is sent home. Students are responsible for checking with each teacher upon return from an absence for missed assignments, regardless if the missed assignments were requested ahead of time. Teachers will have a general lesson plan for the week in FACTS/RenWeb for students and parents to get an idea what is coming up in the class. Students are still responsible for keeping up with assignments that teachers have placed on the board or given them orally to place in their planners.

Homework Policy due to Illness

A parent may request homework assignments via email to the teacher if a student will be absent due to illness longer than one day. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office between 3:00-3:30 p.m.

Students may make arrangements with classmates regarding assignments or check FACTS/RenWeb. Students may also receive missed assignments from their teacher(s) when they return to school.

Students will be allowed one day to make up work for each day of absence due to illness. For example, a student who was absent for three days will be given three days to complete the missed work.

If a student is absent and misses a test or a project due date, they will make up their test and/or turn in the project upon their return to school. If there are extenuating circumstances, special arrangements can be made with the individual teacher. Should an absence for any reason other than illness seem imperative, parents are requested to consult with the Principal and/or the Assistant Principal with a written reason for the absence.

Homework due to Vacations/Planned Absences

The school calendar provides for extended weekends throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process.

Late Work Policy

PreK-3, PreK-4 and Kindergarten

Will send a note home with the student or email the parent as to what needs to be completed.

Homework Policies for 1st through 3rd grade will be distributed by classroom teachers during Back to School Night.

Grade 4 through Grade 8

Assignments turned in the following day may receive a 10% deduction. (These assignments must be turned in to the teacher at the beginning of the class period). An additional 10% may be deducted for each late day. If a student does not have his/her assignment by the third day, a grade of "0" may be given. ***Parents will be notified if the assignment is still missing at that time.*** More details on the 3rd - 8th grade homework policy will be given by the grade-level teachers during Back to School Night.

All assignments must be completed and turned in for feedback to show content mastery and ensure there is an understanding of the material.

Parent Responsibilities

1. Check homework on FACTS/RenWeb daily after 5:00 p.m.
2. Be positive, provide encouragement, and make sure assignments are completed on time.
3. Assist the student with budgeting his/her time.
4. Provide time for daily study.
5. Supervise the homework and make sure the student understands directions and works carefully and neatly.
6. When needed, help find materials and resources to complete homework assignments.
7. Encourage the child to develop a sense of responsibility for keeping track of school materials and assignments.

Student Responsibilities

1. Update Student Assignment Planner daily.
2. Listen carefully and follow directions given by the teacher.
3. Use study aids as provided by teacher and parents (flash cards, etc.).
4. Use time efficiently. Plan ahead. Don't wait until the last minute to do long-range assignments.
5. Study in a well-lighted, distraction-free area.
6. Find time to study each day.
7. Discuss homework assignments with parents.
8. Talk with the teacher if you have problems doing your homework.
9. Be neat, well-organized, and proud of your work!

Tutorials

Teachers may offer before or after school sessions in their classroom for students who are struggling with specific concepts, rather than to recover work that is not turned in. The teacher may arrange the tutorial with the student and parent.

Occasionally, a child will benefit academically from professional, outside tutoring. If this situation is recommended for a child by a teacher, St. Maria Goretti Catholic School will make an effort to provide direction and resources to the parent. Fees for outside tutoring sessions are the responsibility of the parent. Please note, however, that St. Maria Goretti Catholic School teachers are never permitted to tutor a current student for a fee during the academic school year.

STUDENT SERVICE HOURS

Students in 6th-8th grade are required to complete 20 hours. Hours may be accumulated and completed in total throughout the summer and turned in on or before the first quarter due date.

Hours can be acquired through service to the school, to the church, or throughout the community by volunteering to serve as a Vacation Bible Camp Volunteer, Altar Server, Hospitality Minister, Parish Choir or Cantor, or by volunteering service with other non-profit organizations or activities serving the needs of people throughout our community outside of the academic school day. Service hours DO NOT include family obligations such as babysitting, lawn mowing, etc. As service hours are for volunteering, students receiving any type of compensation for services will not be counted as qualified service hours.

Service hours are directly related to the school and Religion curriculum. Student service hours are non-transferable to satisfy parental service hour requirements.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher conferences for all students in grades K-8 are scheduled after the first grading period. Additional conferences may be requested by the teacher or by the parent when needed. If a parent wishes to schedule a conference with a teacher, they are asked to email the teacher directly. Please note that teachers have been provided with planning periods daily for purposes which include parent conferences. PLEASE DO NOT TRY TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE TEACHER DURING ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES OF THE SCHOOL DAY. These times are periods when the teachers are occupied with

supervising the safety of children and planning for the school day. It is the intention of the school to keep in close touch with the parents and students alike. The Roman Catholic Church's principle of subsidiarity states that problems should be solved at the lowest level possible. With this in mind, a person should go directly to the one with whom they are having a problem before going to that person's superior.

Process for communication:

- Parent/Teacher
- Parent/Teacher/Assistant Principal or Principal
- Parent/Teacher/Principal/Pastor
- Parent/Teacher/Principal/Pastor/Superintendent

TESTING

Standardized tests are administered in the fall each year. When the results are returned to the school, an individual report for each child is made available to parents, usually during Parent/Teacher Conferences in October. The standardized tests include:

- *IOWA Basic Test*: Grades 1 - 8
- *CogAT Test*: Grades 1 - 8
- *ACRE*: Grades 5 and 8
- Assessment testing for all new students in grades K – 8 (prior to enrollment)

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

Advancement to the next grade in Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School is based on a student's daily performance, test results, recommendations of teachers, and the student's ability to complete work successfully on a more advanced level.

Promotion to the next grade depends on successful completion of all subject areas. The Administration may recommend the repetition of a grade, tutoring, or summer school classes as requirement for promotion when, after conferences with teachers and parents, it is believed that such action will better prepare the student academically or emotionally for the next grade.

- Students in grades 2-3 shall earn a final average of **"70"** in each major subject in order to be promoted to the next grade. The major subjects for these grades are religion, reading, English and mathematics.
- Students in grades 4-8 shall earn a final average of **"70"** in each major subject in order to be promoted to the next grade. The major subjects in grades 4-8 are religion, Literature, English, mathematics, history, and science.

Students may not be retained more than once per grade and not more than twice in elementary school. Generally, students should be identified and retained in the lowest grade possible so that their academic foundation can be strengthened before moving on to the parts of the curriculum that require higher level thinking skills. Students will be considered for retention if they fail two or more classes for the entire year and retention could reasonably be expected to improve their academic performance. Students may be required to be tested for a learning disability if in the opinion of the teacher and administration it is warranted by their academic performance.

Students may only recover two failing classes during the summer to progress to the next grade level. A passing score or assessment administered by school personnel will determine readiness for the next level. Failing more than two classes may result in transfer to another school.

A student must also be in compliance with the Texas Council of Catholic Bishops Education Department (TCCB ED) in regard to the attendance regulations. A student may not miss more than 10% of the academic calendar days (no more than 18 absences).

Incomplete Coursework:

In extraordinary circumstances, such as a significant illness or a family emergency that requires a prolonged absence, a teacher will assign a quarter grade of "I" (incomplete). It is the responsibility of the student and his or her parent to make sure that the missing coursework is made up within the time allotted by the teacher and no later than the end of the quarter (or the end of the summer in the case of a 4th quarter incomplete). An incomplete grade that has not been made up within the allotted time will be re-calculated based on the student's actual grades for the quarter in which he or she received an incomplete. In the case of a student who has withdrawn from Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School, incomplete grades will remain incompletes on the permanent record and no credit will be given.

The Principal's decision shall be final.

EIGHTH-GRADE PROMOTION/GRADUATION

Eighth grade students will be asked to participate in the graduation/promotion exercises and will receive a certificate provided that:

All fees and tuition have been paid by the end of the second Friday in May. In order to participate in any graduation activities, all fees and fines must be paid.

The student successfully completes all required courses in the eighth grade and completes all 20 hours of required service by the second week of May. Students who fail one or two courses for the year will be permitted to participate in the graduation activities but will not receive the certificate until the course has been made up in an approved summer school. The certificate will be issued when the failed courses are made up. Students who fail more than two classes for the year will not be able to receive a certificate from Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School.

EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

A student is either absent from school or present. This status is documented on the report card. Administratively, absences are designated as either excused or unexcused. Excused absences are made for immediate family emergencies (e.g., death of an immediate family member), an extended sickness, or other reasons acceptable to the administration. All other absences are unexcused. The excused/unexcused designation is made so that the teacher will know how to treat the homework for the absent student. State compulsory attendance laws states that students may not miss more than 10 percent of scheduled school days. For St. Maria Goretti Catholic School, that is 18 days. Excess absences may result in consequences, including being required to make up the school days after the normal school year.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused absences are generally for sickness, family emergencies that are death or serious illness of immediate family members, or other reasons acceptable to the Administration. If a child is absent, parents must call or e-mail the school office before 9:00AM to inform the administration of the nature of the absence. Work for students may be requested at that time. It will be available for pick-up in the office at 3:00PM. A physician's written excuse is required when the child has been absent 5 consecutive days or more.

Students are expected to complete work that has been missed. The student has one day for every day absent to make up work starting with the day the student returns to school. It is the student's responsibility to contact the teacher for make-up assignments. Students with an excessive number of absences (18) or tardies (16) will be contacted by the principal or assistant principal and may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with school and Diocesan policy.

Medical, dental appointments, etc. are to be scheduled outside school time as much as possible. Exceptions may be made if absolutely necessary, but in many cases the child will miss important instruction.

Students must be in attendance a minimum of two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon to be considered present for the day. One half-day absence will be annotated on the report card.

Students who are absent from school in the afternoon because of illness or unexcused absence may not participate in SMEED or any after school extracurricular activities or that occur that evening only. For example, a student who is absent Friday afternoon because of sickness may not participate in extracurricular activities on Friday evening.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

A major goal of any school is to teach responsibility to the student. Students should not be out of school for family vacations, scout trips, ski trips, visits to Disney Land, and so on. These are examples of unexcused absences.

Parents who choose to take students out of class for any reason other than illness, death in the immediate family, or other reasons acceptable to school administration must realize that students are ultimately responsible for the work missed, and forfeit any teacher explanations, quizzes, tests, etc. which are given during their absence. Teachers are not responsible for bringing students up to date on content during the student's unexcused absence. Homework that would have been submitted on an unexcused day of absence may not be accepted (teacher's discretion). When the student returns from an unexcused absence, the teacher will provide a list of assignments, copies of work sheets and other similar items that the student missed. The family is responsible for teaching this material to the student and completing the

other requirements so that the student is current with the other students. At the teacher's discretion, quizzes and tests that were missed during the unexcused absence may be given for grades as well as diagnostic purposes to determine if the concepts and content that was missed has been mastered. This evaluation may start on the second full day after return or later as determined by the teacher.

Parents need to ask themselves if school or other activities are the family priority. You communicate the importance of school to your children by the reason you allow your children to be absent.

TARDINESS

It is the responsibility of the parent to see that students arrive at school on time. Students arriving late disrupt class time and the learning environment of the classroom. Being on time results in teaching the virtues of punctuality and respect. Please respect your child and the other children in the class by being punctual.

Morning prayer will begin at 7:50AM each morning. Students arriving after 7:50AM are considered tardy and must check-in at the front office where they will receive a tardy pass to present to their homeroom teacher.

Anyone present in the hallways (students, parents, or visitors) at 7:50AM is asked to stop and join us in the Morning Prayer and quietly exit the building after announcements.

1. Students arriving to school after 10:00 AM will be counted absent ½ day.
2. Students leaving before 10:00 AM will be considered absent for the day.
3. In order to receive credit for half-day attendance, a student must be in class for three consecutive hours of instruction.
4. After 10 tardies, students and their parents may be contacted by the principal and/or the assistant principal to determine a course of action regarding tardiness.

