



PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025

St. Mary Nativity School

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“If you want to have a good society, we must concentrate all our forces on the Christian education of the young. Experience has taught me that if we wish to sustain civil society then we should take good care of the young.” - St. John Bosco

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to St. Mary Nativity School! In choosing St. Mary Nativity School, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of St. Mary Nativity School for the 2024-2025 school year. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of St. Mary Nativity School during the 2024 - 2025 school year.

We consider this handbook to be a work in progress dedicated to compliance with DOJ and ISBE standards. St. Mary Nativity School reserves the right to make changes in policies and procedures as needed throughout the school year. Any changes to the handbook will be made readily available to the parents and students on FACTS®, under the heading “School Links and Files.” Please be sure to attach new information to your handbook.

The ultimate authority in all school matters lies with the principal and pastor of St. Mary Nativity School. The decisions made by the administration regarding the implementation of school policy are final. The administration of St. Mary Nativity School has attempted to be as explicit as possible concerning the rules and regulations outlined in this handbook, but during the academic year, new and unusual circumstances may arise. The principal and the pastor have the authority to use discretion in making decisions regarding unforeseen circumstances. Policies outlined in this handbook are subject to interpretation by the administration.

The faculty and staff of St. Mary Nativity School look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

God bless you,

Elias Alonzo Ed D
Principal

Student and Parent Handbook

St. Mary Nativity School is a private Catholic school. Attending school at St. Mary Nativity is done voluntarily by students and is supported by parents who want them to attend. St. Mary Nativity has standards and rules for faith formation, academic achievement, extracurricular participation, and appropriate behavior. All students are bound to obey all rules from the day they are accepted as students until the day they graduate. All parents are expected to support the rules. These rules are contained in this book, in other places, or announced to the student body and the parents.

The Principal and administration of St. Mary Nativity School reserve the right, at any time, to modify, terminate, rescind, or supplement any or all the guidelines or procedures contained herein, and to take actions that may be contrary to guidelines, benefits, or procedures outlined in this handbook. St. Mary Nativity may change the requirements for admission or graduation announced in this handbook and to change the arrangement, scheduling, credit, or content of courses, the books used, fees charged, tuition charged, regulations affecting students, and to refuse to admit or resubmit and to dismiss any student at any time, should it be deemed to be required in the interest of the student or of the school to do so.

The Student and Parent Handbook outlines the expectations of St. Mary Nativity's students. For those students who act in a respectful, responsible manner, these guidelines should reinforce their behavior. For those whose self-awareness is not at that level, or whose values don't reflect our Mission of the Gospels, the following guidelines may be difficult to accept. The intent and aim of these policies are to build and maintain a safe, positive, rigorous learning environment where values are clear and consistently reinforced.

Registration at St. Mary Nativity constitutes a voluntary contract recognized by the law between parents and the school. Parents and students assume responsibility for all obligations – religious, academic, and financial, resulting from the contract. Students and parents are expected to be familiar with this handbook, and to sign the attached agreement.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a sound foundation for providing this type of service to young people. The hope is that these pages will contribute to the harmonious working relationship essential to a modern secondary school. All staff members, parents and students are held responsible for familiarizing themselves with this information and performing their duties and responsibilities in accordance with it. The efficient operation of the entire program demands norms and guidelines that must apply to all.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of St. Mary Nativity School is to provide a safe and dynamic catholic environment where faith is nourished, knowledge grows, and mutual respect is evident. We partner with parents and the parish community to create an inclusive, diverse, and flexible atmosphere for learning that provides for global, responsible lifelong learners.

PHILOSOPHY

As Catholic Educators of St. Mary Nativity School, we will work with students at their ability level and with each other to fully develop the academic and spiritual potential they possess.

Our Motto: DEEPLY COMMITTED. CHRIST AT HEART.

HISTORY

Croatian settlers initially attended St. John the Baptist and later St. Joseph Church. However, within a short period, the growing community of 100 Croatian settlers petitioned the bishop to find a Croatian parish reflecting their language and heritage. Permission was granted and Rev. George Violich came to Joliet from Croatia in May 1906 to establish the parish, which today is St. Mary Nativity.

