

# The Organization of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe Catholic Schools

St. Mary's Catholic School of Belen  
 101 N 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Belen, NM 87002  
 (505) 864-0484  
[www.stmarysbelen.com](http://www.stmarysbelen.com)

Archbishop of Santa Fe	Most Rev. John Wester
Superintendent of Catholic Schools	Ms. Donna Illerbrun
Pastor of Our Lady of Belen	Rev. John Kimani
Principal of St. Mary's School	Mrs. Melanie S. Chavez

## Teachers and Staff at St. Mary's School

Pre-K	Ms. Rose Trent	MS Math/8 <sup>th</sup> Grade SS	Ms. Vera Gibson
Kindergarten		MS ELA/7 <sup>th</sup> Grade SS	Ms. Jamecinda Waldrop
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Ms. Charlene Baca	MS Science/6 <sup>th</sup> Grade SS	Ms. Alexandra Jacquez
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	Ms. Brianna Torres	Physical Education	Ms. Natalie Solis
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Ms. Carmen Chavez	Athletic Director	Ms. Natalie Solis
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade		Art	Ms. Bernadette Baca
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Mr. George Albers	Music	Ms. Betty McCabe
Educational Asst.	Ms. Susan Barela	Educational Asst.	Ms. Miriam Herrera
Office Manager	Ms. Janet Montoya	Bus Driver	Ms. Joanne Carrillo
Maintenance/Janitorial	Mr. Felipe Sanchez	Bookkeeper	Ms. Deidra Garcia
Computer Tech/IT	Ms. Sohaila Lucero	Cafeteria Cooks	Ms. Pam Toledo & Ms. Susie Armijo



St. Mary's Catholic School prepares students to be leaders in worship, work, and the world through Roman Catholic teachings, rigorous academics, and service to others.

**Philosophy:** We at St. Mary's Catholic School actively strive to teach as Jesus taught. In the tradition of our patroness, the blessed Mother, we recognize parents as the primary educators of their children and want to assist them in their role in teaching and guiding their children to live their Catholic faith. We are committed to providing:

- a. Activities that allow students to experience prayer and liturgy
- b. Quality educational opportunities for students of varied academic abilities
- c. Financial aid programs to assist those families unable to assume full financial responsibilities for tuition
- d. Opportunities for students to serve others to fulfill the mandate of the Gospel and the demands of justice, and to recognize that society requires the cooperation for our students to become faith filled and productive members of our community.

We believe this will provide the foundation for our students to become faith-filled and productive members of our community.

**Mission Statement:** St. Mary's School prepares students to be leaders in worship, work, and the world, through Roman Catholic teachings, rigorous academics, and service to others.

**Vision Statement:** Through our commitment to critical thinking, empathy, and stewardship, we aspire to make a positive impact on the world, creating a society rooted in truth, compassion, and divine guidance. With God as our compass, we envision a future where our collective efforts foster personal growth, social harmony, and a world filled with love and justice.

### **Theme & Scripture for 24-25 School Year:**

We Are **Blessed**

**Brave**

**Loved**

**Enthusiastic**

**Spirited**

**Studios**

**Empowered**

**Disciples**

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD let his face shine on you; the LORD look upon you kindly and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26

**Archdiocesan Schools Mission Statement:** Fostering the unique gifts of each child and preparing students for leadership in school, Church and global community, the Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe offer a Christ-centered, academically challenging Catholic education.

## 2024-2025 Student Learning Expectations (SLE's)

### Worship

- I will participate in weekly school Mass and ministries
- I will model yearly moral themes and scriptures
- I will participate in student led prayers and Catholic traditions
- I will demonstrate growth in my Catholic Identity goal

### Work

- I will demonstrate growth on STAR Testing
- I will participate in STREAM activities
- I will demonstrate growth in my learning goals
- I will apply technology to boost academic performance

### World

- I will participate in school-wide service projects
- I will embody the Social Justice themes.
- I will establish a community of faith, hope, love, and charity
- I will live the virtuous examples of the Saints

**It's GREAT to be a ROADRUNNER!**

**Disclaimer:** The Archdiocese of Santa Fe Catholic School Policy Manual (ASF CPM) governs all Parish/Regional preschools and elementary schools and the Archdiocesan High Schools (**ASF Policy No. 1300**). Because not all situations can be covered in this handbook, St. Mary's Catholic School reserves the right, at any time, to amend, terminate, rescind, or supplement any or all the guidelines or procedures contained herein, and to take actions which may be contrary to guidelines, benefits, or procedures set for in this handbook.

Simply through enrollment at St. Mary's Catholic School, parents and students enter a covenant with the school and agree to the terms of its handbook.

**SUBJECT: The Role of the Pastor/Rector in Parish/Regional Preschools and Elementary Schools**

The Pastor/Rector is the Canonical leaders of the parish/deanery of which the school is part. In collaboration with the Superintendent, the Pastor/Rector has the responsibility for both the spiritual and administrative leadership of the Parish/Regional school. The administrative supervision of the Parish/Regional school is delegated to the Principal/Preschool Director. In addition to the Pastor's responsibilities, as described in other sections of this handbook, the Pastor/Rector in collaboration with the Superintendent is responsible for hiring and supervising the Principal/Preschool Director of the Parish/Regional preschool and elementary school, promulgating school policies, and approving local school consultative council recommendations. As the primary administrative and spiritual leader for the school, the Pastor/Rector consults and cooperates with the Superintendent and Principal/Preschool Director in matters concerning educational policy, administrative practices, and formation of the Catholic school community. He works closely with the Superintendent of Catholic schools and Principal/Preschool Director in areas such as law, personnel, and the administration of the school. **POLICY NO. 1050**

**SUBJECT: The Role of the Principal**

Under the supervision of the Pastor/Rector and the Superintendent, the Principal is responsible for the general administration and operation of the school as specified in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe Principal Competencies and in accordance with Archdiocesan and local school policies, applicable state laws and the policies and standards of the accrediting association designated by the Superintendent. S/he functions as the school's spiritual leader and chief administrator and provides leadership in all phases of the educational programs of the school. **POLICY NO. 1060**

**SUBJECT: The Role of School Consultative Council**

Each school will have a local school Consultative Council that reports to the Principal and Pastor/Rector. The Consultative Council provides support to the Principal and Pastor/Rector in matters designated by the Council's Constitution and Bylaws or as requested by the Principal and Pastor/Rector. Areas for Council consultation and support include planning, facilities, public relations, marketing, enrollment management, and advancement/development and other areas identified in the strategic plan and approved by the Pastor/Rector and Principal. **POLICY NO. 1090**

**SUBJECT: The Role of St. Mary's Parent Association (SMPA) & Roadrunner Boosters**

Parent organizations assist the school in achieving its mission. These groups shall be subject to the supervision and control of the Principal/Preschool Director. The primary functions of the Parent Organization shall be hospitality, classroom activities, parent education/information, and small fundraising events for the purpose of funding the organization's activities or projects as directed by the Principal/Preschool Director. **POLICY NO. 1095**

**SUBJECT: Use of Name and Logo**

Attaching the school's name, logo, or other insignia to an event, activity, or publication implies a close connection with the school, usually sponsorship or endorsement. Involvement by individual faculty, staff, students, or parents is not, by itself, sufficient basis to title an activity, program, or event as "school" sponsored. Rather, the activity, program or event must be one for which the school takes institutional responsibility. Faculty members, staff, students, parents, and parish members may use the school's name, logo, or insignia (alone or in conjunction with the name of a specified organization or activity) only with the written approval of the Principal and Pastor/Rector in Parish/Regional schools and the Principal and Superintendent in the Archdiocesan high school. In appropriate cases determined by the Principal and Pastor/Rector or Principal and Superintendent, permission for ongoing events, activities, or publications requiring approval under this policy may be given. **POLICY NO. 1540**

**SUBJECT: Accreditation**

All parish elementary schools and the Archdiocesan high school will be accredited through the accrediting association designated by the Superintendents. St. Mary's Catholic School is accredited by the Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA). The purpose of accreditation is to confirm that the professional educational standards of the school meet applicable guidelines. The accreditation process is intended to promote school improvement. **POLICY NO. 1100**



**Admission Policies:** St. Mary's Catholic School follows the ASF **POLICY NO. 2000** in reference to admission.

All Catholic preschools, elementary schools and the Archdiocesan high school shall admit only those students who sincerely seek a Catholic education.