Tardiness is disruptive to the class as a whole and teaches poor life habits to the child who is perpetually tardy. This is a serious matter. Additionally, the administration reserves the right to impose additional sanctions up to and including denial of admission for subsequent school years. Tardiness will ordinarily be unexcused (except for emergency situations) and work missed may not be given credit. This policy will be relaxed during adverse weather as determined by the administration.

ITEMS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School is not responsible for loss or damage to any items brought to school by a student. This includes but is not limited to all electronic devices.

LOCKERS

Each student is assigned a locker or “cubby” in which to store clothing and textbooks. In order to maintain a quiet atmosphere for class, students can go to their lockers at specified times.

Lockers are school property and may be searched at any time. The school also has the right to search book bags, gym bags, purses, phones, etc. No locks are permitted on school lockers at any time.

LOST AND LEFT

Any items left in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school receptionist to be placed in the Lost and Left basket. **Items placed in the Lost and Left remain there for 10 days. After 10 days, items are donated to charity.**

MONEY AT SCHOOL

Money should not be sent to school for any reason unless otherwise specified.

EVALUATION REQUESTS

Please allow at least two weeks for teachers and/or administrators to complete requests for written evaluations on students who are being evaluated (by their physician or diagnostic practitioner) for any learning or behavioral differences. The completed evaluation form must be mailed, faxed, or emailed from Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School directly to the designated school or testing authority, and will NOT be given directly to a parent/guardian.

UNIFORMS

All students should take pride in the Saint Maria Goretti uniform and remember that they represent their school when seen in uniform. **Uniforms and all shoes must be purchased at Mills Uniform Company (located in Fort Worth or online).**

Students are expected to dress in an appropriate manner. If there is a question concerning the acceptability of the attire, it should not be worn. Any faculty member may question whether attire is acceptable and reflects the intent of the dress standard. *If a student is not in proper uniform the student will be issued a demerit and the parent or guardian will be notified through FACTS/Renweb. Unauthorized items such as jewelry will be taken by the teacher and given to the parent to take home.

The administration reserves the right to send home any student who is dressed improperly. In all cases, the interpretation remains with the administration.

The uniform code will be strictly enforced.

Required Uniform **must** be worn on **all Mass days** and other specified days. Each student must have a required uniform.

The REQUIRED uniform for PreK4-Fifth Grade:

Girls:

- Plaid tunic jumper (Grades PreK4-3)
- Plaid skirt (GRADES 4 and 5 **ONLY**)
- White button-down oxford or Peter Pan collared blouse (long or short-sleeve)
- Tie for grades 2-5
- Modesty short for under jumper
- Solid white knee-high socks (logos are not allowed)
- Keds Saddle Oxfords (blue/white)
- Red cardigan sweater** with SMG Patch over left chest area

Boys:

- Navy blue dress slacks, either pleated or flat front
- White button-down oxford shirt (long or short-sleeve)
- Tie for grades 2-5
- Black belt
- Black Crew socks (logos are not allowed)
- Solid black tennis shoe
- Red cardigan sweater** with SMG Patch over left chest area

The OPTIONAL uniform for PreK4-Fifth Grade:

Girls:

- Navy blue dress slacks
- Navy blue walking shorts
- White knit polo with SMG embroidery (long or short-sleeve)

Red fleece with SMG Patch over the heart
Red V-neck sweater vest with SMG Patch over left chest area
SMG spirit-wear sweatshirts
Solid white or black tennis shoes
Tights are allowed - solid white only

Boys:

Navy blue walking shorts, either pleated or flat front
Light blue polo with SMG embroidery (long or short-sleeve)
Red fleece with SMG Patch over the heart
Red V-neck sweater vest with SMG Patch over left chest area
SMG spirit-wear sweatshirts

The REQUIRED uniform for 6th –8th Grade:

Girls:

Box-Pleat skirt
White button-down oxford (long or short-sleeve)
Tie
Modesty short for underskirt
Solid white knee-high socks (no logos)
Leather Saddle Oxfords(blue/white) or Women's Sperry Koifish Shoes
Navy cardigan sweater with SMG Patch over left chest area

Boys:

Khaki dress slacks, either pleated or flat front
White button-down oxford shirt (long or short-sleeve)
Tie
Brown belt
Khaki Crew socks (no logos)
Men's leather Sperry boat shoes
Navy cardigan sweater with SMG Patch over left chest area

The OPTIONAL uniform for 6th-8th Grade:

Girls:

Khaki dress slacks
Khaki walking shorts
White knit polo with SMG embroidery (long or short-sleeve)
Red fleece with SMG Patch over the heart
Navy V neck sweater vest with SMG Patch over left chest area
SMG spirit-wear sweatshirts

Boys:

Navy blue walking shorts, either pleated or flat front
Light blue polo with SMG embroidery (long or short-sleeve)
Red fleece with SMG Patch over the heart

Navy V neck sweater vest with SMG Patch over left chest area
SMG spirit-wear sweatshirts

GENERAL APPEARANCE AND GROOMING

The outward and general appearance of the Catholic school student has traditionally been one that is an excellent reflection on the student, his/her family, and the school. In keeping with this sense of pride, we required the following appearance standards:

Hair:

Hair must be worn in a tasteful manner away from the face (including girls' bangs).

No unnatural colored hair or excessive styles are allowed.

Boys' hair should not fall below the top of the collar, nor over the eyebrows. Hair needs to be cut above the ears. General rule: Over the ears, off the collar, out of the eyes.

Hair accessories may be worn, but may not be a distraction to classroom instruction. Bow colors may consist of navy, red, blue, green, gray, or black. No MEGA BOWS or bows with colors other than those previously listed are allowed.

Jewelry:

- Watches, one per student, may be worn. Alarms on watches may not be sounded during school or church (sounding alarms will result in a confiscated watch).
- No Apple watches, FitBits, or other Smart watches, will be allowed.
- One genuinely religious necklace, and/or one genuinely religious bracelet and/or one genuinely religious ring may be worn as determined by the school.
- Only girls may wear earrings — one set only, and on the earlobe. For safety reasons, the earrings should not be longer than the bottom of the earlobe.

Fingernails:

Fingernail polish and acrylic nails are **not allowed for any girl.**

Makeup:

- Girls in grades 6,7,8 may wear *minimal* makeup consisting of foundation only - neutral and natural tones.
- Other makeup – eye shadow, mascara, blush, eye liner, lipstick and gloss are **not allowed.**
- No tattoos, whether permanent or temporary, are acceptable.

Facial Hair:

Boys will be clean shaven.

Skirts:

Skirt length will be knee length at the beginning for the first and second semester. This will allow room for growth during each semester. At no time during the year may the skirt be more than 3 inches above the knee.

Free-Dress:

Uniforms will be worn unless otherwise communicated. Free-dress will constitute jeans, spirit shirts, and athletic shoes only. A new Diocesan Policy regarding free-dress will be communicated to all diocesan schools within the first several weeks of school.

Birthday Dress:

In anticipation of the new Diocesan Policy regarding free-dress, **students who are celebrating a birthday will no longer be allowed to be out of uniform on their birthday or half-birthday.** Students will still be recognized with a ribbon (from the front office) on their birthday (or half-birthday).

Spirit Day:

The goal of Spirit Day is to give students an opportunity to show school pride and maintain the integrity of the dress code. SMG Spirit Day will be on Fridays.

- Saint Maria Goretti students may wear Spirit shirts with uniform bottoms (jumpers, skirts, pants, shorts)
- No Jeans
- School uniform shoes are to be worn on Spirit Days.
- Students may wear the current year Kountry Karnival shirt on Mondays during the month of September. The week before Kountry Karnival students may wear their KK shirt every day except Wednesday (Mass Day). Students may also wear the Kountry Karnival shirt the Monday following the Kountry Karnival.

Judgment calls will be made by the administration.

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria is an important part of our school. Food services are available to provide a well-balanced lunch that is offered at a reasonable price. Children may bring sack lunches along with drinks and milk from home. Monthly menus will be posted on the website. Students may purchase ice cream on Fridays. **To promote healthy and nutritional choices, candy and soda are not permitted as part of students' school lunch.**

Lunchroom Guidelines:

1. Students are expected to show respect and courtesy to their classmates, the lunchroom staff, and parents.
2. Students sit as assigned by the teacher to a bench.
3. Students remain seated unless getting food or going to the trash container.
4. Students are responsible for cleaning his/her area.
5. Students are not allowed to share food with other students.

Parents are invited to eat lunch with their children on a special occasion, such as a birthday. We ask that you limit your visits to the lunchroom to just special occasions and observe the following guidelines:

1. All parents/guests must sign in at the Front Office and receive a visitor's badge before going to the cafeteria.
2. Please do not bring any food for students other than your child.
3. A separate table will be available in the cafeteria for parents to enjoy lunch with their child only.
4. Adult visitors should be directly related to the student.
5. All other visitors should be accompanied by the Saint Maria Goretti student's parent for the visit.

LUNCH/RECESS SCHEDULE

11:00-11:20	Lunch: Pk-3, Pk-4, Kindergarten, and 1st Grade
11:20-11:40	Recess: Pk-3, Pk-4, Kindergarten, and 1st Grade
11:25-11:45	Lunch: 2nd Grade and 3rd Grade
11:45-12:05	Recess: 2nd Grade and 3rd Grade
12:09-12:29	Lunch: 4th Grade and 5th Grade
12:29-12:49	Recess: 4th Grade and 5th Grade
12:09-12:29	Recess: 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade
12:29-12:49	Lunch: 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade

SNACKS

Each day from 9:30-9:45AM, students will have a break/recess. Students are permitted to eat a healthy snack (fruit, veggies, granola) and water during this time. No candy, soda, or sports drinks are allowed.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Parents can purchase the required school supplies through the school and have them delivered to the school. Parents may also opt to purchase school supplies independently. Students/parents are responsible for replenishing these supplies as needed.

CLASSROOM, BIRTHDAY, AND SCHOOL PARTIES

Please mail invitations to private parties or distribute them off the school premises. On campus distribution of invitations is only appropriate if **all** students in the class are invited. Parents may send in a Non-Food birthday treats (i.e. birthday pencils, etc.) for every student in the class, if they wish. **Due to allergies, do not bring any food products to school (at ANY TIME) to share with other students in celebrating your child's birthday, i.e. brownies, cupcakes, cookies, etc.** Please Do Not have balloons, flowers, etc. delivered to the school for your child.

The following are the only approved school parties: All Saints Day, Christmas, Valentine's Day (if it does not fall during Lent), and an end-of-the-year party. Room parents should assist the classroom teacher with these parties and teachers will approve the type of party to be held in their classrooms. Candles may not be used at parties.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

The procedures will help facilitate morning arrival and after school pick-up.

Before and After-School Care (SMEED)

Students may sign up for morning care through our Saint Maria Educational Extended Day (SMEED) program. SMEED is available each school day from 7:00AM – 7:30AM. Students arriving for morning SMEED must be walked and signed in by a parent in the Cafetorium each morning.

Morning Drop-Off

School is in session from 7:50AM to 3:15PM. Students are expected to be in the classroom by 7:50AM daily. Students who arrive between 7:30-7:40AM will be monitored in a Morning Room according to grade levels. Students should check signs on classroom doors for the correct Morning Room. At 7:40AM, students will report to their homeroom. Students who arrive at or later than 7:50AM should check in at the school office before going to their classroom.

A child is considered tardy after 7:50AM. For the safety of your children, please do not drop students off before 7:30AM as the school does not accept responsibility or provide supervision for children on the grounds before 7:30AM, and the doors will not be opened until this time, unless the student is enrolled in SMEED.

Please note, after Labor Day **all students (even PreK students) must be dropped off at their designated drop-off locations. **Parents/guardians will not be permitted to escort their student(s) into the building.** This is a new Diocesan policy that we will begin following this year. The primary reason for this policy is out of concern for the safety and security of all students. The two times a (school) building is least secure is during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. As well, we hope to foster a sense of independence in our students beginning at a young age, while also helping them to settle into a positive school routine.