The parish school was always an integral part of the life of St. Mary's and the beginning of the Joliet immigrant community. Through the untiring efforts of the Sisters of the Precious Blood from Alton, Illinois, who originally staffed the school, and later the School Sisters of St. Francis of Christ the King from Lemont, the school thrived. In 1914 an addition was built to accommodate the increasing school enrollment and in 1943 two buses for school use were purchased. Due to the fire that destroyed much of the school on June 27, in the process of rebuilding and updating the structure, a gym was added. Recent additions have provided easy indoor access for students to the church for liturgy and other activities.

The student body represents a wide spectrum of backgrounds. There are children whose forebears were founding families, those of second and third generation's graduates, along with children whose parents newly arrived in the area come searching for a stable educational environment for their children.

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

Following the mandate given to it by its founder Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church has always considered education to be one of its main areas of concern and activity. The Catholic School, as an agency of the Church, seeks to provide an environment in which faith and values are thoroughly integrated with every aspect of human life. Its main purpose is to develop in its students certain insights, values, and modes of acting based on the Gospel Message.

The mission of the Catholic Schools System in the Diocese of Joliet is to prepare the Catholic youth of the Diocese for living the Catholic faith throughout their lives by providing an identifiably Catholic and academically excellent education.

This is achieved by:

- Providing a model for living the faith that recognizes that our faith touches all areas of our lives.
- Ensuring that Catholic principles and ideals permeate the curriculum and the life of the schools within the system.
- Maintaining high academic standards throughout the curriculum. Making Catholic Schools available to as many students in the Diocese as possible.
- Maintaining a close and clear relationship between the schools and the faith community that they serve.

DIOCESAN POLICY

Catholic Schools operate under the auspices of the Diocese of Joliet. Therefore, Catholic Schools in the Diocese adopt in whole all policies set forth in the Handbook of School Policies published by the Diocese of Joliet Catholic Schools Office. The school administrator, faculty and governance board are required to follow all policies of the Diocese. Additional local policies may be developed to govern the operation of the school but may not be contrary to those policies and procedures established by the Diocese of Joliet. The names of the

elementary and secondary schools can be found in the OFFICIAL CATHOLIC DIRECTORY, published annually.

Copies of the Diocesan Handbooks as well as the local handbooks are available upon request for on-premise reading.

ATTENDANCE

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE

Class attendance is an essential aspect of our educational program. Illinois law requires that whoever has custody or control of any child between the ages of six and seventeen must ensure that the child attends school the entire time school is in session during the regular school term, except as otherwise provided by law. Parents and/or guardians having legal custody of school-age children are responsible for ensuring the regular attendance of their children in school.

STUDENT ABSENCES

EXPECTATIONS

The Catholic Schools Office requires that parents/guardians ensure the regular attendance of their children, consistent with the Illinois School Code, and inform the school of any absences and the causes of such absences. A telephone call by the parent or guardian is required on the first day and each subsequent day of absence or tardiness. A written excuse signed by the parent/guardian may also be required upon the child's return to school.

ABSENTEEISM

Each building principal is responsible for maintaining an effective system for recording student absences and for encouraging students to be prompt and to attend class on a regular basis. Absences are categorized as excused or unexcused. Valid causes of absenteeism (excused), as listed in the Illinois School Code are:

- Illness (including mental or behavioral health of the student)
- Observance of a religious holiday
- Death in the immediate family
- Family emergency
- Circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent or guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety
- Other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the Building Principal and Pastor.

Additionally, a student will be excused for up to 5 days in cases where the student's parent/guardian is an active-duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings. The principal and pastor, in their discretion, may excuse a student for additional days relative to such leave or deployment.

A student and the student's parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teachers prior to any excused absences and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his or her return to school.

Students who are excused from school will be given a reasonable timeframe to make up missed homework and classwork assignments.

All other absences will be considered unexcused. Pre-arranged excused absences must be approved by the building principal.

Absences from school may result in failing grades, withdrawal from classes, and/or other disciplinary actions. Parents/guardians must attempt to plan family trips/vacations to coincide with scheduled school vacations and to plan professional visits to doctors, dentists, orthodontists, etc. during non-school hours. Attendance is a vital part of a successful education experience. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to substantiate an excused absence.

NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

In the event of any absence, the student's parent/guardian is required to call the school before 8:00 a.m. to explain the reason for the absence. If a call has not been made to the school by 10:00 a.m. on the day of a student's absence, a school official will call the home to inquire why the student is not at school. If the parent/guardian cannot be contacted, the student will be required to submit a signed note from the parent/guardian explaining the reason for the absence. Failure to do so shall result in an unexcused absence. Upon request of the parent/guardian, the reason for an absence will be kept confidential.

Diagnostic Procedures for Identifying Student Absences and Support Services to Truant or Chronically Truant Students

State law requires every nonpublic school that receives public funds to collect and review its chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families to encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success.

Furthermore, State law provides that schools are encouraged to provide a system of support to students who are at risk of reaching or exceeding chronic absence levels with strategies and are also encouraged to make resources available to families to support and engage students and their families to encourage heightened school engagement and improved daily school attendance.

"Chronic absence" means absences that total 10% or more of school days of the most recent academic school year, including absences with and without valid cause, and out-of-school suspensions.

The CSO considers absenteeism excessive when it significantly interferes with a student's learning, as reflected in academic performance or social development. Excessive absenteeism includes excessive tardiness.

The School will use diagnostic procedures for identifying the causes of unexcused student absences, such as Interviews with the student, his or her parent/guardian, any school officials, or others who may have information about the reasons for the student absences.

To reduce or prevent excessive absenteeism, the school maintains a procedure to:

1. Track and provide early identification of potentially harmful attendance practices; and
2. Provide a progressive, multi-level plan for remediation of the problem

Supportive services to truant or chronically truant students include parent conferences, student counseling, family counseling, and information about existing community services.

5150 TRUANCY

TRUANCY

The CSO considers a student subject to compulsory school attendance truant if he/she is absent for the school day or a portion of the school day without an excused absence.

CHRONIC TRUANCY

The CSO considers a student subject to compulsory school attendance a chronic or habitual truant if he/she is absent for 10% or more of regular attendance days without proper permission. Students who are chronic truants will be offered support services and resources aimed at correcting the truancy issue.

Resources and Supportive Services

The following resources and supportive services, as determined appropriate, are available to truants and chronic or habitual truants with unexcused absences and their parents/guardians:

- Conferences with school personnel
- Counseling services of school social worker
- Review student IEP and accommodations provided
- Referral to community agencies

Chronic Truant Minor

The CSO, under the Illinois School Code, considers a truant minor to be a chronic truant when the above resources and supportive services have been provided and have failed to result in the remediation of chronic truancy or have been offered and refused by the parent/guardian and/or student.

Referral of Chronic Truants

The building principal will initiate the first action to handle the truancy problem by notifying the parents. The principal will also initiate proper counseling and actions to secure resources to resolve the situation.

If the truancy continues, the principal will notify the superintendent or his designee. The local truancy officer will also be notified.

Punitive Action

If chronic truancy persists after support services and other resources are made available, the school and CSO may take further action, including:

- Reporting to officials under the Juvenile Court Act
- Referral to the State's Attorney
- Appropriate school discipline

Under the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/26-12), schools will take no punitive action, including out-of-school

suspensions, alternatives to suspension, expulsion, or court action, against chronic truants for such truancy unless the above resources and supportive services have been provided to the student and parents/guardians.

In the case of excessive absences (3 days or more) a parent may call the school office before 9:00 am to arrange for homework assignments. Those homework assignments may be picked up at the school office from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm.

Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes, or tests. For example, a student absent for three days would be given three school days to complete the missed work.

ABSENCE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

The school requests that medical and dental appointments be scheduled after school hours, if possible.

However, if a student has a medical or dental appointment during school hours, a written note or email from the parent or guardian is required. The note should state the reason, the time, and, if necessary, the person to whom the child is released. At that time, a pass for an early dismissal will be given to the student to present to his/her classroom teacher. When the appropriate time for dismissal occurs, the parent or guardian must sign out the child. No child will be permitted to leave the school early unless an adult accompanies them.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Any student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Academic probation impacts a student's ability to participate in extracurricular activities.