For admission purposes, preference is given to students who are practicing Catholics, who have a basic knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith, and who are registered members of a parish or mission within the Diocese.

By applying for admission to a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school, parents or legal guardians acknowledge and agree that their student will participate in religious instruction and formation in the Catholic faith.

By applying for admission to a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school, parents or legal guardians acknowledge and agree that they will support the philosophy and mission of the Catholic school and all the Catholic teachings. No students will be refused admission to a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school because of race, color, national origin, or gender [FAM-501].

- St. Mary's Catholic School Pre-K accepts children from the ages of 3½ to 4 years old. Student must be 3½ by August 31 of the school year.
- Children entering Kindergarten **must** be 5 years old by August 31 of the school year [NM Law 22-8-2M]. Completion of a pre-school program does not replace the minimum age requirement.
- Children entering first grade must be six years old by August 31 of the school year [NM Law 22-8-2M].

**Admission Policies: (New Student):** New students seeking admission to St. Mary's Catholic School and their families will meet with the principal. Screening assessments may be scheduled for kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. When necessary, these tests may be used as a consideration for admission. Previous behavior records, reasons for seeking admission, and commitment to the rules, regulations and traditions of St. Mary's Catholic School will be considered. A student expelled by another school (Catholic, private, or public) is generally disqualified from admission to St. Mary's Catholic School. Admission and/or reenrollment may be denied based on the best interests of the school and its students. Admission may also be denied if a student has special needs that cannot be met at St. Mary's Catholic School.

**Admission Policies: Re-admission:** The readmission of a student who previously voluntarily withdrew from St. Mary's Catholic School is at the discretion of the principal. Students who leave St. Mary's Catholic School to attend another school for a semester or more may be asked to take a placement test upon returning to St. Mary's Catholic School to insure the grade level status.

**After School Activity Programs:** St. Mary's Catholic School seeks to offer after school opportunities for students. We would like to have at least one club, class service project, or other activity Monday through Thursday from 3:20 pm to 4:30 pm. Students will be able to sign up for the activity that they want to stay and participate in. In some cases, it is possible that there will be a small material fee, but for the most part, these classes are to be just for fun. **ONLY STUDENTS SIGNED UP FOR THE ACTIVITIES ARE ALLOWED TO STAY AFTER SCHOOL.**

**Athletics:** St. Mary's Catholic School is part of the APIAL League and offers competitive team sports for students in grades fifth through eighth. St. Mary's Catholic School and APIAL offers elementary sports for first through fourth grade as well. These are competitive, and all students can sign up to play for a fee on the APIAL website. Games will be scheduled in Belen, Albuquerque, and Santa Fe.

- To compete in the league, all students in grades 1-8 **MUST** have a signed Release Form and Medical Examination Form annually.
- Only students that have their physicals up-to-date and are registered in the sport will be allowed to stay after school for practice and/or games
- Siblings of students in sports cannot be unattended on the premises during practice and/or game times (Coaches are not permitted to supervise anyone who is not registered to be on the team).
- Most information about our sports department can be found in the St. Mary's Catholic School Athletic Handbook.

**Attendance Policies:** Students are expected to attend school every day and on time. State law (22-1-2 NMSA and 22-12-2 NMSA) require daily school attendance for those between the ages of 5 and 18, or until graduation from high school.

Absence due to illness, family emergencies, religious commitments, death in the family, diagnostic testing, school sponsored activities and doctor's appointments are considered **excused absences**.

ALL family vacations are considered **unexcused absences**.

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify the school when the student is absent. Notification is to be made to the school office by 9:00 am. Absences not reported will be counted as unexcused. If a child has accumulated five unexcused absences within a quarter, a call may be made to CYFD. Excessive absence days or the equivalent of 20 days in one semester, can cause a student to be retained in the current grade for another year or fail certain courses. Therefore, a parent conference may be required to determine a course of action for students who have accumulated ten excused or unexcused absences within a semester.

Students who have received Financial Aid from the school for the school year could have their scholarship rescinded if there are excessive tardies and/or absences.

A student must be present for most of the day to receive credit for the day. If a student is out part of the day, it will be marked a tardy (up to 2 hours at the beginning or end of the day). After that, it becomes a half day.

**Attendance Policies: Tardies:** Excessive tardies are a disruption to the class and should always be AVOIDED at all costs. If a parent signs out a child from an afternoon field trip to take them home, the child will not be counted as tardy or suffer any penalty provided, IF they leave the field trip at the same time as the other students. If a student arrives at school after two hours, attendance is recorded as half day. If a child leaves before 1:15 pm, the attendance will be recorded as a half day present. Students in St. Mary's Catholic School sport activities (no other school sports or organizations) will not be counted tardy but will not be released before the designated time. **Students who are absent from school a full day on the day of a game or practice may not participate in the sport that day.**

**Attendance Policies: School Tardy Penalties (by grading period):**

- First and second tardy in a grading period: WARNING
- Third tardy: WARNING & WRITTEN NOTIFICATION
- Fourth tardy: PARENTAL CONTACT & WRITTEN NOTIFICATION
- Fifth tardy: MEETING WITH PRINCIPAL
- Continued Excessive Tardies: Call to CYFD for education neglect [NM Law 22-12-2]

**Attendance Policies: Release of Students During the School Day:** Please try not to disrupt your child's school day. If the need arises, you will need to personally come to the office when picking up students early and complete a "Student Release Form." If the student returns to school that same day, the parent must accompany him/her to the office and complete the second half of the form. Please do not just drop the student off without checking into the office and signing the student in.

If someone other than the parent/guardian is assuming responsibility for the student at the time of release, that person must be listed on the student's "Emergency Contact List and Early Release" form and the parent/guardian must inform the school ahead of time by phone or email. St. Mary's Catholic School cannot legally release your student to someone who is NOT on the list. Therefore, it is extremely important that parents/guardians update emergency contact lists through FACTS regularly. Students will be released from the classroom once you have signed the proper paperwork in the office.

**Birthdays & Class Parties:** Please contact your child's teacher when sending birthday treats. Birthday lunches for the whole class are not allowed. Because we have many students with food allergies, we would prefer students with food allergies do not participate in class party snacks. Parents of students with allergies should provide a safe snack for their students. Family members are not permitted in the classroom for birthday observances.

Birthday party invitations can only be handed out at school if **EVERYONE** in the class receives an invitation. This causes many issues when some students do not get invited.

Deliveries, such as balloons and flowers, will not be delivered to the student's classroom during the school day, but will be held in the office until the end of the school day.

**Bus:** St. Mary's Catholic School offers bus service to and from Los Lunas. All families wishing to use this service must fill out the proper transportation forms and pay a monthly fee of \$100 per family regardless if used one way or both ways. We prefer the bus to be prepaid and you stay ahead of



your child's fees. If your account falls behind, we will notify you and draw your balance from your account using FACTS.

**Bus Policies for Students:** While riding the bus, students are expected to act responsibly and in accordance with school policies. They should exhibit Christian character and behavior towards each other, the driver and follow the following rules:

- Obey the driver's instructions. The driver of the school bus is in complete charge of the passengers while they are aboard. The bus driver has the authority to assign seats. All complaints should be brought to the attention of the principal.
- Be seated immediately and remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Do not extend arms, legs, head, or objects out of the bus.
- In case of an emergency, students shall remain seated and wait for directions from the bus driver.
- Do not tamper with the emergency door, fire extinguisher, or other equipment on the bus.
- Do not mark or deface the bus, or the seat coverings in any manner.
- No eating or drinking on the bus (water is the only liquid students can have).
- Only registered and paying students are allowed on the bus unless previous arrangements have been made with the principal for emergency type instances.
- Students are only allowed to leave the bus at their regular designated stop.
- Never cross at the rear of the bus, even if it is stopped!