PK3 and PK4

Parents are asked to park in the front parking lot. Please do not park in the fire lane in front of the building. Parents will be permitted to escort their PreK student(s) to their classroom, or they may utilize the morning drop-off car line in the west lot where school faculty and safety patrol students are available each morning to help students out of their cars and guide them to the classroom. PreK students arriving after 7:50AM, must be signed in at the front desk by a parent/guardian and school faculty or staff will escort the student to his/her classroom from there.

Kinder – 8th Grade

Students are dropped off on the west parking lot starting at 7:30AM. Please pull your car as far forward as possible and have students exit from right side of the vehicle. **Students should not be asked to walk across traffic from a parked car. All students should be dropped off in the car line.**

Students who walk to school MUST be escorted onto school property by a parent or adult guardian. SMG faculty and staff are responsible for supervising car line and students getting out of cars in the morning. They cannot be responsible for supervising students walking and entering school property from various locations along the surrounding streets each morning.

Remember it is illegal to be on a cell phone, even a hands-free device, in a school zone. Please be mindful of this law as it is to ensure the safety of our students.

Dismissal and Carline

PK3 through 2nd Grade Students Only Children - Dismissal

PK through 2nd Grade students **with no siblings in the school (only children)** will be dismissed beginning at 3:15PM from the Cafetorium steps. Parents are asked to park their car and present their dismissal tag to the faculty/staff on dismissal duty.

3rd – 8th Grade Students Only Children – Express Car Line Dismissal

At 3:15PM, students in the Express Car Line will be dismissed. Express Line dismissal takes place in the driveway lane immediately next to the St. Maria Center building (see map back of handbook). Students in grades 3rd-8th **with no siblings and who are not part of a car-pool** will be classified as **Express Car Line.** Parents will be issued an Express Car Line tag at the *Meet the Teacher* event. Express Car Line will be a moving car line; therefore, car tags must be visible to the faculty/staff. Please pay attention to the

directions of the faculty/staff when moving through the Express Car Line. When the Express Car Line is finished, students with siblings will be dismissed.

PK4 through 8th Grade Students with Siblings – Red Line Dismissal

Prior to Red Line dismissal, all students in a family/carpool will be brought to the oldest student in that family/carpool's homeroom. When Express Car Line is finished, Red Line dismissal will begin. Parents will be assigned a parking area based upon their oldest child's grade level. Please be sure to have your car tags clearly visible. **Parents/guardians should stay in their car and wait for their students to come to them.** Students will be directed to their assigned areas by their teachers. **When all children are safely in their cars, traffic flow will begin.** No one will leave the parking lot until they have been signaled by faculty/staff. **We are all responsible for the safety of our children!**

Late Dismissal

Students remaining after 3:30PM will be escorted to SMEED. SMEED is located in the Cafetorium in the afternoon. If a student(s) is sent to SMEED and picked up before 3:45PM, there will be a minimum charge of \$2.50. If the student(s) is picked up after 3:45PM there will be a one-hour minimum charge fee (\$8.00), in addition to any further hourly charges. On the second occurrence of a non-registered student going to SMEED, the family will be charged the registration fee (\$45.00 per child) in addition to the hourly fees.

Special Needs/Appointments

If you have an appointment that requires an early dismissal, please pick up your child **by 2:55PM**. Park in the Front parking lot and sign your child out at the School Office. Please notify the homeroom teacher or office in advance to expedite pick up. Failure to follow these procedures may detain you.

Indoor Dismissal

On rainy days, days when the temperature/heat index is 95 degrees or above, or the temperature is below 32 degrees, we will have *Indoor Dismissal*. Parents will pick up their child/children from their homeroom(s). No one will be admitted into the school until dismissal time at 12:15PM if early dismissal day, or 3:15PM on regular dismissal days. The Front Office and West doors will open at 12:15PM or 3:15PM on Indoor Dismissal days. Students end instructional class time at 12:10PM or 3:10PM, but the school doors will not open until 5 minutes later to give students time to return to their homeroom and pack up their belongings.

A **RED FLAG** will be posted at the Front Office door and West entrance door by 11:45AM or 2:45PM to indicate an Indoor Dismissal. A text alert will also be sent via FACTS/RenWeb.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

The St. Maria Extended Education Day (SMEED) is before and after school care is provided by school personnel. Students need to register for the program and can do so at any time during the school year. Registration paperwork is available in the school office, during *Meet the Teacher*, and on the school website.

HEALTH

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School has a nurse on staff charged with managing the health care needs of your children during school hours. The school nurse follows Diocesan policies regarding dispensing medication, sending sick children home, screenings and childhood immunizations. The Diocese complies with state law in performing vision, hearing, height and weight, acanthosis nigricans and spinal screenings, all of which are under the purview of the school nurse. The Diocese also follows Texas state law regarding required immunizations.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

1. A physical examination is required of all students new to the Catholic School System.
2. No person may be admitted to any elementary school unless he/she has been immunized according to the current requirements set forth by the Texas State Department of Health.
3. No person with evidence of active tuberculosis may be admitted to the school.
4. All children participating in extracurricular sports must have a health examination signed by a doctor, dated after June 1 of that year, and show evidence of insurance coverage.
5. As required by the Texas State Department of Health, students in grades PreK4, Kindergarten, 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th will be screened for vision, hearing, and Acanthosis Nigricans. All girls ages 10 and 12 **and** boys ages 13 and 14, as of September 1, 2019, will have spinal screenings done.
6. Catholic School Health Report form must be used for all health exam reporting. Forms are available on the school website or in the front office.

IMMUNIZATIONS

All students enrolled in Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School must have current immunizations. The only exemption to the policy is in the event that a student has an illness that would compromise his/her life by being immunized. Documentation of a compromising condition, such as, but not limited to, leukemia must be presented prior to the first day of the school year. The student will not be admitted without the proper immunizations on record. Parents will need to show proof of immunization record for admittance. Religious objections to shots are not accepted. Students with medical exemptions must have a medical doctor's note that is approved by the school nurse.

MEDICATIONS

So that all safeguards may be taken to protect the health of the child, the school nurse must be notified before the first day of school, concerning prescribed medications and/or any special physical conditions of the child. Diocesan policy states that necessary medications such as those needed for epileptics, asthmatics, diabetics and hyperkinetics may be given at school. Parents or an authorized adult must bring any medication to the school nurse which is prescribed by a doctor in the container received from the pharmacy and must have on its label the following information:

- Child's name
- Name of doctor prescribing the child's medication
- Frequency
- Dose
- Date

If a child brings medication to the nurse, the parent will be called, and the medication not given. Parents are requested to notify the school nurse by the first day of school concerning any special medication for their children.

No medication of any kind (even over the counter) will be dispensed through the school clinic unless the medication itself is accompanied by the proper diocesan form requesting administration of medication by school personnel. This includes cough drops, throat lozenges, etc.

This form is available in the school office and on the school website and must be signed by a physician (no signature stamps). Antibiotics will not be given at school by school personnel. If the parent feels the antibiotic must be given during the school day, the parent may come to the school office/clinic and administer it.

Students are **not** permitted to keep **any** medication in their possession, even over-the-counter medications. **It CANNOT be in backpacks, lunch boxes, etc. This includes throat lozenges and cough drops.**

All medication must be turned in to the school nurse and administered only by the school nurse or other authorized faculty. Students requiring any medication must have a signed authorization from the parent and a physician requesting its administration.

If medical information changes at any time during the school year, for the safety of each student, parents or guardians must promptly notify the school office and school nurse.

A doctor's note is also required for a student to have crutches, brace(s), or any other mobility device.

ILLNESS

If a child becomes ill at school, parents will be notified by the school nurse to come and take the child home. **Please have current home and emergency numbers and address filed in the school office, so contact can be made.**

A child who has been absent due to a fever (100°F or more) or flu may not come back to school until he/she has spent 24 hours free of fever. A child must be fever-free for 24 hours *without any Tylenol, Advil* or other fever-reducing medication in order to return to class. In addition, a child who has had vomiting or diarrhea in the morning before school may not attend school that day. Conditions may necessitate a student's exclusion from school.

A student who goes home early for illness must be fever free and "throw up" free for 24 hours, so that may mean he/she will not be participating in athletic games or tournaments. If a child has a doctor appointment, he /she must attend part of the school day to participate in the athletic game or extracurricular activity.

In case of failure to abide by these guidelines, the parent will be called, and the child must be picked up.

Parents are requested to notify the school office if a child becomes ill with a contagious condition. A physician's note will be needed to return to school. Notification will be sent home via email to other parents if students have been exposed to contagious diseases. Please refer to the current health checklist.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The following guidelines for excluding students from school are found in the *Texas Catholic Conference Education Department School Health Manual*. Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School will use these guidelines when deciding whether or not a student should be excluded from school in order to minimize the risk of other students contracting a communicable disease:

Infectious and Contagious Disease

Guidelines for Excluding Students from School

Keep Child at Home Guidelines	Return to School Guidelines
Oral temperature of 100 or above	Fever free for 24 hours without the help of fever reducing medications
Vomiting	Symptom free for 24 hours
Nausea or severe stomach pains	Symptom free
Marked drowsiness or malaise	Symptom free upon arrival to school
Sore throat, acute cold or persistent cough	Symptom free upon arrival to school
Red, inflamed or discharging eyes	Written physician release
Acute skin rashes or eruptions	Written physician release
Swollen glands around the jaws, ears or neck	Written physician release
Suspected scabies or impetigo	Written physician release
Any skin lesion in the weeping stage	Covered and diagnosed as non-infectious
Earache	Symptom free
Pediculosis (head lice)	Nit free- <i>must be cleared by school nurse before readmitted to school</i>
Other symptoms suggestive of acute illness	Written physician release
Diarrhea	24-hour Symptom free

A parent must keep a child home if he/she:

- Is unable to follow the classroom routine
- Coughs excessively and/or might infect others
- Is a disruption to the classroom
- Had a fever or vomited in the night
- Has an active, contagious infection or disease.

Participation in Physical Education Classes

In order to be excused from physical education classes, it is necessary that the child have a signed excuse from a physician.

Accidents and Injuries

Every accident or injury occurring in the school buildings, on school grounds, or at school- sponsored events must be reported immediately to the person in charge of the area and then to the Principal's office. A written accident form must be completed to document the incident.

Allergy Policy

If the student has any noted allergies requiring the use of an EpiPen, the parent shall furnish the school with two EpiPens for the student. An allergy plan of care for the student must be in place by the 1st day of school and at all times that the student attends the school. The EpiPen and the Diocesan Medication Permit Form must be signed by both the physician and the parent or the child cannot be in school.

Prior to each field trip, the Parent has the responsibility of reminding the teacher that the EpiPen is to go on all field trips with the student.

The EpiPen furnished to the School by the Parent must be currently valid and any expired EpiPens are to be immediately replaced by the Parent.

All school employees will have annual EpiPen training in August during orientation, and refresher training as needed.

At any time that a Parent is not in compliance with this policy, the student cannot attend the school and school related functions.

Illness/Injury During School Hours

Should a child become ill or injured during the school day and the matter cannot be handled at school, the parent will be called to make further arrangements. A child whose temperature is 100 degrees or above must be picked up from school as soon as possible. **Please list an emergency contact that can arrive within 30 minutes of notification.**

**A CHILD MUST BE FREE OF FEVER AND/OR VOMITING 24 HOURS
PRIOR TO RETURNING TO SCHOOL.**

WEATHER RELATED HEALTH CONCERNS

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School follows the Diocesan Heat and Cold Guidelines relative to outdoor activities. When the Temperature-Heat-Index (THI) reaches 95 degrees, outdoor activity is limited to 10 – 15 minutes. When the Temperature Heat Index (THI) reaches 100 degrees, no outside recess, P.E., or diocesan sports/practice for elementary/middle schools are allowed. When the temperature and/or wind chill is below 32 degrees, the children will be kept indoors for PE and recess. Please dress your children appropriately for the weather: shorts and short sleeves in the warm months; long pants or hose/tights and long sleeves with sweaters and jackets for cold weather.