ACCREDITATION

St. Mary Nativity Catholic School is officially recognized according to the Policies and Guidelines for Registration and Recognition of Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools established by the Illinois State Board of Education.

1470 NON-PUBLIC STATE RECOGNITION OF DIOCESAN SCHOOLS

All elementary and secondary schools of the Catholic Diocese of Joliet shall be recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education. Schools must be registered with the State of Illinois and be recognized by the State Board of Education. To maintain ISBE recognition schools must annually comply with requirements which include meeting administrative deadlines as determined by ISBE thus ensuring compliance and recognition.

All elementary and secondary schools of the Catholic Diocese of Joliet adhere to all applicable sections of the Illinois School Code [105 ILCS 5] relevant case law including Plyler v Doe, 457 U.S. 202, 102 S Ct 2382(1982).

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

SMNS 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 at the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, national or ethnic origin in educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

As openings become available, the following criteria will be used to accept students to SMN:

1. Siblings of current families
2. Active parishioners of all the parishes in St. Mary Nativity.
3. Non-parishioners/non-Catholic

Any child entering the 3-year-old Preschool program, must be toilet trained and be three (3) years of age by September 1st of the year of entry.

Any child entering the 4-year-old Preschool programs must be four (4) years of age by September 1st of the year of entry. A copy of the child's birth certificate and baptismal certificate (if applicable) must be presented at the time of admission. The child must be fully potty trained to qualify for admission to the Pre-School.

Any child entering Kindergarten must be five (5) years of age by September 1st of the year of entry. A copy of the child's birth certificate and baptismal certificate (if applicable) must be presented at the time of admission.

AT THE TIME OF REGISTRATION

Requirements include:

- Verification of active parish affiliation/stewardship
- Health Records
- Immunization Records
- Birth Certificate (original)
- Baptismal Certificate (Catholic applicants only)
- Report cards
- Standardized Test Results
- Record of IEP or Service Plan (if applicable)

Students applying for admissions must present a copy of the current report card and standardized test results. These will be reviewed to determine whether the program at St. Mary Nativity Catholic School will meet the educational needs of the students. An interview with the student is a recommended part of the admission process.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Staff – As an equal opportunity employer, the Diocese of Joliet allows no discrimination based on sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin, or physical disability. This policy refers to all school personnel.

Students – Schools operated under the auspices of the Diocese of Joliet admit students of any race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally available to students at the school.

ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENT 5140

When a student who is transferring from one Catholic school in the Joliet Diocese applies for admission to another Catholic school in the Joliet Diocese a Student Transfer Form must be completed. During the process of completing this form contact between the two principals is advisable. Such contact with the former principal of any school may be needed to clarify the reason for student transfer, i.e. suspension/expulsion or unpaid tuition.

Transfer students may be admitted following receipt from the transferring school of attendance records, health, and academic records, etc. Until such records have been received and analyzed, the child's admission status is probationary. Certified copies of transfer students' records must be requested within 14 days of enrollment.

ADMISSION AGES 5130

A child entering first grade must be six years of age (kindergarten, five years; preschool three or four years of age respectively) on or before September 1 of that year. The verification of age with a birth certificate is presented at application time. The school maintains certified copies of birth certificates for each student enrolled upon enrollment.

APPOINTMENTS WITH THE PRINCIPAL

Principal will be happy to meet with parents/guardians and be of any assistance to them in any way possible. To make sure the proper amount of time is allotted, please call in advance to arrange for an appointment, at 815-722-8518.

ATTENDANCE 5145

The State of Illinois provides by law for compulsory attendance of all children up to the age of sixteen years. The principal and teachers must insist upon daily attendance. Principals must see that the requirements of the law of the State of Illinois are met. The responsibility for compliance with the law and the diocesan policy belongs to the parent/guardian of each child.

Schools keep accurate and daily records of attendance which are placed in the student's permanent file each school year. A summary of these records is kept permanently on file.