Responsibility of the parents/guardians whose student(s) ride the bus:

- Report any alleged misconduct on the bus to the principal.
- Encourage your student(s) to observe all safety and conduct regulations established for the safe and efficient operation of the bus.
- Observe extreme caution when approaching a bus stop, a moving bus, or a stopped bus.

\*\*Offenders will be subject to disciplinary action and/or restitution.

**Celebrations:** Pre-K and Kindergarten end-of-year promotion ceremonies will be held the last week of school. For the most part, the celebration will consist of songs, presentation of certificates, and refreshments. The event will be held in the school gymnasium. The teacher oversees the event and may ask parents for assistance.

A fee of \$120 is charged for all 8<sup>th</sup> graders during registration. This fee takes care of some of the activities for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade week at the end of May. They will have an important retreat, buddy picnic, with the week culminating in the Mass and small gathering. This exciting week has been a tradition for St. Mary's 8<sup>th</sup> graders for many years. It is not to celebrate the achievement of completing eight years of school, but the celebration of friendships and memories made over the past years at St. Mary's Catholic School. It is of high importance to the staff, administration, and the priest that these events reflect the joy and spirituality that they deserve. The eighth-grade sponsor and the principal will work together in the planning of the event.

**Cell Phones, iPads, Smart Watches, Earbuds & Tablets:** Students MAY NOT use cell phones during the school day. The teacher collects them in the morning, and they are taken to the office until the

end of the day. At no time will students be allowed with their cell phones on the playground or to photograph other students. If a student is found to be using a cell phone, or the phone rings during the day, indicating that they did not turn it in, the student will receive a referral and surrender the phone until the parent picks it up. If this is habitual, the student will be asked not to bring a phone at all.

At no time should a student have earpieces/earbuds/headphones other than those distributed by the teacher. If a student is found to be wearing them during school hours without permission from the teacher, he/she will receive a referral and surrender the earpiece until the parent picks them up.

Smart watches and other wearable cellphones are not allowed and will need to be turned in at the beginning of the school day along with cell phones.

We have enough computers, Chrome Books, and iPads within the school for all the students therefore, students are not to bring in any electronic devices to school.

\*\*The school CAN NOT be held responsible for any theft or vandalism of the device. (See acceptable use form for more information which students are required to sign and observe).

**Cheating:** Cheating of any type (including plagiarism) will not be tolerated. Students who choose to cheat face a failing grade, detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. A student athlete who is involved in cheating will also be unable to participate in sports.

**Communication Between Home & School:** FACTS is the major source of information for our school. To maintain open communication, St. Mary's Catholic School will provide all parents with log-in information.

Parents will be able to access information regarding upcoming school events, calendars, grades, lunch menus, and announcements by visiting FACTS. Phone calls or texts are made through FACTS to notify parents of important events or changes in the school calendar events. Very few hard copies will be sent home with students.

St. Mary's Catholic School has an active website at [www.stmarysbelen.com](http://www.stmarysbelen.com). Monthly newsletters (The Bird Word) will be posted on our website and on our social media platforms (Facebook & Instagram). A hard copy will be distributed in the church bulletin at Our Lady of Belen.

Every Sunday evening or Monday morning, the principal will send "Monday Notes" to parents via email regarding weekly activities. **PLEASE read your "Monday Notes."** This will be the avenue used to announce such things as jean days, popcorn sales, emergencies, etc.

It is important as Catholics that we are good stewards of our natural resources, therefore, we will eliminate paper as much as we can. Therefore, it is important that you become familiar with FACTS.

**Conferences:** In accordance with **POLICY NO. 4410**, the teacher is expected to meet periodically with the parents of each student for the purpose of discussing the student's development and academic

progress in school. The student is expected to lead the conference in an effort to take responsibility for their learning.

Conferences should take place at the designated school conference times and at other times deemed necessary by the teachers or parent/guardian.

Designated conference days may be considered contact days, provided students are required to attend all or part of the conference.

*Unless specifically prohibited by a court order, the non-custodial parent has the right to the same information and opportunities for conferences provided for the custodial parent.*

**Crisis Management:** We are always looking for ways to make our children safer. As you know, we keep all school doors locked and always secured. We have an entry system that requires parents/visitors to ring the exterior bell for admittance. We put a window in the front office to have a direct line vision with the front door. All classrooms can be locked from the inside to prevent an intruder entrance. We have perimeter fencing with gates that are locked during the school day. Persons with no legitimate reason or written authorization to be on the school campus will be asked to leave by any school personnel. If the person does not leave, the police will be called.

Rest assured, we are required to, and we will have regular drills to practice these procedures so that in an event of the "real thing" the children will know what to do in each situation. Please communicate to your child that these drills are normal and necessary, and they should not be afraid.

In the event of an emergency, our first response **ALWAYS** is for the safety of the students. After informing the police department, at the first available moment, we will send out a text, email and phone message through FACTS informing parents/guardians of our situation. Please do not try to come to the school and enter the building until you have received notification. The principal will then send an email or hard copy following any emergency explaining the details. (Please read over the "St. Mary's Safety Plan" that is included at the end of this document).

**Discipline:** To accomplish everything we need to at St. Mary's Catholic School, a strict code of discipline must be maintained. It is important for students to know that **IT IS A PRIVILEGE** to attend St. Mary's Catholic School and there are boundaries that must not be crossed when it comes to respect of adults and one another. Morals and values are as important, if not more, as math and English. We will do our best to maintain a school and atmosphere that reflects the tenants on which this school was based.

Teachers will be responsible for maintaining discipline in their classrooms. The teachers utilize, as appropriate, a variety of procedures that are designed to change inappropriate behavior and help students improve their self-discipline. These measures include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal reprimand/warning
- Assign constructive assignments/tasks
- Require a student/teacher conference
- Confer or conference with parent/guardian

- Require students to serve lunch detention or after school detention
- Develop, with the student, a contract of behavior plan
- If the student has not responded appropriately to the above actions, the teacher will make a referral to the principal who will determine the consequences.

Depending on the severity and the frequency of the discipline referrals, students may be held in a **mandatory after school detention** until 4:30 pm. Students may not be excused from after school detention to participate in any previously planned after school activity or sport. Difficulty providing transportation will not serve as a basis for cancellation of the detention. The school will call and notify you that your student will need to stay for detention after school.

A student may be placed on suspension for serious misconduct occurring on campus, during school related activities off campus, or for continued misconduct after several attempts of correcting misbehavior has occurred.

Suspension refers to the isolation of a student from some or all classes and/or school activities. Suspension is defined as a temporary dismissal of a student from the school. Suspension is a serious consequence that should be used rarely and only in response to an action of a very serious nature or after other remedial measures have been employed without success. **POLICY NO. 2450**

Behaviors that may result in a detention or a suspension from school include, but are not limited to:

- Disruptive behavior in class
- Disrespect for authority figures
- Disrespect for or stealing of school or other's property
- Continuous disregard of St. Mary's Catholic School dress code
- Unauthorized presence in any part of the building
- Copying another's work or test, including plagiarism
- Giving answers to another student
- Talking at any time during a test
- Excessive tardiness to school (four or more)
- Improper use of computers/laptops/iPads
- Lying or misrepresenting the truth
- Crude or vulgar language or gestures
- Failure to serve previous detention
- Possessing, using, or being under the influence of tobacco, vaping, alcohol, or illicit drugs

**Dress Code--Violations:** The uniform policy has been outlined, posted on the website, as well as printed in the parent calendars distributed to each parent. There is not room in this handbook to post all the do's and don'ts possible with the code violations. The principal will make the final call on all violations. Please adhere to the following:

- Students must be in core uniform every Wednesday and other posted core uniform days.