Ozone alerts: On confirmed Purple ozone days there will be no outdoor PE or recess. On confirmed Red ozone days, children with known lung disease who are sensitive to the ozone factor will be kept indoors. On Orange ozone days, we will monitor sensitive children during outdoor activities. If your child has

respiratory difficulty during periods of high ozone and you want to be sure that he/she is kept indoors, please send a note to the school nurse with specific instructions.

LIBRARY

Generally, the following loan periods will apply:

- K-2nd Grade: One week
- 3rd-5th Grade: Two weeks
- 6th-8th Grade: Three weeks

Sometimes, however, due to holidays and other events, loan periods may be extended or shortened.

We ask students to comply with the following library rules:

- Two books may be checked out at a time.
- Library privileges will be forfeited if a student abuses the books or is habitually late in returning them.
- Overdue notices will be issued to the students via the Friday Folder. However, non-receipt of a notice does not exempt a student from applicable fines.
- If a student is absent on the day an item is due, the item will be due on the day the student returns to school, not the next time the student has library class.
- Lost or damaged books must be paid for at replacement cost.
- Records will not be released, or registration not finalized to students who have not returned overdue books and/or paid their fines.

To promote literacy and the lifelong habit of reading, all students are encouraged to have a library book with them at all times. They may read as they finish independent work in class, at transition times, and other times designated by the teacher.

FIELD TRIPS

Participation in field trips is a privilege, not a right. Students considered by the teacher to be disruptive may be restricted from participating in field trips.

The students must have a *signed* permission slip to be able to participate in a field trip (see back of the handbook). A copy of the Field Trip Permission Slip is available on the website. Telephoned permission will *not* be accepted. Signed faxed permission slips are allowed. The signed permission slip must be at school before the class leaves campus.

Unless otherwise directed, students must wear the complete uniform on field trips.

Field Trip Drivers

Parents who wish to drive for field trips must complete a Driver Information Sheet. Driver Information Sheets are available in the school office. The Diocese of Fort Worth requires that all volunteer drivers possess a valid driver's license, have proper and current license and vehicle registration, and have the required insurance coverage in effect on any vehicle used to transport students. The minimal, acceptable liability limit for privately owned vehicles is \$100,000/\$300,000. Drivers under the age of 25 will not be

permitted to transport children from the school. All drivers must meet the requirements of a volunteer as well.

- Safety requires that all supervisory adults be able to give their whole attention to the children in the class. Siblings including pre-school or school-aged are not allowed on the field trip must not accompany drivers while on field trips.
- All children must wear a seatbelt or be in a booster seat according to current state law. When seating a child under the age of 12, please place the child in a seat NOT protected by airbags.
- Cars going on field trips must stay in caravan; all leave and all return to school at the same time.
- Drivers will not provide snacks and/or drinks.
- Drivers must remain with the class for the duration of the field trip unless directed otherwise by the teacher.
- Drivers helping on field trips are expected to help monitor the behavior of all children in their group.
- Drivers are not to smoke or engage in cell phone usage when participating in field trips.
- Field trip drivers are not allowed to disperse any medication or Epi Pens.

Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals. Field trips are re-evaluated each year to determine the compatibility of the field trip with curricular goals.

1. A field trip is a privilege and not a right.
2. There are no “traditional” field trips. Class participation in a field trip over consecutive years does not mean that this trip has become a school tradition.
3. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.
4. Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience ensure a successful learning opportunity.
5. Individual teachers, in consultation with the Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
6. A written **official permission slip**, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. Verbal permission **cannot** be accepted. **Permission slips are due in the office forty-eight (48) hours after receipt of the permission slip.**
7. A field trip permission slip is printed at the end of this book. This is the only format that may be used to allow a student to leave campus during school hours. If your child fails to bring his/her permission slip home, you may tear out and use or copy the form provided. Call the school for information needed to complete the form.
8. Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend a field trip will remain at home with the parent and will be marked absent for the day.
9. When students who are participating in the field trip must ride a bus to and from the field trip with their class. Students not on the bus may not participate in the field trip and will be counted absent for the day.
10. All monies collected for the field trip are **non-refundable**.
11. **Student cell phones** are **not allowed** on field trips.
12. Parents who are not “official” chaperones may not drive their car to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on the field trip. Our risk management insurance company ensures

the “official” chaperones and participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students and all other “official” adults on the trip.

FINES

All fines must be paid before participating in any end-of-year activity, including field trips, field day, 8th grade promotion, etc. or before receiving report cards.

COMMUNICATION

E-mail and the Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School website (www.smgschool.org) will be the primary means of school communication to parents. Parents will have a family access code to FACTS/RenWeb to allow them to access their personal information as well as classroom information from the teacher. The FACTS/RenWeb Caller System will be used for various means of communication, but primarily for school closings and emergency information where we need to communicate on a mass scale in a short period of time. As well, *The Trojan Times*, the school’s weekly newsletter is sent out weekly, usually on Sunday evening.

Friday Folders

Communications from the school such as SCRIP order forms and filled orders, flyers, classroom newsletters, permission slips, completed student schoolwork, etc., will be sent home via the Friday Folders. Students are asked to return these folders every Monday morning (or first day back following a weekend or break). Classroom teachers may utilize the Friday Folder to return completed work or may send the work home on another day. The classroom teacher will communicate his/her routine for returning completed student work to parents.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of severe weather:

1. FACTS/RenWeb Caller System will be used to alert parents via text, email, phone, or all the above.
2. Check the Saint Maria Goretti website.

The decision to close or have a late start (10:00 a.m. for students) will be made by 6:30 A.M.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School has implemented a “crisis plan” in case of a fire, tornado, or lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedures to follow to keep your children safe.

Fire and tornado drills are scheduled periodically to ensure the safety of everyone at school in the event of such an emergency. Fire drills are signaled by the fire alarm system. Students will proceed to the assigned exit in complete silence. Teachers will remain with your class until signaled to return to class. Lockdown drills will be conducted as well using verbal directives as listed in our emergency procedures manual. Failure to comply with emergency regulations may result in disciplinary action.

State Law requires that **fire drills** be held monthly. During the fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Close windows and doors;
3. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file, and in silence;
4. Stand in a column, facing away from the building;
5. Return to building when signal is given.

Tornado drills are held periodically.

The procedures are:

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Walk briskly to the assigned place in single file;
3. Sit, face wall, and put hands over head;
4. Return to classroom when signal is given.

DISCIPLINE PROGRAM

Philosophy

At St. Maria Goretti Catholic School, one of our objectives is to assist parents with the formation of good behavior and virtue in their children. To achieve this, we provide opportunities for students to encounter goodness, grow in goodness, and desire goodness. The ultimate example of goodness is Jesus Christ. Therefore, we seek to encounter Him, follow Him, and become His disciples. The life of a *disciple* requires *discipline*, a discipline that helps us grow according to our human nature, cooperate with grace, and, in the words of St. Irenaeus, become "fully alive" so that our moral life is ordered and our gifts and talents are cultivated and may flourish. Living this requires virtue, the "habitual and firm disposition to do the good." (CCC 1803) At St. Maria Goretti Catholic School, we aim to provide a learning environment where virtue is cultivated, and students respect their neighbors and themselves.

We have high expectations for behavior and cooperative interaction among all members of the St. Maria Goretti Catholic School community. Our school's approach to discipline formation and student behavior is reliant on a secure common good and a community whose members work together. Therefore, what we do to others and to ourselves matters. Behaviors and misbehavior are decisions, and decisions engender consequences. At St. Maria Goretti Catholic School, we believe in natural consequences for actions. The consequences for poor decisions should flow from the nature of the mistake, and reconciliation is based on mending the community. Consequences reflect the natural outcome of poorly made or inappropriate decisions. All people need help in realizing that they are not perfect, and they are likely to make poor judgments and mistakes while learning and growing.

Each serious incident referred to the administration is different and will be treated differently. The administration will review each serious incident using any and all factors that are considered pertinent. Therefore, you should not expect the consequences of two incidents to be the same since the extenuating and mitigating circumstances are probably quite different. The administration will consider not only the immediate incident in determining appropriate consequences but also any other factors that are considered pertinent. This could include past behavior, parental cooperation and support, number of incidents, student attitude towards discipline and so on. Just because the circumstances of two separate incidents appear similar, does not mean that the consequence will be similar. One size does not fit all. Only the administration has access to all information required to make these decisions.

Our response to behavior problems is to correct the action and apply the appropriate consequences while remembering and reminding the children of our continued love and their God-given dignity.

Behavior Standards

Our ultimate concern is the formation of young men and women as disciples of Christ who are prepared and disposed to respond to God's call. Toward that end, our discipline program seeks to recognize the dignity of the individual, fostering in the child a love of God, neighbor, and self. We seek to accomplish this by helping students come to live a virtuous life.

The objectives of our plan are:

- To ground students thoroughly in an understanding of the virtues
- To support students in making the right decisions
- To instruct, correct, and develop self-control and orderly conduct
- To use consistent and logical consequences rather than punitive measures

Our expectations are three-fold:

- **Be Safe**: Do my actions promote a safe environment for myself and others?
- **Be Responsible**: Am I taking responsibility for my actions and their outcomes?
- **Be Respectful**: Are my actions showing consideration for the rights of others?

From these expectations, the following standards are observed at all times:

All St. Maria Goretti Catholic School students will...

1. Be polite and kind to others, both adults and students, in speech, action, and manner.
2. Display respect and prayerful participation during liturgy.
3. Follow all rules and procedures maintaining orderly behavior while using school and church facilities.
4. Respect property of the school and church, as well as the property of others.
5. Work to the best of his/her ability.
6. Be prepared for class each day by having the necessary materials.
7. Be academically prepared for class by completing all assignments on time, turning in all work, and actively participating in class.

Teachers are empowered to use individual disciplinary techniques in their classrooms that promote self-discipline and emphasize mutual respect and courtesy for all people. Any "Quiet Time" or "Time Out" responses to a child's need for reevaluation of a specific behavior will be done in the least embarrassing and non-threatening manner. Self-discipline is the goal for each of our students and, working together as a team, the school community strives for the transition from externally imposed discipline to self-discipline.

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School follows the Diocese of Fort Worth's strict guidelines of allowing NO corporal punishment.

Counselor

A certified counselor will be available to families to serve the needs of students and parents through private pay and consultation.

Gum

Students may not have or chew gum on campus. We are a gum-free campus.

Disrespect of Property, Stealing, Vandalism

Any act which demonstrates a lack of integrity or respect for the property of others is never acceptable. St. Maria Goretti Catholic School will not tolerate vandalism or stealing. Students who choose to engage in such activity may be suspended or may be expelled. Consequences will be left to the discretion of the principal.

The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property.

Fighting, Harassment, or Bullying

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School recognizes that each person has great dignity because each is made in the image and likeness of God; therefore, each person deserves respect. Respect and dignity may be understood through the Ten Commandments; we do not steal, lie, cheat, hurt a person in spirit or body, or do anything that would hurt the dignity of another. Such inappropriate behavior will be handled by the teacher.

In union with our fellow schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth, the staff and teachers of St. Maria Goretti Catholic School will not tolerate fighting, harassment, or bullying on or off campus or while students are under their supervision. Fighting, intimidation, bullying, and harassment of any kind are inappropriate and also unacceptable. Depending upon the type and severity of the offense, a student may be given a disciplinary referral or a detention. A student may also be suspended or expelled.

Note: Parents, please communicate with your child's teacher should you have a concern in this area.

Inappropriate Language

The way we speak to or treat one another directly correlates to respect. Our ability to communicate is a great gift from God who sent His Son, the Divine Word, to us in complete communication of His love. Chiefly, our speech should reflect a pure mind and a clean heart. Blasphemy or sacrilege against God, His Church, the Blessed Mother, or the angels and saints are not acceptable. Profanity, crude or inappropriate language, and rude gestures toward other people are also never acceptable. Students should always show the utmost respect for faculty, staff, and fellow students. Violating this ethic will result in a disciplinary referral.

Note: Parents, please communicate with your child's teacher should you have a concern in this area.