ASTHMA AND FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

SMN recognizes that both asthma and food allergies are important and, quite possibly, life-threatening conditions. Therefore, it is imperative that the parents and/or guardians of any student who has either asthma or any food allergy please notify the school in writing and/or make sure that the school records indicate that such a condition does indeed exist to minimize the incidence of life-threatening asthmatic or allergic reactions.

SMNS will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing the life-threatening reaction and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/guardian and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potential life-threatening asthmatic or allergy condition.

ALLERGIES 830

If a student has been diagnosed by a physician to have allergies and the necessity to self-administer and to self-carry an epinephrine auto-injector a signed parent permission notification and a signed physician authorization must be provided to the local Catholic School either at the start of a new school year, upon enrollment, or immediately following diagnosis of such requirement. Both the parental permission and physician authorization will be held on file at the school site where the student attends.

Accommodation requests are initiated by a parent/guardian to the local Catholic School and include a physician's report outlining the severity of the allergy and the recommended actions by the physician that are medically necessary to avoid any reaction. The administration explains to parents/guardians what reasonable accommodations they can make. Allergy free

is not a credible accommodation that schools make, however, effective practices to reduce the chance of exposure to allergens may include, but are not limited to:

- designating a separate table/area for students with an allergy,
- allowing the allergic student to eat at his/her desk, keeping the same desk year-round to reduce possible contaminants if there is no common lunchroom,
- limit/prohibit food in classrooms,
- remove food as a reward in classrooms or for celebrations,
- the regular cleaning of classrooms and lunchroom,
- educate school personnel on the management of students with allergies.

ASTHMA 6840

A school, whether public or nonpublic, must permit the self-administration of medication by a pupil with asthma or the use of an epinephrine auto-injector by a pupil, provided that:

- The parents/guardians of the pupil provide to the school written authorization for the student to self-administer medication or for use of an epinephrine auto-injector, written authorization from the pupil's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse, and
- the parents/guardians of the pupil provide to the school: the prescription label, which must contain the name of the medication, the prescribed dosage, and the time at which or circumstances under which the medication is administered.

If a student has been diagnosed by a physician to have asthma and is required due to this diagnosis to self-administer and self-carry asthma medication of any type, a signed parent permission notification and a copy of the prescription must be provided to the local Catholic School either at the start of a new school year, upon enrollment, or immediately following diagnosis of such requirement. Both the parent's permission and the copy of the prescription will be held on file at the school site where the student attends. Parents/guardians please be informed that the school and its employees and agents incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, because of any injury arising from the self-administration of medication or the use of an epinephrine auto-injector by the student.

A school or a school employee is not liable for civil or other damages because of conduct, other than willful or wanton misconduct, related to the care of a student with diabetes. (b) A school employee shall not be subject to any disciplinary proceeding resulting from an action taken in compliance with this Act unless the action constitutes willful or wanton misconduct.

ATHLETIC/EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

As a member of the Illinois Elementary School Association (IESA), St. Mary Nativity Catholic School wishes to acknowledge the great value that competitive athletics have as a part of a student's growth and development.

However, as an educational institute, the academic standing of the student is of prime importance. Therefore, any student participating in athletics or any IESA activities sponsored by the school should be working to the best of his/her ability in their respective schoolwork. For ALL IESA activities, athletic as well as non-athletic, passing work shall be checked weekly to govern eligibility for the following Monday through Saturday. Grades are accumulative for the school's grading period. The eligibility check will be held on the same day of each week unless school is not in session; then it will be taken on the last day of student attendance for that week.

All students in grades 4-8 who plan on participating in athletics must have a sports physical on file before they will be allowed to practice. Since good conduct and attention are so vital to the learning process, any student who repeatedly disrupts class with poor conduct or who commits a serious violation of school rules will also be suspended from athletics. If a student is absent from school, the student may not participate in a practice or a game held on that day.

ATHLETICS 6510

Interscholastic athletics are a part of the educational process and are consistent with the philosophy and goals of the Diocese and local schools. The athletic program is an outgrowth of a sound physical education program and emphasizes good sportsmanship, teamwork, and personal development. Each local school provides interscholastic sports for boys and girls.