- At no time will open toes shoes, flip flops, Heelies, Crocs, high-heels, light-ups, and furry or non-furry fashion boots be acceptable at St. Mary's Catholic School.
- Cowboy boots can be worn on all days EXCEPT on Wednesdays and may only be worn if the tops are not visible (pants cover the top of the boot).
- No excessively tight or baggy clothing.
- No leggings at any time.
- No capris.
- No hats or sunglasses may be worn inside the school buildings.
- No make-up, mascara, lip gloss, colored gloss or Chapstick, or colored/polished nails.
- Hair must be of natural color, no dyes, highlights, bleach, tinsel etc.
- No body piercings except for ears.
- Girls may wear ONE pair of stud earrings no larger than a dime (NO HOOPS OR DANGLING TYPE EARRINGS).
- Uniforms must be in good condition with no rips, tears, holes, or stains. Dress and short hemlines no shorter than 2 inches above the knee.
- All polos and cardigans must have the St. Mary's Catholic School emblem with Mary in the center.

A phone call will be made to the parent of a student who is not dressed in accordance with the dress code so the parent can correct the uniform infraction immediately.

**Dress Code—Accessories:** Accessories are outlined and must be modest and small. Necklaces, bracelets, and colored nails are not allowed. Only small post earrings may be worn. Religious necklaces must be worn under the polos. Smartwatches, or any other electronic or wearable technology that sends emails or text messages and connects to the internet are NOT allowed. Small fitness trackers that are not internet connectable are allowed.

No outer wear, including St. Mary's hoodies and sweatshirts, may be worn in the classroom. Cardigans may be worn in the classroom and will be part of the core uniform in November through March. If a student wishes to wear a long-sleeved shirt under their polo shirt, it must be the same color as the polo worn—no two tones.

No short socks (no shows/footies)—the type that end at the top of the shoe and looks like a sock is not worn are allowed.

Length of shorts, skirts, and jumpers are going to be closely monitored. They should be no more than 2 inches above the knee cap. Again, the principal will make the final call.

**Dress Code—Free Dress Day:** This day will be limited to school picture day and Catholic Schools Week (or any other day at the principal's discretion). All rules regarding shoes, accessories, length of dresses/skirts/shorts and general modesty will apply. Spaghetti straps, thin shoulder straps, tank tops, muscle shirts, sleeves that end at the shoulder are never acceptable.

**Dress Code—Hair:** In recent years, students have tried to get by with highlighting, low lighting, or bleaching their hair. Teachers notice those changes. Hair must be student's NATURAL color without dyes, highlights, or bleaching. Any additions to the hair, i.e., extensions, tinsel, etc. are not permitted.

Boys must keep a short haircut that should not be below the collar. Hair should be above the eyebrow (for both boys and girls). No extreme spiking or shaving on the sides or shaving designs is allowed.

**Dress Code—Jean Days:** Jean days mean that students can wear plain, blue denim jeans (NOT LEGGINGS) with a blue, gray, white, or other designated St. Mary's shirt with a logo including hoodless sweatshirts. No denim shorts or capris are allowed at any time. All jeans should be in good condition without rips, tears, or stains and blue in color. All shoes, accessories, and sock rules still apply on Jean Days.

**Dress Code—Nails:** Nails should be kept short and clean. At no time should students have acrylic or press on nails. Colored nails polish is not allowed.

**Drop Off and Pickup:** Morning drop-off occurs on the west side of the school cafeteria and basketball court. Enter the campus through the most southern entrance in front of the Church (under the "Our Lady of Belen" sign) and proceed to the back. You can exit immediately onto Reinken.

The pick-up procedure will be the same as the morning drop-off routine for students whose last names begin with A-M.

For students whose last name begins with N-Z, pick-up will be on the east side of the school. Please enter through the most northern gate and exit through the southern gate and proceed right onto 10<sup>th</sup> Street (do not make a left-hand turn when exiting the southern gate).

PreK parents, please drop off your student by the gate near the PreK portable (for safety reasons, please do not enter the gated area). If your student is ½ day PreK please pick her/him up at the same gate. Full day PreK students will be escorted by a teacher or aid to the student's assigned pick-up area.

Parents may walk-up on either side and drop-off or pick-up their students if they choose. For safety reasons, please do not enter the gated area when picking up and dropping off students.

Parents are to drive **NO FASTER than 5 mph** while on school campus. Parents are asked not to use their cell phones while driving through the pick-up/drop-off line.

Students are to enter and exit the vehicle through the passenger side only.

The front door will not be open for entrance in the morning until the morning prayer and announcements have been completed. If you are dropping your student off late, please remain in the car with her/him until the door is open and she/he can enter.

**Electronic Acceptable Use Form:** St. Mary's Catholic School provides access to the Internet for students and staff in keeping with its role to provide information and resources to meet the needs of the educational community. The Archdiocese of Santa Fe or St. Mary's Catholic School has no control over the information on the Internet and cannot be held responsible for its content. Responsibility for proper use of the Internet rests with the users, and, at St. Mary's Catholic School, we require students and staff to adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines will be explained more fully in the Acceptable Use Contracts sent home with your student(s). Basically, tablets, laptops, and computers at St. Mary's Catholic School, whether the student or school owned, are to be used for educational purposes in compliance with the federal and state laws, in compliance with Archdiocesan and school regulations, and with care and consideration for hardware and equipment.

**Eligibility for Sports, Clubs, and Activities:** Eligibility will be taken weekly! Students will fill out eligibility forms beginning each Thursday morning during their sport season or club. It will be turned in to the homeroom teacher at the end of the day. All students are eligible in the fall until after Labor Day when the first eligibility will be assessed.

To be eligible to play, students must maintain a 2.0 (or 2's and 3's for fifth graders) with no more than one D and NO F's. If a student has an office referral or served a detention with the week, he/she may lose the privilege to play the week the detention was served. If a student received a suspension, it may be determined that the student will no longer be allowed to play in the sport for the rest of the season.

Please ensure that you and your student are aware of these requirements to participate in sports and clubs. If the student does not meet the requirements stated above, then the student can attend practice, but will not participate in any APIAL sanctioned game during that eligibility week (Thursday to Thursday). If the student does not meet the criteria for two weeks in a row, it becomes a liability for the team and the student can be removed from the team.

**Field Trips:** As extensions of the curriculum, field trips can offer valuable off-campus learning experiences. It is important that the students realize that field trips are a privilege and not a right. Permission forms are used for all trips, including walking trips. At all times, whether on or off campus, **St Mary's students represent our school and must behave appropriately!** (Although after-school athletic games are not considered field trips, student behavior is expected to be appropriate and equal to what is required during school hours).

Absolutely no overnight field trips are allowed by the Archdiocese **POLICY NO. 4340**—this includes no overnight athletic events as well.

Parents will be informed about field trips well in advance. A permission slip must be signed by the parent/guardian so that the child may participate in the field trip. Verbal permission **cannot and will not** be accepted.

If the bus is used for the field trip, a bus fee may be charged based on the distance traveled. You will be informed of the cost when information is first sent home about the field trip. (Financial aid for such field trip costs is available, if needed).

**Chaperones must be 21 years of age and must have completed VIRTUS Abuse Awareness Training as well as completed a background check as indicated by the certificate of completion issued by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.**

All chaperones on the field trip are expected to assist the teachers in maintaining discipline and a safe environment. If, for some reason, you are not comfortable in that role, there are other events that you may participate in with your child. **Also, our insurance does not cover siblings of students who do not attend St. Mary's Catholic School; therefore, chaperones may not bring any other children of any age on the field trip.**

**Siblings attending St. Mary's Catholic School will not be going on each other's field trip unless the whole class is going. If it is made aware of a sibling attending, make-up work will not be given, and any missed exams will have to be done after school at the teacher's convenience.**

The bus is the preferred mode of transportation for field trips, however, if the bus is unavailable parents/guardians will be able to provide transportation **IF** proof of automobile insurance is provided to the school office beforehand and waivers are signed by all parents. This form may be obtained from the front office.