BEHAVIOR PLANS

*PreK3 – 3rd grade behavior plan and disciplinary actions will be handled by the homeroom teacher. More detailed information will be given at *Back to School Night*.

4th – 8th Grades School Behavior Expectations

Expectations:

	Be Safe	Be Responsible	Be Respectful
Classroom	Keep hands and feet to yourself. Store materials under your desk. Do not throw objects.	Arrive to class on time. Bring necessary materials. Be on task.	Follow directions. Be kind. Take care of personal and school property.
Recess	Stay within designated recess area. Do not play aggressively (tackling, shoving, etc.).	Line up as soon as you hear the whistle. Bring in recess equipment.	Allow anyone to participate in activities. Prepare to enter the building (tuck in your shirt, quiet yourself, etc.).

Positive Consequences:

Natural	School Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Growth in virtue ● Helping others ● Self-satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Merits

Negative Consequences:

Natural	School Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Loss of virtue ● Damaging relationships ● Hurting one's soul 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Warning ● Demerit ● Detention ● Conference

Behavior resulting in an automatic detention or, in serious situations, suspension and/or expulsion from school:

- A) Damaging property*
- B) Fighting*
- C) Stealing*
- D) Inappropriate hand gestures*
- E) Cheating/plagiarism*
- F) Bullying* (See details in Bullying Policy to follow)

*These are examples, not an all-inclusive list.

Procedure:

Behavior concerns (including demerits) are noted in FACTS/RenWeb.

- 1) Verbal warnings or student/teacher conference may take place with any behavior at any time.
- 2) Demerits may be given by any teacher, supervisor, or substitute teacher.
- 3) If a student accumulates three demerits, that student receives a detention. Detentions will be served on Wednesdays from 3:15-4:00 p.m.
- 4) Continuous disruptions may cause the student to be removed from the classroom and sent to the office. This will be followed by parent contact.
- 5) An automatic detention will also warrant a conference with the teacher, child, and parent.
- 6) When a suspension is warranted, a conference will be scheduled with the student, parents, teacher, and principal or assistant principal. Two or more suspensions within the year will be of longer duration and/or probation or expulsion.
- 7) A student may be placed on probation with a written contract which is the continued enrollment of a student but with specified conditions.

Certain circumstances may warrant a written contract requiring counseling and/or outside interventions before a student is eligible to return to school. If the behavior continues, parents may be asked to withdraw their child from the school, or the school may begin expulsion process. As per diocesan policy, expulsion involves the principal, pastor, and the school superintendent.

Conference with Parent, Teacher(s), and/or Administration: When a single behavior is extreme or a pattern of behavior is concerning, the teacher and/or administration may call a parent conference to discuss the concern and a plan of action. Please note, a teacher will always be accompanied by a peer or administrator in a conference with parent(s).

Suspensions

Suspension is a serious response to violations involving fighting, serious disrespectful behavior toward a staff member, an adult, or another student; stealing or any other action that endangers the safety of others; and any involvement with tobacco, drugs, alcohol, or weapons. St. Maria Goretti Catholic School will notify the student's parent/guardian of their suspension and will require a conference before the child may return to school. ***Parents/guardians of a student who is to serve an in-school suspension (ISS) will be responsible for paying the daily rate to hire a substitute teacher (\$80-100/day) to work with/monitor the student each day the student is serving an ISS.***

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy concerning weapons, drugs, and alcohol on school grounds. Any student who violates this policy is subject to suspension and/or expulsion from the school.

Work missed during suspension is due the first day a student returns to the classroom. This includes assignments to be turned in and tests to be taken. A maximum grade of 70 will be given for both assignments and tests.

Students participating in sports and other extracurricular activities will be subject to that program's code of conduct agreement as well. School disciplinary issues can affect extracurricular participation. Student's will not participate in sport or extracurricular activities during a suspension.

PLEASE NOTE DIOCESAN POLICY #5220 – SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION Addendum.

HARASSMENT/BULLYING

Harassment/Bullying Harassment is when one person makes repeated verbal or physical contacts with another person who does not want these contacts. "Repeated" is defined as more than once. Examples of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment include: sexual propositions, off-color jokes, inappropriate physical contact, innuendoes, sexual offers, looks and gestures. Harassment is considered serious and will be referred to the administration for action.

According to www.stopbullying.gov, bullying has the following definition:

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

All members of the school community are expected to contribute to the positive climate of the school. Student behavior should reflect acceptance and respect for others. Inclusion of others is the guiding principle. Reported incidents of bullying will be investigated and appropriate interventions and/or consequences will be used to address the reported incident.

ADULT BEHAVIOR

Adults are also expected to demonstrate good behavior on and off campus at activities in which our students are participating or that are sponsored by SMG. This would include both coaches and spectators at athletic events. The actions of adults speak more powerfully to our students than words ever will. Therefore, it is an adult responsibility to act in an appropriate manner that not only sets a good example for our students but also reflects in a positive way on our school. Any other behavior that is less than this high standard and expectation will be reviewed by the school administration for action. The school reserves the right to remove students from the school based on parents' or family members' actions.

CONFISCATION OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES, ETC.

Students are not to bring any of their own electronic equipment to school without permission from the teacher. Devices brought to school without prior permission from the teacher will be confiscated, labeled and sent to the Assistant Principal and/or Principal. A parent must claim confiscated items. **A \$15 fee will also be assessed at the time the device is picked up.**

Students who plan to bring a cell phone to school must have a signed **Cell Phone Agreement** on file with the school. Students at Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School are not allowed to have a cell phone/device on during the school day. Phones must be turned off before entering the building and may be turned on after exiting the building at dismissal. Student phones need to remain off and turned into the community holding center in the homeroom throughout the day. If a student is carrying the phone on their person, an adult will take the phone and bring it to the Assistant Principal and/or Principal, where the parent can retrieve it at the end of the day. **A \$15 fee will also be assessed at the time the phone is picked up. Student use of a cell phone/devices during the restricted hours will result in disciplinary action. Students may not use phones or electrical devices during SMEED. The administration reserves the right to search the contents of a confiscated cell phone.**

VIOLENCE AND WEAPONS

The school is concerned with providing students and employees with a safe and productive environment. As such, the school expressly prohibits any and all acts or threats of violence by or against any student, employee, family member of a student, vendor, or other visitor to the school facilities. This policy applies to all students and employees, whether or not they are engaged in business on behalf of the school, and whether or not they are on school premises.

In addition, the school strictly prohibits the possession of, exhibiting or threatening to exhibit or to use, or use of any and all weapons, including handguns, on school premises by any student or employee, family member of a student, vendor, or other visitor, whether licensed or unlicensed and whether concealed or visible. School premises include, not only the main facilities, but also the parking lots, entrances and exits, break areas, etc.

Students and employees are further prohibited from the possession of, exhibiting or threatening to exhibit or to use, or the use of any and all weapons while conducting business on behalf of the School off School premises.

The school is required to post signs containing the written statutory notice prohibiting bringing concealed weapons on the School property.

The school administration, in accordance with state laws, will determine the appropriate disciplinary measures to be taken concerning the presence of these items in the school. **Items taken away from students will be returned to the parent(s)/guardian(s) on the last day of the school year.**

OFF-CAMPUS MISCONDUCT

The administration of Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students. **This off campus behavior includes but is not limited to cyber-bullying and the misuse of technology and social media.**

REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS

No individual, who is required to register as a sex offender under Chapter 62, Code of Criminal Procedure, or any other statute, may be a student. Any student who is required to register as a sex offender shall be expelled from the school.

Statutory Notification of a School of the Arrest of a Student

Article 15.27 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure requires the police to give a private school, in which a child is enrolled, oral or written notification that the child has been arrested for a felony or certain misdemeanors.

“(h) This article applies to any felony offense and the following misdemeanors:

an offense under Section 20.02 [Unlawful Restraint], 21.08 [Indecent Exposure], 22.01 [Assault], 22.05 [Deadly Conduct], 22.07 [Terroristic Threat], or 71.02 [Engaging in Organized Crime], Penal Code;

the unlawful use, sale, or possession of a controlled substance, drug paraphernalia, or marijuana, as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code; or

the unlawful possession of any of the weapons or devices listed in Sections 46.01(1)-(14) or (16), Penal Code, or a weapon listed as a prohibited weapon under Section 46.05, Penal Code.”

The oral or written notification required by Article 15.27 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure or any other statute to a school that a student has been arrested for a felony or misdemeanor that the law requires the police to notify the school of the arrest is grounds for the expulsion of the student from the school.

SCHOOL LOGO

No activity (sports, dances, parties) may carry the name of the school or any class within the school unless it is officially sanctioned by the school administration. Jerseys, shirts, or any material item including postings on Social Media may not include the school name or logo without permission from the Pastor or Principal.

PICTURE/MEDIA RELEASE

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School uses students’ photographs in electronic media and in publicized advertising. **The Diocese of Fort Worth requires that each student have a Permission to Publish photo release form signed by their parent on file with the school.** If a parent does not wish for their child to be included in electronic media and/or publicized advertising, they must notify the Principal via written notification before the first Friday of the school year.

POSTERS, FLYERS, AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Posters, flyers, and other written communications may be posted at Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School only with the approval of the Principal or her designee. They should always be in good taste and neatly designed. Those who post written communications are responsible for removing them after the event, which they advertise, is completed. Posters will not be permitted if they advertise events which conflict with those of the Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School. Signs, banners public postings, or parent emails for sports, fundraising, any events, or distribution of information, must be approved by the Principal or designee.

RELAYING MESSAGES TO STUDENTS

To avoid the interruption of classes, only in cases of serious emergencies will telephone messages be delivered to students during class. Students will not be called out of class for phone calls. Any students contacting parents through texting or calling during the school day will result in a disciplinary action by school administration.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER SCHOOL

Students are not permitted to return to the school building after the 3:15PM dismissal unless accompanied by a teacher. This policy is designed for the protection of your child in addition to helping your child to become more organized and personally responsible.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are expensive, and students are expected to take great care to see that they are not abused. **Textbooks are required to be covered at all times.** Though normal wear is expected and reasonable, damage beyond this normal wear will be assessed fines. When students are issued textbooks at the beginning of the school year, they will complete a textbook information form, noting any pre-existing damage to the book(s). These forms will be kept on file and reviewed at the end of the year when students turn in their textbooks. Book damage fines will be based on the following guidelines:

Bent Corners	\$1.50 ea. corner
Ink Marks	\$.50-\$1.50 ea. mark
Marker	One-half to whole cost of book
Minor Damage	\$2.00-\$5.00
Major Damage	New book cost to replace
Lost Books	Charged at replacement cost of new book

ASSOCIATIONS

An elected **School Advisory Council** assists and advises the administration. This body works to ensure the financial and physical well-being of the school. Unlike government bodies, it is not responsible for hiring or supervising teachers or disciplining children. Meetings are open, and interested parties are welcome to attend. The meeting dates are listed on the school calendar.

The **Home and School Association** fosters greater interest, understanding, and cooperation among parents, teachers and students. The fundraising contributions help maintain operating costs and provide teaching aids. Each family sending a child to Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School is considered a member of the Association and is encouraged to attend sponsored activities.

VISITORS

Teachers will not permit visitors to class without a notification from administration. The administration reserves the right to limit the number of visitors on a given school day. Visitors should be directly related to the student (immediate family). All other visitors should be accompanied by the Saint Maria Goretti student's parent for the visit.

KEEPING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH SAFE

The diocese has provided school programs for grades PreK-8 to help children protect themselves against abuse. The activities are age appropriate and led by the classroom teacher. All volunteers are required to have taken ***Virtus Training (formerly Safe and Sacred Training)*** prior to participating in school activities where they will be in direct contact with children.

LEGAL AGENT

No parent or student has the authority to sign any agreement or contract for the school. Only the Pastor and the President/Principal are legal agents of the Bishop in matters of contracts.

CHILD ABUSE LAWS

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Texas. This law mandates that all cases of **suspected** abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services.

CUSTODIAL RIGHTS

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) in regard to privacy of student records and the rights of non-custodial parents. It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information decided through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the Principal. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof.

The school reserves the right to charge a shipping and processing fee for extra records sent to more than one home address. Be advised that if a teacher is subpoenaed to testify in a child custody case, the parent will pay the cost of a substitute teacher and any other costs associated with the testimony (mileage, parking, food, etc.).

From time to time, the school may be required to retain outside legal counsel to respond to parent requests or demands, requests or subpoenas for testimony or documents in legal proceedings to which the school is not a party, or to address other issues affecting or involving only one or a few students or families. In such situations, the school is typically required to expend finite financial resources to address an issue which otherwise affects only a very small portion of the school community. In such situations, the school will require the family or families involved to reimburse the school for attorney's fees, costs of court, and other expenses incurred (including, without limitation, the cost to secure substitute staff when school personnel are subpoenaed to testify in court proceedings).

Accordingly, each person who acknowledges his or her agreement to the contents of this handbook, either by written or electronic signature or by enrolling a student in the school, agrees that, in the school's absolute and sole discretion, he or she shall indemnify and reimburse the school and representatives on demand from and for any and all attorney's fees and related costs including without limitation the cost of responding to requests for documents or other records or information arising from, in connection with, or related to 1) a violation of any provision of this handbook, 2) any request or demand made upon the school which pertains to a legal proceeding to which the school is not a party, 3) threatening or harassing communications directed to any indemnitee, or 4) threatened or actual litigation against any indemnitee which does not result in a final and appealable judgment adverse to the indemnitee.

RIGHT TO AMMEND

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents via the weekly newsletter or through email communication.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Diocesan Policy 6200. Use of Technology

Access to the technology resources in the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Fort Worth, including the Internet, shall be made available primarily for instructional and administrative purposes. Access to the school's computers, network, and Internet resources is a privilege, not a right. All users shall have the responsibility to use the equipment and software with care and to comply with the Diocese's Acceptable Use Policy. Teachers may grant students access to the school's technology as deemed appropriate by the teacher. Users of the school's technology shall not purposefully access materials that are considered an Unacceptable Use as defined hereinafter. Individuals making an Unacceptable Use of the school's technology will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include, but not be limited to, termination of employment or expulsion from the school.

Internet Terms, Conditions, and Regulations

It is the policy of the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fort Worth to require the Acceptable use of the Internet and related technologies by all employees, volunteers, patrons, guests, and students as set forth below. Access privileges may be revoked, disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action taken for any Unacceptable Use of the school's technology.

Acceptable Use — The use of Internet and related technologies must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational and religious objectives of the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fort Worth. Use of other organizations' networks or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for these networks.

Unacceptable Use — Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening, violent, or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities is not acceptable. Use for product advertisement, political lobbying, game playing, unauthorized "chat," or chain letter communication is also prohibited. Other examples of unacceptable information are pornography, information on bombs, inappropriate language and communications, flame letters, etc.

Acts of vandalism are prohibited. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user or to damage hardware or software. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses. Unauthorized use of another's computer, access accounts, and/or files is prohibited.

Privileges — The use of the Internet and related technologies is a privilege, not a right, and Unacceptable Use will result in cancellation of those privileges and may subject the individual to disciplinary action, which may include, but not be limited to termination of employment or, expulsion from the school. Each user who is provided access to Internet and related technologies will participate in a training session with assigned staff person(s) concerning the proper use of the network. The faculty, staff, or parent/guardian may request the administrator or designee to deny, revoke, or suspend a specific user's access to the Internet and related technologies.

Copyright — It is the policy of the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fort Worth that all employees, volunteers, patrons, guests, and students will abide by the federal copyright laws. Employees, volunteers, patrons, guests, and students may copy print or non-print materials allowed by:

- copyright law
- fair use guidelines
- specific licenses or contractual agreements
- other types of permission

Employees, volunteers, patrons, guests, and students who willfully disregard copyright law are in violation of the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fort Worth policy, doing so at their own risk and assuming all liability.

Other

- Security problems must be promptly reported to the supervising adult. Users will notify the supervisor immediately if any individual is trying to contact him/her for illicit or suspicious activities.
- Users shall not reveal their personal home address, phone number, or personal information about anyone else. Users' personal identifier on any E-mail must use the school address only.
- No software of any kind may be brought from home for use in any school computer. All school software must be properly purchased or donated, including licenses.
- Network accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purpose.
- Users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the network.
- Malicious use of the network to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.
- Prior approval is required from the school for List serves use by or for Employees, volunteers, patrons, guests, and students.

6205 ONLINE SOCIAL MEDIA

Although this policy closely mirrors the Diocesan policy on social media, due to the special, privileged and powerful relationship between a Catholic school and its parents and students, sections of this policy are more restrictive. The first legal duty of a Catholic school is to keep those entrusted to them safe.

The Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fort Worth acknowledge the right of employees to use personal websites, social networks, wikis, weblogs and other emerging technologies not only as a form of self-expression, and, in their individual capacity, as a means to further the work of the Church. Additionally, the same rules that apply to school employee's messaging and communications in traditional media apply in the online social media space. This specifically means that teachers and all school staff, including substitutes and volunteers, are never to use social media to directly communicate, interact or respond directly to students unless that social media is operated, controlled and directed by the school itself. Simply because the development and implementation of an online social media program can be fast, easy, and inexpensive, does not mean that different rules apply. School employees should bear in mind that posting of certain comments, photos, links or references to third party websites and information on websites, social networks, wikis and weblogs may have a harmful effect on the Church and its schools, their reputation, and their employees.

In light of this possibility, school employees are required to adhere to the following policy regarding the use of personal and professional websites, social networks, wikis, weblogs and other emerging

technologies. This policy supports other related Diocesan and school policies, including Acceptable Technology Use and the ***Code of Conduct & Behavior Standards for All Clergy, Religious and Lay Ministers***.

School employees may only access websites, weblogs, wikis and social networks for legitimate professional job-related purposes during the workday with the approval of their direct supervisor. School employees are not to create, post or otherwise access weblogs, personal social networks, wikis or personal websites for personal use during normal school working hours. Employees should exercise sound judgment and common sense to prevent online social media sites from becoming a distraction at work.

If you identify yourself as an employee of a Catholic school on a personal website, weblog or social network, you must make it clear to your readers that the views you express are yours alone and that your views do not necessarily reflect the views of the Diocese or its schools. In the event that you identify yourself as an employee of a Catholic school on a personal website, weblog, wiki or social network, to help reduce the potential for confusion, you are required to put the following notice in a reasonable prominent place on your site (e.g., at the bottom of your personal profile page) in at least a size 12 font bolded:

“The views expressed on this website/weblog/social network are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer.”

- School employees are prohibited from disclosing on personal or professional websites, weblogs, wikis or social networks, any information that is confidential or proprietary to the Diocese, its schools or to any third party that has disclosed information to the Diocese or its schools.
- The school has exclusive ownership rights with respect to certain concepts and developments you produce that are related to school business. Employees may not use school trademarks on their site or reproduce any school materials or logos. Please consult with your Principal if you have questions about appropriateness of publishing anything that may be related to the school on your site.
- School employees may not use the copyrights, trademarks, rights of publicity, and other third-party rights in the online social media space, including with regard to user-generated content (UGC), without the necessary permissions of the rights holder(s).
- School employees are prohibited from providing a link or otherwise referring to the school website on their personal website, social networks, wikis or weblogs without consulting with and obtaining the approval of the Principal of the specific school.
- School employees shall not allow any obscene, harassing, offensive, derogatory or defamatory comments and images which reflects/discredits or causes embarrassment to the Diocese and its schools, their employees, patrons, vendors, partners, affiliates, agencies, students, and others on personal, the school’s and professional websites, any other social networks, wikis or weblogs.
- All social media being used by Catholic entities must be clearly branded in order provide institutional authority as well as avoid confusion. Unless you have been officially authorized in writing to speak or act on behalf of a Catholic entity, employees are prohibited to use such brandings or create secondary social media sites that give the illusion of being authoritative.
- All social media used by Catholic entities must comply with the Minimum Social Media Requirements contained in Policy 6210.

The school reserves the right to regularly monitor any and all school-based computers. In addition, it is the policy of the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Fort Worth that every portable information/data storage

device used by a school staff member or student may be examined at any time because it may contain something dangerous.

- The school reserves the right to monitor professional websites, social networks, wikis or weblogs created on school computers during the course of a normal workday, or on school computers on personal time.
- Once information is published online, it is essentially part of a permanent record, even if you "remove/delete" it later or attempt to make it anonymous. If your complete thought, along with its context, cannot be squeezed into a character-restricted space (such as Twitter), provide a link to an online space where the message can be expressed completely and accurately.
- The school requires that you confine your personal website, social network or weblog commentary to topics unrelated to the Diocese or its schools (or in certain cases, that you temporarily suspend your website or weblog activity altogether) if it believes this is necessary or advisable to ensure compliance with this policy or federal and state laws.
- School employees will comply with all aspects of the Children's Online Private Protection Act (COPPA). Employees are forbidden to post or distribute personal identifiable information including pictures on any child under the age of eighteen without parental consent. Personal identifiable information includes name, home address, email address, telephone number or any information that would allow someone to identify or contact a child. If written verifiable consent is obtained from a parent, it is important that the parent has approved the information that is to be provided and has full knowledge of its use, purpose and how the information is going to be provided. Likewise, parents should be made aware that the school is making use of only school-controlled websites, social networks, weblogs and other emerging technologies to communicate with students.

School employees will model safe and effective use of technology for students including developmentally appropriate instructions on responsibility associated with the use of technology and the possible dangers associated with technology.

School employees who violate this Online Social Media policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. If you have questions about this policy or any matter related to your site that this policy does not address, please consult with the Principal of your school.

6210 THE MINIMUM SOCIAL MEDIA REQUIREMENTS

The following guidelines are required for schools wishing to establish social media. These requirements apply to all current and future social media, including but not limited to websites, wikis, Facebook, Twitter, blogs and other emerging technologies.

- Site administrators must be adults and/or approved employees of the school
- There must be at least two site administrators for each site to allow for rapid response and continuous monitoring and updating of the site.
- All social media must be reviewed by the Principal or the Pastor before implementation to ensure it is not in conflict with current standards, policies and Catholic teachings.
- Personal sites shall not be used in connection with school programs or to communicate with students. Students are defined as any and all students enrolled in a Catholic school in the Diocese of Fort Worth.

- Passwords, names of the sites and the site addresses or site location information shall be registered in a central location in the school and at least two (2) adults must have access to this information.

In establishing a school site, know and abide by these key “Rules of the Road”:

- Abide by all diocesan, parish and/or school guidelines
- All communication by school employees reflect on the Church and the school
- Do not claim or in any way give the impression or the appearance of representing the official position of the school or the teachings of the Church, unless you have written authorization to do so.
- All school social media sites shall be clearly branded and identified to provide institutional authority and to avoid confusion.
- Abide by all copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws.
- Never divulge confidential information.
- Do not cite others, post photographs or videos of other individuals or link to their material without express written approval. Media involving minors must have written parental approval.
- Practice Christian charity.

STUDENTS CAN BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE BY THE SCHOOL FOR THE INAPPROPRIATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA WHILE OFF CAMPUS IF THIS BEHAVIOR BECOMES DISRUPTIVE TO THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT OF THE SCHOOL. CONSEQUENCES CAN BE ADMINISTERED IF A STUDENT’S USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA CONFLICTS WITH OUR DIOCESAN ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY, THE SCHOOL’S BULLYING POLICY OR THE TEACHINGS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Acceptable Use Policies for Internet Access

Telecommunications access at Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School is provided for the purpose of student enrichment in elementary and junior high in preparation for higher education and ultimately to provide student with skills for lifelong learning. Students and parents agree to support all legal and ethical guidelines established by the SMG Advisory Council and Administration.