When the bus is used for a field trip, **all students** will ride the bus to the destination. The parent can sign a release for their child to return home with them. Chaperones cannot ride the bus.

Cell phones, Smart Watches, or any electronic devices are not allowed on field trips.

**Grading Procedures and Policies:** Academic grades are to be based solely on scholastic achievement as defined by the individual school. Behavior will be evaluated separately **POLICY NO. 4400.**

Report cards, standardized test scores and parent/teacher conferences shall provide parents with tangible evidence of student progress **POLICY NO. 4400.**

Report cards for the first and third quarters will be available at conferences at the end of each quarter. The parent portal will be turned off at the end of the grading period so that teachers can grade exams and final work. It will be made available to you at report card time to see the final report card. If student fees are in arrears, the fees will need to be paid before the parent portal will be available to the family.

Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice a year, at the end of the first and third grading periods. Students need to attend the conference with their parents. With the availability of FACTS SIS, there will be no progress reports sent home. At any time during the school year, parents may request a conference with teachers by calling the office to schedule an appointment before or after school. Parents/guardians may also email teachers to request a meeting.



For education to continue in the classrooms until the last possible days in May, grades will not be available until the week after school is out, and then they will be available to parents and can be printed at home. Eighth graders may request a hard copy of their final report card by calling the front office.

**Grading Procedures and Policies: Grading Scale:** For grades 6-8, St. Mary's Catholic School uses the following percentage grading scale:

- 93-100=A
- 85-92=B
- 76-84=C
- 75-70=D
- 69 and below=F

Grades Kindergarten through 5 will use the following Standards Based Grade Scale:

- 4=Highly Proficient
- 3=Proficient
- 2=Partially Proficient
- 1=Minimally Proficient

**Grading Procedures and Policies: Homework:** Formal home-study is assigned to help students become self-reliant, self-directed, and to practice what is taught in the classroom. Students' work should be guided and supported, but not done for them. Since each student has different capabilities and interests, it can be difficult to denote a specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. If a problem arises, the teacher should be contacted. Homework can be assigned to students Monday through Friday. Students should be reading **every** night. Reading is a separate expectation in addition to extending the practice of the work they did in class.

If a student is absent, homework that was due on the day of his/her absence will be due on the day of their return.

**Harassment:** Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The staff investigates all complaints of harassment and students involved may face detention, suspension, or expulsion.

The Archdiocese **POLICY NO. 3550** prohibits all forms of harassment (i.e., harassment based on an individual's race, color, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, national origin, ancestry, and disability), whether verbal, physical, visual, or environmental. Any students who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including required withdrawal.

**Instruction:** St. Mary's Catholic School follows the Archdiocese Curriculum Standards which incorporates National Common Core Standards. All students have language arts, math, social studies, science, and religion every day. Students have art class, choir, technology/makerspace, and Spanish (specials vary with availability of teachers) once a week. Students attend PE twice a week.

Instruction at the highest level is an expectation at St. Mary's Catholic School. That is why most St. Mary's Catholic School teachers are highly qualified in their teaching area and several hold advanced degrees.

St. Mary's Catholic School is aligned K-8 using Wit & Wisdom for English and Literature, Eureka Math Squared, and Lab Learner for Science and Ignatius Press for Religion. Grades K-5 use Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for social studies, and our middle school social studies utilize McGraw Hill and a myriad of other resources available to our teachers and students.

**Lost and Found:** Any items that are found should be turned in to the school office for the owner to claim. Eyeglasses and other valuable items are kept in the office. Clothing, school supplies, lunch boxes et., are placed in the LOST AND FOUND box, which is in the hall just outside the office. To help prevent the permanent loss of items, please label all belongings with your student's name. Items not claimed after each quarter will be donated to St. Vincent de Paul. St. Mary's is not responsible for the loss of personal items or unclaimed items.

**Lunch:** Hot lunch in our cafeteria is available daily. A menu for each month can be found on FACTS SIS. Due to the "Universal Free Meals" program, there is no charge for the students' meals. Forms for the program will be sent home with each student the first week of school. **PLEASE fill it out and send it back within the first two weeks of school.** Each meal is nutritiously sound and includes milk.

If a student brings lunch, please do not send anything that needs to be refrigerated, cooked, heated, or micro-waved. **NO SOFT DRINKS, CARBONATED DRINKS (I.E. LA CROIX) OR FAST-FOOD LUNCHESES (I.E. McDONALD'S, CHICK-FIL-A, ETC.) ARE PERMITTED IN THE LUNCHROOM!** Milk can be purchased for \$0.50. Lunches should be in a regular lunch box/bag or paper bag.

If you wish to take your child out for lunch, they must be signed out in the office during their scheduled lunch time and signed back in upon return.

Three times a year (Grandparents Day, Thanksgiving, and Spring Lunch), we invite family members to join us for a special lunch. The price of these special lunches are \$7.00 for adults and \$4.00 for visiting children.

**Lunchroom Rules:** When entering the cafeteria:

- Students need to enter in alphabetical order.
- Students should stand quietly in line inside the cafeteria. Students should not lean on tables or disturb other students who are already seated.
- Students who bring a sack lunch and are purchasing a milk need to stand in line with the other students.
- Students sit at the first empty place at their assigned table (taking turns on each side), or if an assigned seat is given, he/she needs to sit where assigned.
- Students need to leave playground equipment in the designated area.

At the table:

- Students need to always use good manners at the table.

- Due to food allergies, students will not trade or exchange food.
- Students are expected to use appropriate level of voices while eating; yelling or making loud noises is not acceptable.
- Students may have any extra milk from the "share table."
- Throwing food or any other item while in the lunchroom will not be tolerated.
- The Parish Center bathrooms may be used one at a time during lunch with permission from the staff member.

Leaving the lunchroom:

- Students will wait to be dismissed by a staff member.
- Students need to check that all trash on top of their table and underneath their table is picked up before exiting.
- Students will carry their tray with both hands and wait their turn to clean off their tray before stacking it correctly on the counter.
- Students will leave the lunchroom and go straight to the playground.

**Medical & Health Policies: Communicable Diseases:** The NM Dept. of Health tracks outbreaks of confirmed or suspected communicable diseases and school administrators are expected to comply with the reporting requirements for conditions that indicate such a disease. A student suspected of having a communicable or infectious disease will be excluded from the classroom. Parents will be notified to come and take the child for the necessary doctor's examination. If a student is absent due to communicable disease, the school reserves the right to require a doctor's release for return to school.

Because of close contact with other children and the possibility of communicability, it is recommended that children who show any of the following signs or symptoms be kept at home: a cold, sore throat, swollen glands, excessive coughing, discharging nose, skin eruptions, excessive sneezing, red or watery eyes, stiff or rigid neck, vomiting, or other obvious signs of illness.

**\*\*St. Mary's Catholic School follows all state health mandates and health orders.\*\***

**Medical & Health Policies: Students with Food Allergies:** Parish/Regional schools and the Archdiocesan high school do not have a legal obligation to accept a student with a food allergy (POLICY NO. 2320). It is acceptable for a Parish/Regional school or Archdiocesan high school to deny enrollment to a student if the school cannot reasonably accommodate the student's food allergy. If a Parish/Regional school or the Archdiocesan high school knowingly accepts a student with a food allergy, the school will follow the following guidelines provided by the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network ("FAAN").

**FAMILYS RESPONSIBILITY:**

- a. Notify the school of the child's allergies.
- b. Work with the school to develop a plan to accommodate the child's needs.
- c. Provide written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by the child's physician.
- d. Provide properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or when expired.