- All use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and consistent with the mission of the Catholic school.
- The user must abide by acceptable use rules of any network being used/accessed.
- Any use of the Internet to facilitate illegal activity is prohibited.
- Any use of the Internet for commercial or for-profit purposes is prohibited.
- Any use of the Internet for advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
- Unauthorized use of copyrighted material is prohibited.
- Network accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purpose.
- Electronic communications to and from Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School should reflect the Christian principles and educational goals of the school.

Only Internet Service Provider (ie. Comcast, Charter, Time Warner, SBC Global, ATT, etc.) addresses will be acceptable for electronic mail access. Access to World Wide Web (ie. Yahoo, Gmail, Microsoft Live, MSN, and etc.) services are prohibited on school computers/devices.

Netiquette

- Be polite.
- Do not use vulgar or obscene language.
- Users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent themselves on the Internet.
- All communications and information accessible via the Internet should be assumed to be private property.
- Do not intentionally disrupt the network or other users.
- No use of the network shall serve to disrupt the use of the network by other; hardware or software shall not be destroyed, modified or abused in any way.
- Use caution when revealing your address or phone number (or those of others).
- Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private.
- Posting of anonymous messages is prohibited.
- Abide by generally accepted rules of network etiquette and ethics.

Inappropriate Uses of Technology

- Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behavior are prohibited.
- The illegal installation of copyrighted software for use on school computers is prohibited.
- Texting between students and teachers and /or staff members of SMG School is prohibited.
- “Friending” on social networking sites between students and teachers and/or staff members of SMG School is prohibited.
- Accessing music or video services such as Spotify, Pandora, Amazon, iTunes, Netflix, etc. by Students without prior permission at SMG School is prohibited.

Inappropriate Postings to the Internet, Texting, or Cyber Bullying

Students should be aware that the texting of or posting of inappropriate, vulgar, threatening, or demeaning statements or images on the internet will subject them to school discipline for engaging in such behavior. While the texting or posting of demeaning or threatening statements may not have occurred on school time or utilized school equipment, they, nonetheless, have the potential to negatively impact the school’s efforts to maintain a safe and dignified learning environment for all students. Engaging in Calumny, detraction, or other offenses against the dignity of others via text message or on the internet will be disciplined according to the school’s Discipline System. The school has the right to demand that a student remove such postings as a condition of his/her continued enrollment in the school. While on campus or using school equipment, students should not access social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Vine, etc.

Blogs

Engagement in online blogs such as, but not limited to Facebook, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student or parent’s blog includes defamatory comments regarding the school, the faculty, other students or the parish.

No parent should open/post/tweet/comment to a social media blog site such as a Facebook, Twitter, etc. account under the name of the school or a particular grade or organization. The only official Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School Facebook® page is the one created and monitored by the SMG staff. A parent who

chooses to create/contribute to such an account may subject his/her child(ren) to separation from the school.

Social Media Postings of Student Photographs

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School works to protect the confidentiality rights of all students. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1973 (FERPA) and the Child Protection Act of 2012 (CPA) were designed to protect personally identifiable information of minors. Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School adheres to these laws in its attempt to protect the privacy rights of all students. As a result, the parents of students enrolled at Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School are forbidden from posting photographs taken at school sponsored events that include the images of students other than their own child without parent permission on their personal Facebook® page and other social media sites. Such postings are a violation of the Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School's adherence to FERPA and the Child Protection Act. The students of parents who post such photos may be separated from Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School.

Instagram® and other Social Media Resources:

As stated in the Social Media Policy, photos and captions on a student or parent's Instagram® or any other Social Media Resources account that depict the school, the faculty, other students, or the parish in a defamatory way may result in disciplinary action.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCESS

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal statute that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The purpose of this Complaint Review Process is to provide a structure for bringing about resolution and reconciliation when disagreements arise between a school family and the School arising out of a student's physical or mental impairment or disability.

Everyone involved in the Complaint Review Process is to be free from restraint, coercion, discrimination, or retaliation in any form. The Complaint Review Process should be used when issues arise at the school relating to your child's disability that have a significant impact on your child and you have been unable to reach a resolution with your child's teachers or other members of the School staff.

I. Initial Complaint Process

1. If you have a complaint or disagreement regarding your child's disability, you should first try to resolve your complaint by discussing it promptly with the person(s) involved.
2. If you cannot reach a resolution or you are not comfortable with discussing the issue with the person(s) directly involved, you may bring the matter to the Principal of the school. Notification to the Principal must be written and within fifteen (15) days of the event which is the subject of your complaint. If you do not submit a written complaint to the Principal within the fifteen (15) day period, your complaint will be considered untimely.
3. The Principal will conduct an investigation as promptly as possible. The scope and nature of the investigation will depend on the nature of the issue presented. The goal is to achieve a just resolution and reconciliation with everyone concerned. The parties are advised to maintain confidentiality. The Principal will advise you in writing of the outcome of the investigation and his or her decision of submission of your written complaint.

II. Review Level

1. If you disagree with the decision of the Principal, you may appeal the decision in writing to the next level for review within fifteen (15) days from the date of the Principal's written decision or your appeal will be considered untimely. The request for review must be sent to the Superintendent of the Catholic schools of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth. The superintendent can be reached at the address of The Catholic Center, 800 West Loop 820 South, Fort Worth, Texas 76108-2919, and telephone number (817) 560-3300.
2. The superintendent will set the date, time, and location for the review. Your review may be conducted by a single person or by a representative committee, as the case warrants. All persons involved in the complaint may select someone to help in preparation for the review, to attend the hearing, and to provide support during the process. No attorneys are allowed to appear at or participate in the hearing.

The hearing will be set after receipt of your request for review, giving consideration to the schedules of all persons involved.

At the Review Hearing:

1. You explain your complaint, present relevant documentation, and answer questions the reviewer(s) may have.
2. The reviewer(s) interview(s), or other parties involved in the case, giving each an opportunity to respond to the complaint and present relevant facts and documentation.
3. The reviewer(s) will encourage the parties to reconcile their differences and come to a mutual agreement on some or all issues.
4. If the complaint cannot be resolved at the review hearing, the reviewer(s) will prepare a final, binding decision, which will be communicated to all parties, in writing, within ten (10) days of the hearing. The decision of the reviewer(s) is final and is not to be subject to any other grievance, arbitration, review, or reconciliation procedure of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth.
5. Your participation in this Complaint Review Process does not prevent you from making a complaint to an applicable government agency.

HOW TO REQUEST A MINOR ADJUSTMENT PURSUANT TO SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

If you feel that your child with a disability needs a minor adjustment to enable him/her to participate in the general education curriculum of the school, please talk to your child's teacher and/or Principal of the school. Be prepared to submit medical documentation to verify both your child's disability and the nature and extent of the requested minor adjustment.

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, nationality, 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, sex, nationality 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.

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.

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School (Pre-Kindergarten – 1st Grade)

Parents' Permission, Release and Indemnity for Field Trips

Please read, sign and return this top portion to school.

I request that my child, _____, _____ attend and be permitted to participate in the field trip with _____ class on _____

To _____.

Cost: _____

The educational purpose of this field trip is: _____

To the best of my knowledge he/she is physically fit to engage in such activity and is not suffering from any disease or injury. I agree and do hereby waive and release all claims against Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School and any teacher, employee, or other person engaged in the activity in question and agree to hold them harmless from any and all liability relating to my son/daughter for any personal injury or illness that may be suffered or any loss of property that may occur to my son/daughter. If an emergency arises and the parents cannot be reached, I authorize any necessary treatment.

(Signature of parent/guardian)

(Date)

Phone number where parent can be reached _____

I can drive on this field trip (please circle one): Yes No

Keeping in mind that every student requires a separate seatbelt and that students under the age of 12 may not sit in the front seat, how many students are you able to transport? _____

If driving for any school trip, a current and correct Driver Information Sheet must be on file in the school office.

Laura Behee, M.Ed., Principal

08-2019 revised

**Please retain this section for your information.
SEND A BOOSTER SEAT FOR YOUR CHILD**

Date of Field Trip: _____ Place: _____ Class: _____

Times: Leave school at _____ Return to school at _____

Lunch: _____ Bring sack lunch and boxed drink
_____ Will eat at school as usual

Dress: _____ in uniform _____ out of uniform

Special Information: _____

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School (2nd – 8th Grades)
Parents' Permission, Release and Indemnity for Field Trips
Please read, sign and return this top portion to school.

I request that my child, _____, attend and be permitted to participate in the field trip with _____ class on _____ To _____ Cost: _____

The educational purpose of this field trip is: _____

To the best of my knowledge he/she is physically fit to engage in such activity and is not suffering from any disease or injury. I agree and do hereby waive and release all claims against Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School and any teacher, employee, or other person engaged in the activity in question and agree to hold them harmless from any and all liability relating to my son/daughter for any personal injury or illness that may be suffered or any loss of property that may occur to my son/daughter. If an emergency arises and the parents cannot be reached, I authorize any necessary treatment.

(Signature of parent/guardian) (Date)

Phone number where parent can be reached _____

I can drive on this field trip (please circle one): Yes No

Keeping in mind that every student requires a separate seatbelt and that students under the age of 12 may not sit in the front seat, how many students are you able to transport? _____

If driving for any school trip, a current and correct Driver Information Sheet must be on file in the school office.

Laura Behee, M.Ed., Principal 08-2019
revised

Please retain this section for your information.

Date of Field Trip: _____ Place : _____ Class: _____

Times: Leave school at _____ Return to school at _____

Lunch: _____ Bring sack lunch and boxed drink
_____ Will eat at school as usual

Dress: _____ in uniform _____ out of uniform

Special Information: _____

SOCIAL MEDIA ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I have received and read a copy of the Diocesan School Policy #6205 Online Social Media. I have also received and read a copy of the Diocesan School Policy #6210 The Minimum Social Media Requirements. I understand both policy statements and agree that all student members of my family will abide by the standards set forth in both policies. I further acknowledge that any violation of these policies by a student member of my family will result in disciplinary action against the student member(s) of my family up to and including expulsion from the school.

ONE FORM PER STUDENT

Family Name: _____

Date: _____

Student Name: _____

Home Room Teacher: _____

Name of School: St. Maria Goretti Catholic School

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

**St. Maria Goretti Catholic School
Cell Phone Policy**

Students at St. Maria Goretti Catholic School are not allowed to have a cell phone on during the school day. Phones must be turned off before entering the building and may be turned on after exiting the building at 3:15PM. Student phones need to remain off and in their homerooms throughout the day. If a student is caught using a cell phone during the restricted hours and/or carrying the phone on their person, an adult will take the phone and bring it to the Assistant Principal and/or Principal, where the parent can retrieve it at the end of the day. **A \$15.00 fee will be assessed at the time the phone is picked up.**