- e. Provide the school, at minimum, with at least two (2) Epi-pens for school or student use.
- f. Educate the child in self-management of the food allergy. This would include strategies for avoiding exposure; safe and unsafe foods; symptoms of allergic reactions; how to tell an adult when having allergy symptoms; and how to read food labels (age appropriate).

**SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITY:**

- a. Notify parents and students that the school cannot guarantee an allergy-free environment.
- b. Ensure that all staff understand food allergies; can recognize symptoms; know what to do in case of an emergency; and work with other school staff to eliminate the use of allergens in the student's meals, educational tools, arts and crafts projects, etc.
- c. Create and review the Food Allergy Action Plan before an allergic reaction occurs to ensure the plan is efficient.
- d. Ensure that medications are appropriately stored, and to be sure that an emergency kit is available containing the physician's standing order for epinephrine. If a student is seven (7) years old, or older, the student may carry an Epi-pen on his/her person if properly trained.
- e. Designate and properly train school personnel to administer medications.
- f. If a student needs or has been self-injected with an Epi-pen, call 911, the parents and the student's doctor in that order.
- g. Ensure that a trained staff member is available during school operations.
- h. Discuss field trips and other special activities with the family of the child to decide appropriate strategies for managing the food allergy.
- i. Discourage children from "trading" food.
- j. Ensure all surfaces such as tables and toys are washed and cleaned of contaminating foods.
- k. If needed, designate a specific table in the cafeteria for children with food allergies. Encourage all students to wash their hands after handling food.

**STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY:**

- a. DO NOT trade food with other students.
- b. DO NOT eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain the food allergen.
- c. Be proactive in the care and management of food allergies and reactions (age appropriate).
- d. Notify an adult immediately if they believe they have eaten or been exposed to the food allergen.

**Medical & Health Policies: Immunizations:** The school is required to maintain a current record for each student, which documents immunizations, emergency information, release forms, medication, allergies, and other pertinent health information. These records are confidential. Immunizations records will be checked yearly. Students not having up to date vaccinations will be given a grace period to get current. Disenrollment is possible for noncompliance.

**Medical & Health Policies: Medications:** School personnel may **NOT** administer medications of any kind to any student without appropriate consent forms **POLICY NO. 2320**. The following requirements **must be met** for a student to receive medication at school:

- The medicine must be in a prescription bottle or original container.
- There must be a written request, signed by the student's parent or legal guardian, and by the student's doctor, specifically authorizing school personnel to administer any medication sent to school. That request must contain the following information:

- a. The dates and times when the medication is to be administered.
- b. Instructions as to the proper dosage; and
- c. The original signature of the student's parent or legal guardian and the original signature of the prescribing doctor.

Principals/Preschool Directors may not accept general, on-demand or standing orders for students to take over the counter (OTC) medications for non-specific conditions. We cannot give a student ANY medication without doctor's authorization. We cannot clean wounds with any astringents or administer sunscreen or bug spray.

All medications must be kept in a secure place to which students do not have access. (Exception: School personnel may keep back-ups of inhalers or Epi-pens in the classroom, as well as in the school office, if such inhalers or Epi-pens are properly secured). Because of the risk of students sharing medication, no student may carry his or her own medications on school campus or at any school related event. If a student would be seriously at risk if they were not able to personally carry an inhaler or Epi-pen, and the student's parent or legal guardian requests that the student be permitted to do so, the school may grant an exception to this policy if the student's parent or legal guardian, and the student's doctor document the following:

- That there would be a risk to the student if the student were not able to personally carry the medication; and
- That the student has been instructed on the indications for use of the medication, on the administration of the medication, on the possible side effects, on the student's responsibility not to share the medication with anyone, and the student's responsibility to notify the teacher of the use immediately after such use.

The person designated by the Principal/Preschool Director to administer medication to students shall keep a log of all medicine administered. Where reasonable and feasible, a student's medication is to be self-administered in the presence of the Principal/Preschool Director (or designee).

Glucose testing and insulin administration is to be coordinated by the student's parent or legal guardian, in collaboration with the school's Principal/Preschool Director (or designee).

At the end of each school year, all medications shall be returned to the student's parents or legal guardians or will be disposed of in an appropriate manner.

These requirements apply to over-the counter drugs as well as to prescription drugs. Other than as specifically permitted above, school personnel shall not provide any medication, including acetaminophen, cough drops, medicated lip balm, etc. to any student, at any time, for any reason.

**Medical & Health Policies: School Nurse:** St. Mary's Catholic School does not have a school nurse on staff. For that reason, students with certain illnesses might not be best served at our school. We reserve the right to make that decision based on our ability to provide the safest environment for a child.

**Missed Work Due to Absences:** Since the important work of school occurs in the classroom, a student can never “make-up” what is lost in an absence. All students are expected to complete assessments missed due to excused or unexcused absences within a week of the absence.

For 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students must assume responsibility for meeting with the teacher to arrange for a make-up assessment time and list of missed work/assignments **on the day of their return**. For the primary grades, students’ parents must arrange with the teachers for missed assessments and missed work/assignments.

Teachers will give the student a day for each day absent to turn in make-up work. **Work will be given to students upon the day of their return**—students who are ill will not be up to working on missed assignments. If a student has a prolonged illness (more than 3 days) teachers can provide necessary, practice for students with 24-hour notice.

Teachers will work with students who have been absent due to surgery, prolonged illness, hospitalization, or contagious disease.

**\*\*TEACHERS WILL NOT GIVE ADVANCED ASSIGNMENTS FOR TRIPS OR PLANNED ABSENCES\*\***

**Missed Work—Family Trip During the School Year:** Parents are strongly encouraged not to plan family trips to include school days, because they are unexcused. Regular school attendance is very important. Parents are asked to consider when a student is absent, it is impossible to make-up teacher presentations, classroom learning activities, classroom discussions, and class interaction. Teachers will not prepare work in advance to accommodate vacations. If a student is absent due to a family trip, they will be required to make-up assignments and missed exams within the week of their return. Students are not allowed to make-up work for family trips scheduled after May 1. Class time will not be used to make-up work once the student returns. However, students needing to make-up work, or exams, must make arrangements with the teacher(s).

**Morning Care:** St. Mary’s Catholic School offers early morning care for students beginning at 7:30am. Students can go to the kindergarten classroom to be supervised until 7:50 when staff will escort them to the playground. The cost for this service is \$2.00 per student per day. Students should not arrive before 7:30 am.

**Parents: Meetings Between Parents & Teachers:** Parents who wish to meet with teachers may leave a message in the front office or contact the teacher directly through email on FACTS. Regarding questions or concerns that may arise during the school year, please contact your child’s teacher first using their preferred method of communication. The teacher will have the most information about issues involving her/his classroom and procedures. This may be all that is needed to clarify or resolve a problem(s). If more discussion is needed, a meeting will be set up with the parents, teacher, student, and principal. Appointments will be scheduled as soon as possible—usually before or after school so as not to interrupt instruction.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding school procedures, please address them with the principal.

**Parents: St. Mary's Parent Association (SMPA):** St. Mary's Parent Association is the parent group that supports the students and teachers. The SMPA also sponsors some of our Family Nights and the Christmas Shop in December. Teachers also receive door prizes and occasional gift cards for their classrooms from the SMPA. The SMPA runs the spirit store in our gym concession stand. The store will be open periodically for the students to purchase St. Mary's items including spirit shirts, hoodies, or pens.

**Parents: Student/Parent Handbook:** All families will receive an updated handbook at the beginning of the school year. It is the responsibility of the family to be aware of all policies and information provided in the handbook. Included in the handbook is a form that must be signed by the student and his/her parent or legal guardian signifying that they have read and discussed the policies, that they agree and adhere to the policies and procedures, and that they commit to support the school's curriculum and programs. This form must be returned to the school by the end of August. Only one form per family is needed to be returned. Each child on the form will get credit for his/her class.

**Parents: Visitors:** Visitors are only allowed in the building by appointment only. This must be done in advance as often teachers and staff members have other commitments during the day. **During COVID only staff and students were permitted within the courtyard and the school buildings. This practice will continue indefinitely for the protection of the students and staff from a multitude of threats.**

**Parents: Volunteering:** As a parent of a St. Mary's student, you will have the opportunity to contribute not only your "treasure" through tuition, but also your time and talent. Unfortunately, tuition only covers 80% of our operating budget. The other 20% must be raised through our annual fund drive and major fundraisers. We hope you will consider this an opportunity to have a vital stake in your child's education and to grow personally by sharing the fun challenges and fellowship of knowing other caring, kind parents who want only the best for their child.

Families are required to work at the Fiesta Burger Booth **and** contribute ten (10) hours of service over the school year. At the beginning of the year, you will receive a list of the current year's volunteer needs. You will be asked to look at his list and pick one event that you would like to help with. We will then ask you to get on Sign-Up Genius sometime before the event. A chairman for the event may call you prior and remind you of the upcoming event.

Besides our major events, there are other after school activities where parents can give their time to teach students a new skill. Please let the office know if you would be interested in volunteering to do an after-school activity.

We offer an incentive that if you bring a \$500 sponsorship for the Fall Fest, you buy out your ten (10) hours (except for the burger booth). If you get a \$200 sponsorship, you buy out five (5) of your hours (except the burger booth).

In addition to your time, every year we ask parents to contribute \$20 or a large item for the class basket for the Fall Fest. The classroom teacher or parent volunteer will contact you to let you know the theme of the class Fall Fest "Basket." You can then decide if you have a NEW item to donate or will contribute the \$20.

**ALL** volunteers are required to take the Abuse Awareness Class (VIRTUS) to be able to work with our students. This class is taken on-line through VIRTUS on the Archdiocese Website or on St. Mary's Catholic School website.

**IMPORTANT:**

***In accordance with Policy PER-403 of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, regular volunteers who have unsupervised contact with students are required to have a criminal background check. This does not require fingerprinting. In addition, such volunteers must attend the Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures Workshop.***

**Parents: Volunteering in the Classroom:** There may be a time a teacher will contact you to assist in the classroom with a special project. To be able to assist, any volunteer must be updated on their VIRTUS training. Please observe proper dress code while on campus.

**Parents: Withdrawal Due to Parental Behavior:** According to **POLICY NO. 2470** normally a child is not to be deprived of a Catholic education or otherwise penalized for actions of parents. However, parents may so significantly reduce the school's ability to effectively serve students that the parents may be requested to remove their student from the school for ANY of the following reasons:

- A. Refusal to cooperate with school personnel; or
- B. Refusal to adhere to Archdiocesan or local policies and regulations; or
- C. Interference in matters of school administration or discipline.

In such cases, reasonable effort to elicit the minimum requisite parental cooperation shall be made and documented. The Principal/Preschool Director must verify that parents were informed to terminate the inappropriate behavior and begin cooperating with the school or **POLICY NO. 2470** would be enforced. If such effort does not correct the situation, then after consultation with the Superintendent, the Pastor, and the principal, the parents may be required to withdraw their child(ren). Documentation signed by the principal and parents as well as any other information or evidence of consultation with the parents on the matter must be retained on file.

**Playground:** The safety of our students is of the utmost importance to our school. To be on the playground, there **MUST** be adult supervision. Students are expected to be respectful and follow the directions of any staff on duty. Students are also expected to abide by the following rules:

- If you see someone that is not associated with the school or an animal on the playground—**NOTIFY THE SUPERVISOR ON DUTY IMMEDIATELY!**
- Students must always be in the sight of the adult supervisor.
- Always stay on the playground—do not jump over or climb the fence for any reason (not even to retrieve a ball).
- Always use appropriate language. No foul language, name-calling, put-downs, threats etc. are acceptable in the playground.
- Include everyone who wants to play. Never tell another student he/she cannot join in a game.



- Use jump ropes on the cement area only.
- Do not throw rocks, sand, dirt, or seeds off a tree.
- When using the slide, not sitting on the top of the slide, and blocking the traffic. Only slide down (no running up slides) and slide on bottoms only.
- No physical contact games are to be played (i.e., tackle football, wrestling, etc.). No hitting or spitting.
- Swing back and forth on swings only. Students should not jump off swings, no underdogs, and no hanging or climbing the poles surrounding the swings. Only one at a time on the swings, and no holding hands. Students should not run directly in front or back of someone swinging.
- No running or playing tag around any of the equipment. No running on the equipment.
- Bouncing balls off the building walls is prohibited.
- Do not bring your own playground equipment to school unless you are gifting it to your classroom.
- No tennis balls on the playground.
- Do not ask a passerby to retrieve balls.

**Probation:** Probation is described by **POLICY NO. 2440** refers to the careful supervision and evaluation of the student's conduct or academic progress for a specified period, at the end of which a determination is made concerning whether the student has corrected the misconduct or made appropriate academic progress.

A student may be placed on probation by the Principal/Preschool Director. Probation may be imposed in accordance with rules established by the school. Probation may be imposed when a student's behavior or academic progress are a grave concern to teachers and/or administrator. A student may be put on probation when all other interventions have not been successful.

Probation shall include an agreement in writing between or among the student, parents/legal guardians, teacher(s), and the school administrator addressing the student's misconduct or academic deficiencies, duration of probation, corrective measures to ensure compliance with applicable rules or requirements and the consequences of any violation of the terms of the probation. Parents will be notified in writing when the probation is terminated or if is to be extended.

Subject to compliance with the terms of the probation agreement, a probationary period shall not exceed two semesters.

**Promotion & Retention:** St. Mary's Catholic School follows **POLICY NO. 4420** for promotion and retention.

- Promotion of students shall be based on completion of academic work and mastery of academic skills. Credit for courses shall not be given solely on the basis of class attendance.
- Retention—all decisions regarding retention are the responsibility of the principal in consultation with the teacher(s). In cases of inadequate progress, each student should be considered individually. Any decision concerning non-promotion must be made after considering all the factors related to the student's development (emotional, social, physical, as

well as intellectual and academic) collected from a wide range of sources throughout the year. Excessive absences and/or tardies may be cause for retention or withdrawal from the school. The following are the minimum procedures for retention:

1. Consultation between teachers and principal,
  2. A conference is held with the parents no later than the end of the first semester to advise them of the possibility of retention and to discuss possible remedial actions,
  3. Follow-up conferences with the parents are held to evaluate the progress of the student,
  4. Evaluations and reports to parents will be made by the end of the third quarter regarding retention,
  5. Ordinarily, a decision will be made by the end of the third quarter regarding retention.
- No student shall be retained more than one year at any given grade or level. Ordinarily, a student should not be retained more than once while in elementary school (grades K-5) and once in middle school (grades 6-8).
  - Local school policy should define the extent to which the school can serve students with special needs. Schools may accommodate students with learning challenges who require curriculum modifications. Adaptations and modifications should be regularly discussed with parents and the use of significant modifications should be noted on the report card. Such a record should say, "Grade indicated by an asterisk denotes progress made based on a curricular program adapted by the needs and abilities of the student."

**Registration:** Registration for returning families begins the first Monday in February. The registration fee is \$200, if registration is completed within three weeks of the beginning registration date. After that time, the registration fee will go up to \$350. Registration is not considered complete until the fee is paid.

Registration fees are non-refundable.

The following items are required for admission and must be presented at the time of registration of new students:

- Birth certificate
- Baptismal record and other sacramental information (Catholic students only)
- Current record of immunizations
- Most current grade reports
- Record of IEP (if applicable)
- The name, address, and telephone number of the previous school's administrator

**Registration: Delinquent Payments:** All tuition must be paid through FACTS. If FACTS is not able to draw a tuition payment at the agreed upon time, a \$30.00 late fee will be charged (in addition to what your bank charges). A \$30.00 fee will also be charged by FACTS for each attempt that is not successful. If a payment cannot be collected within ten (10) days of the attempted draw, it is considered delinquent. Delinquent accounts can be the reason for a student to be ineligible to return to class or for disenrollment. Under no circumstances will such issues be discussed with faculty members, nor are they to be informed of any reason for a student's disenrollment.