Student's Printed Name _____

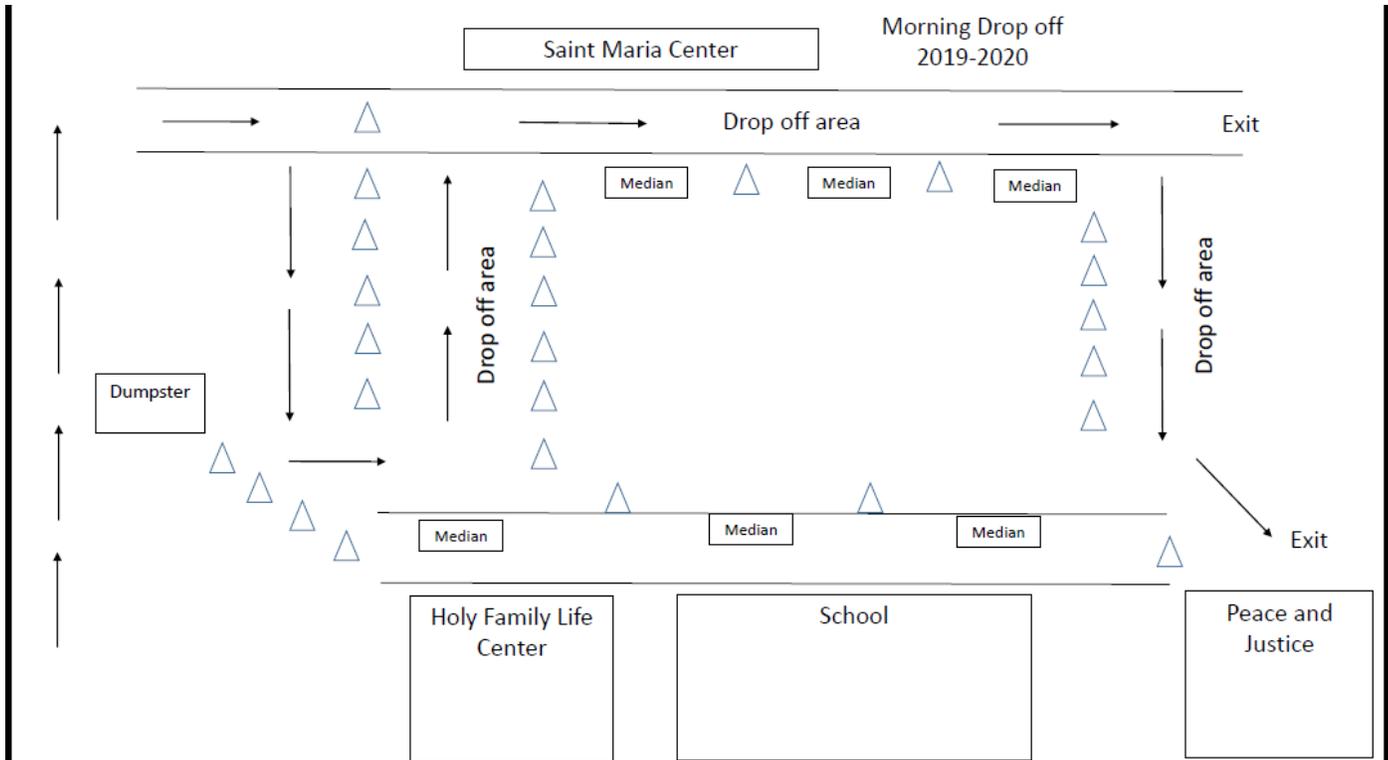
Student's Signature _____

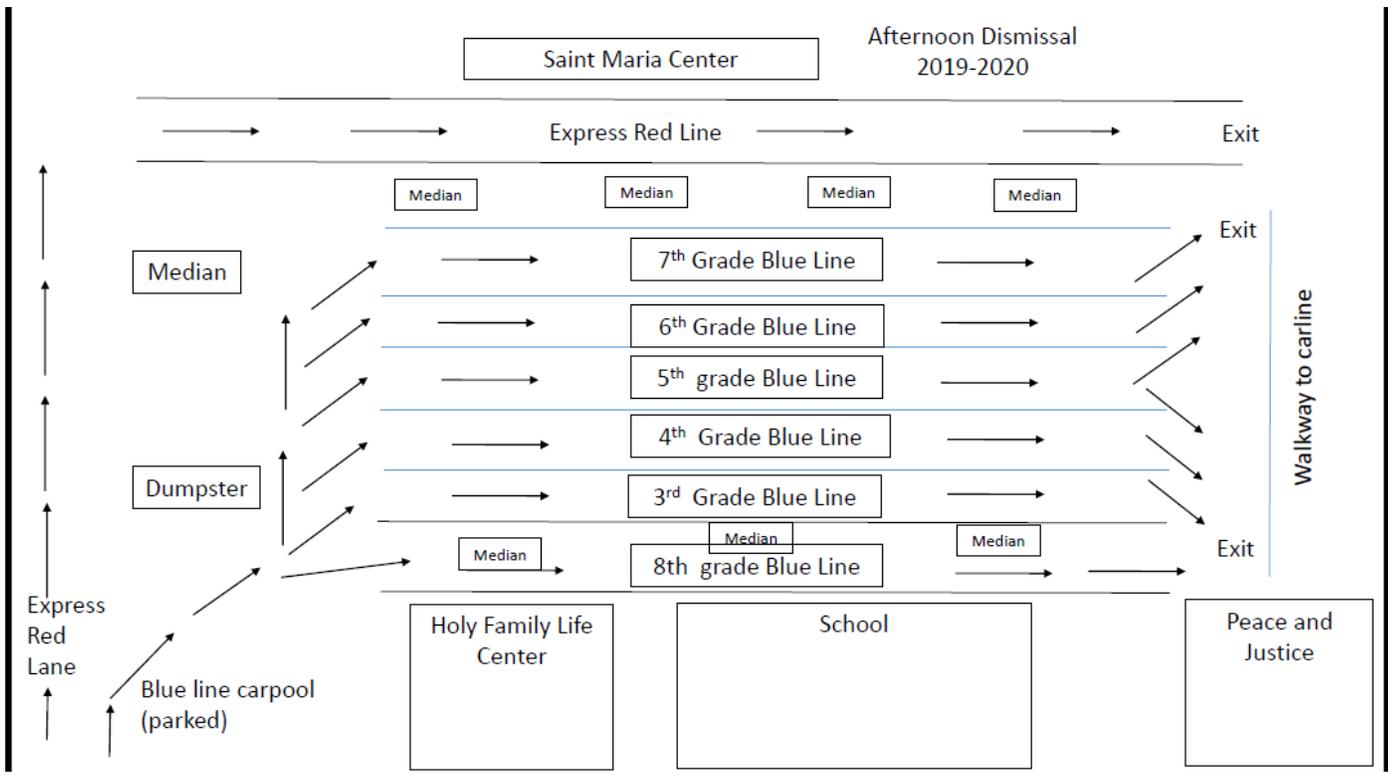
Parent's Printed Name _____

Parent's Signature _____

Student's Cell Phone Number _____

Date _____







SMG SPIRIT Program Questions and Answers for Families

What is SPIRIT?

SPIRIT stands for St. Maria Goretti Parents Involved to Render Inspiration and Time and is the name of the volunteer program at SMG. All families are required to volunteer a minimum of 40 hours for the school throughout the year.

Why do we have this program? Volunteer hours are crucial to helping ensure the smooth daily operation of the school, help manage special events and activities, and keep costs and tuition low. At least 10 hours of your 40 hour commitment **MUST** be related to our major fundraisers — our annual Kountry Karnival (KK), KK Rame, or Dinner Dance (DD) events, as they directly impact our tuition rates.

What do I need to do (and when)?

1. Complete Safe Environment Training (as soon as possible)
2. Find ways to earn your 10 required Kountry Karnival/Dinner Dance (KK/DD) SPIRIT hours (by the end of September). Go to smgschool.org > SignUp Genius > select an activity.
3. Explore other volunteer opportunities that interest you for the remainder of your 40 hour commitment (before the end of the school year; the earlier you start, the easier it is to meet your commitment)
4. Submit your SPIRIT hours to the SPIRIT Coordinator (within one week of volunteering)

What is Safe Environment Training (Virtus) and how do I sign up?

Child and Youth Protection Safe Environment training is a training program developed by the Diocese of Fort Worth in response to the issues of abuse within our society. The purpose of the program is to make participants aware of the behaviors and attitudes associated with abuse and to help keep all our children safe. Anyone who will be earning SPIRIT hours for your family must be up to date on this training prior to volunteering. Free training is available and is good for three years. Contact the school office for information or email secretary@smgschool.org

How do I find volunteer opportunities?

SignUp Genius is our online volunteer scheduling tool, accessible via the school website. It shows currently available volunteer opportunities and is continually updated. Visit www.smgschool.org > SignUp Genius > select an activity. Once inside, look for the colored tabs to find different categories there are left/right arrows which allow you to scroll through all the available options. To sign up for a volunteer opportunity, click on your selection, scroll to the bottom to submit and follow the directions. Note: Signing up via SignUp Genius does not turn in your volunteer hours for you — you are responsible for submitting your actual hours worked to receive SPIRIT credit.

Who keeps track of all this?

We have a SPIRIT Coordinator who is responsible for tracking all the volunteer hours submitted for each family and providing you with periodic SPIRIT Reports. Our SPIRIT Coordinator can be contacted at SPIRIT@smgschool.org

What if I can't volunteer at school? There are limited opportunities to volunteer from home as well as opportunities to donate your talents and treasure in lieu of your time.

What happens if I don't earn all 40 hours? All SMG families must complete 40 hours (20 hours by December 20, 2019, and 20 hours by May 15, 2020). Otherwise, \$400 per family will be billed (\$200 in January and \$200 in May). You are only charged for the hours you did not complete. Ex. You complete 19 hours by December 20, 2019, you will only be charged for the one hour you did not complete.

How will I know if I have completed the required 40 SPIRIT hours?

Periodically throughout the year, you will receive official reports of the volunteer hours that you have submitted. The first report will be sent in November and will include all Kountry Carnival hours that were turned in- The SPIRIT Coordinator will track the first 40 hours you submit; any hours you choose to volunteer beyond 40 do not have to be submitted. Official reports will be discontinued once you have completed a total of 40 hours.

Updated August 2019

What counts towards SPIRIT hours?

We give SPIRIT hours for the time, talent, and treasure that families give in support of approved activities that benefit SMG School. In general, SPIRIT Hours are given for things that will save money or make money for SMG School, e.g.:

- Helping teachers with classroom projects or serving as Lunchroom helper, Playground Monitor, etc.
- Field trip chaperone, party worker, Room Parent, etc.
- Donations of time, talent, or treasure (including food/beverage, gift cards, or other items) to support an approved fundraiser, Marketing/Development or Teacher Appreciation event. Donated items cannot exceed 10 hours per item regardless of the time invested to make the item or the monetary value of the item, e.g., quilts or craft items, airline tickets, etc.

What does NOT count towards SPIRIT hours? In general, these are things that families do in support of their student or our community that don't meet the requirements for SPIRIT hours, for example:

- Donations of food/beverage/decorations/favors for any class party/dance/other non-fundraising event (we do give hours for working parties/events) e Donations of food/gift cards for families in need
- Donations of food/beverages for parent meetings (e.g., H&S meetings)

- Volunteering for the Parish (Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Youth Group, etc.)
- Volunteering for another community organization

What is the difference between Service Hours and SPIRIT hours and who can earn each?

SPIRIT hours are earned by parents, relatives and friends (including older siblings in high school) who have current safe environment training and may be used to complete your SPIRIT Hour Commitment. Service Hours are earned by junior high and high school STUDENTS to meet their school's student volunteer requirements. High School students may earn EITHER Service Hours for their school OR SPIRIT Hours for SMG, but the same hours may not be applied to both. Current SMG students may only earn Service Hours.

How do I submit SPIRIT hours?

Signing up to volunteer for an event via SignUp Genius DOES NOT submit your hours. There are TWO ways to submit SPIRIT hours, either by using a paper form or via email. With either method, your volunteer activities must be verified by the chairperson or coordinator of the activity. No hours may be verified by the individual doing the work. SPIRIT Hours Submissions received without verification will not be recorded. Methods of verification are as follows:

- I. Paper form: This can be either a sign-in sheet at the event or an individual SPIRIT Submission form. Submit a completed SPIRIT Hours Submission Form (available in the school office or at www.smgschool.org Forms → SPIRIT Forms) to the chairperson of the activity for their verification/signature, and then submit the completed form to the school office or via KIDMAIL.
2. Email: Send an email which includes: Family Name Receiving SPIRIT Credit, Volunteer Name (if different), Activity Description/Date, and # Hours Worked to the chairperson/coordinator or teacher sponsoring the activity. Ask that they verify the hours and forward the email to SPIRIT@smgschool.org.

Exceptions:

- Lunchroom and Playground Monitor hours are submitted by the school office monthly.
- Generally, if there is a sign-in sheet available when you volunteer, that will be used to submit your hours. E.g., hours worked during the weekend of Kountry Carnival will be submitted via sign-in sheets. ALL OTHER KK HOURS NEED TO BE SUBMITTED VIA METHODS 1 OR 2 LISTED ABOVE. Booth and activity chairpersons will have their hours verified by the chairperson responsible for their area. Updated August 2019