If a check is returned for insufficient funds, we will assess a \$30.00 fee.

**Registration: Emergency Information:** Emergency information pages are created on FACTS SIS from the information you provide at registration and must be current for each child in the school. In case of a change of address, phone number, work or cell phone, approved pickup names, etc., please change it within your FACTS SIS account, or send the new information to the school immediately.

**Registration: Financial Aid:** Forms for financial assistance are available online at [www.factstuitionaid.com](http://www.factstuitionaid.com). The deadline for FACTS Grant and Aid Assistance, St. Mary's Scholarship, and ACE Scholarship are posted each year. Other financial aid such as Kremer, Ft. Rollins, St. Kateri, and Archbishop Sheehan will be made available during the Spring with their individual due dates posted each year. Information should be uploaded to FACTS for verification. Some of these scholarships are on a first come first served basis.

Financial aid will not be awarded to families that are not financially current or registered for the following school year.

NOTE: If the applications are not completed in full by the given deadline, the applicant will **NOT** be considered for financial aid. Please begin the application process as soon as the forms are made available, so you have time to confirm that everything is complete. The amount of financial assistance is related to the Archbishop's Fund distribution.

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE MUST BE REPAYED TO THE SCHOOL IF THE STUDENT IS DISENROLLED FOR ANY REASON BEFORE THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.**

**Registration: Parental Agreement:** A copy of St. Mary's Catholic School Parental Agreement is included in the registration packet. Enrollment in the school indicates acceptance of all St. Mary's policies even though signed copy is kept in the office.

**Registration: Payment Options:** Tuition may be paid through the following options:

1. 100% paid not later than August 1 of the new school year. Even though you pay in full, the Archdiocese **requires** that all parents open a FACTS account.
2. 1 to 12 (24 if registered with enough time) payments made through FACTS (electronic debit system) either on the 5<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.

**Registration: Subsidy:** A subsidy fee of **\$500 per student** is paid by the family's parish if the family has been registered at their parish for at least one year. Families who do not meet the parish requirements are responsible for payment of the subsidy, which will be added to the FACTS immediately since all subsidies must be paid no later than December 31 of the current school year.

**Registration: Tuition:** Tuition prices for the 2024-2025 are as follows:

First Child:	\$4975	Second Child:	\$4475	PreK Full Day:	\$4975
Third Child:	\$3975	Fourth Child:	\$3975	PreK 1/2 Day:	\$2500

**Registration: Withdrawal Policy:** Parents who move or transfer their children to another school must pickup a WITHDRAWAL OR TRANSFER checklist from the front office. The checklist must be

completed before any transcripts or grades are forwarded to the student's new school. Registered students who withdraw at any time (including before the first day of school) must pay a \$175.00 withdrawal fee at the time of the withdrawal. **Families who withdraw or are disenrolled MUST repay any financial aid they were awarded for that school year.** The bookkeeper will update the withdrawing family's account. If money is owed to the school, this account must be paid for before the student's records can be cleared. If the account shows a credit, a check will be issued as soon as possible.

Pro-rated tuition may be refunded if a student withdraws due to extenuating circumstances, such as relocation of the family. Extenuating circumstances do not include expulsion of a student or withdrawal of a student due to a parent's dislike of St. Mary's School, its staff, or its policies.

**Sacramental Program:** The sacramental life of the children at St. Mary's Catholic School is an important component of their religion program in the Catholic tradition. Preparations for two sacraments, First Reconciliation and First Eucharist, form the core instruction beginning in Grade 2. In accordance with the diocesan guidelines for First Eucharist will be the sacrament of Reconciliation prior to the First Eucharist. St. Mary's Catholic School celebrates First Eucharist during Grade 3. Reconciliation and First Eucharist are only conferred to students who are baptized.

If you have an older student(s) who are behind on their sacraments of First Reconciliation and/or First Eucharist, and would like them to make their sacraments, please call the office as soon as possible so arrangements with the parish pastor can be made.

**Servers:** Boys and girls in grades 4-8 who have made their First Eucharist are encouraged to become altar servers and assist in serving daily, weekend, and school liturgies, and in parish funerals (typically grades 7-8). Training classes will be held periodically throughout the school year.

**School Closing-Severe Weather:** St. Mary's Catholic School will inform families of a school delay or closure on local news channels, social media, and send an email through FACTS.

If we announce a two hour delay the following abbreviated schedule will be in effect for St. Mary's:

- 9:30 a.m.--Staff reports to school.
- 9:45 a.m.--Students report to school.
- 10:00 a.m.--School begins.

\*\*Please do not assume we will be delayed or have a closure if Belen Public Schools posts of these events.

When closures exceed a reasonable number of days, the Catholic Schools Office may require that days be added to the calendar to maintain the needed level of instruction **POLICY NO. 1430.**

**School Hours:**

Regular School Hours: 8:10 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

Early Dismissal Hours: 8:10 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

**School Mass:** As a school community, it is important to join to praise God through the celebration of the Holy Sacrament of the Mass. We are blessed to be able to do this every Wednesday and on Holy Days of Obligation. While parents are welcome to attend these Masses, we require that our students remain seated with their class. We ask that parents sit in seats on the far East and West wings of the Church or behind all the classes once they are seated.

**Social Media:** St. Mary's Catholic School loves to let our followers on social media know how great our school, students, and staff are! It is encouraged for families to follow the school's accounts and to participate. We post on our social media (Facebook & Instagram) often to keep the pages updated with events and happenings in our school.

**Testing:** Students will be tested three times a year on the STAR standardized test for their progress in reading and in math. The Assessment for Catholic Religious Education (ACRE) will be given to 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders in March or April as well.

**Textbooks:** Textbooks and workbooks are purchased by the school to support the curriculum. Any damage to these books will be the responsibility of the person to whom the book is assigned. Students are expected to return all textbooks in good condition. Loss or excessive damage to a textbook or workbook will result in the student paying the replacement cost for the book.

**Tobacco, Alcohol, & Other Drugs:** In accordance with **POLICY NO. 2330**, all Archdiocesan and Parish/Regional schools shall promote and maintain a smoke-free, alcohol-free and drug-free environment. All students are prohibited from possessing, using, or being under the influence of tobacco, vaping, alcohol, or illicit drugs while on school premises and at all school-sponsored activities. If a student possesses, uses, or is under the influence of tobacco, vapes, alcohol, or illicit drugs while on school premises or at any school-sponsored activity, the school shall immediately contact the student's parents or legal guardians, and the school may, at its discretion, contact local law enforcement. The possession, use, sale, or attempted sale of tobacco, vapes, alcohol or illicit drugs by a student may result in the required withdrawal or expulsion of the student from school.

**Visitors:** In compliance with the recommendations of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and law enforcement agencies, the doors of the school will remain locked and secured during the school day. Visitors, including parents and other family members of students enrolled, must ring the front exterior doorbell to be admitted. All visitors must sign-in and get a visitors pass before going to their designated area.

**During COVID only staff and students were permitted within the courtyard and the school buildings. This practice will continue indefinitely for the protection of the students and staff from a multitude of threats.**

When exiting our building you will need to push the green button on the west wall to unlock the doors. For safety reasons, please do not push this button to allow others in our building, even if the person on the other side is known; the office staff will be the only people allowing visitors in the building.

**Website:** Friends and family can keep abreast of school happenings through our website. Registration information, recognition, important happenings, and other information that we want the community to know will be posted on our website ([www.stmarysbelen.com](http://www.stmarysbelen.com)).

**Water Bottles:** It is recommended that all students have a water bottle. Water bottles will only hold water. No other liquid type of drinks or additives should be in the water bottle.