Competitive sports are not permitted below the fifth grade. Where training programs exist before fifth grade; they are not to include competition between schools.

Each local school develops its own specific athletic philosophy, rules, regulations, and eligibility standards for interscholastic sports following the direction provided by the Catholic Schools Office. This philosophy and its accompanying policies, rules, and regulations are developed under the direction of the principal in collaboration with local school boards and athletic personnel.

Eligibility standards are developed per a school's athletic philosophy. When possible, regional consultation is sought before enacting such standards. Behavioral and academic criteria are considered in setting standards. Students who play on school teams should be students at the school so that other eligibility standards can be maintained. Every effort should be made to schedule athletic events so that they do not interfere with a family's attendance at liturgy. No games or practices are scheduled in a parish facility before the last Sunday morning or early afternoon liturgy has been completed. The superintendent, in collaboration with the principal(s), develops administrative regulations general to the interscholastic athletic program and specific to the various sports.

Schools comply with these regulations or discontinue sports programs that repeatedly do not comply. All athletes in grades 5-8 must show proof of an annual sport physical. 6th grade physicals as well as sports physicals are a state requirement. Our diocese requires annual physicals of all athletes in grades 5-8. Without a physical, students will not participate in practices or games. Physicals are also required for 4th-grade instructional programs and intramurals.

This information is required by law on the first day of school, with an extension time of October 1st for students who begin school on the first day. Any students entering school after the first day will be allowed 30 days from their entrance date to comply with this policy. Children can be excluded from school if they are not in compliance with the requirements.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT POLICY 6515

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard student-athletes by (1) educating student-athletes, school personnel, and parents/guardians about concussions, (2) requiring that a student-athlete be removed from play when a concussion is suspected, and requiring a licensed health care professional to provide clearance for the student-athlete to return to play or practice, and (3) implementing the concussion management requirements specified by the Illinois High School Association and Illinois Elementary School Association.

This policy applies to athletic play occurring in Diocese-sponsored sports programs provided by elementary, middle, and high schools regardless of whether the sports program is intramural, interscholastic, extended care, or provided during the summer (e.g., summer sports camp). This policy applies regardless of whether the sports activity or program is offered by or through a Diocese consultant, vendor, or partner.

CONCUSSION SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. A student-athlete does not have to lose consciousness to have suffered a concussion. Signs and symptoms of a concussion include the following:

Signs Observed by Others	Symptoms Reported by Athlete
Appears dazed or stunned	Headache or “pressure in the head”
Appear confused	Nausea
Forgets sports plays	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, opponent	Sensitivity to light or noise
Move Clumsily	Double or fuzzy vision
Answers questions slowly	Feeling sluggish or slowed down
Loses consciousness (even briefly)	Feeling foggy or groggy
Shows behavior or personality changes	Does not “feel right”
Can’t recall events prior to hit or fall	Concentration or memory problems
Can’t recall events after hit or fall	Confusion

Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the game or practice and shall not return to play until cleared in writing by a licensed healthcare professional. If a healthcare professional is not immediately available at the athletic event or practice and an injured student athlete has any of the described signs, symptoms, or behaviors of a concussion, s/he shall be promptly taken to a facility for appropriate medical evaluation and care.

A player must be removed from an *interscholastic* athletics practice or competition immediately if one of the following persons believes the player might have sustained a concussion during the practice or competition:

- a coach;
- a physician;
- a game official;
- an athletic trainer;
- the student's parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student;
- the student; or
- any other person deemed appropriate under the school's return-to-play protocol.

A student removed from an *interscholastic* athletics practice or competition may not be permitted to practice or compete again following the force or impact believed to have caused the concussion until:

- the student has been evaluated by a treating physician (chosen by the student or the student's parent or guardian) or an athletic trainer working under the supervision of a physician.
- the student has completed each requirement of the "return-to-play" and "return-to-learn" protocols established for the student to return to play.
- the treating physician or athletic trainer working under the supervision of a physician has provided a written statement indicating that, in the physician's professional judgment, it is safe for the student to return to play and return to learn; and
- the student and the student's parent or guardian have acknowledged that the student has completed the requirements of the "return-to-play" and "return-to-learn" protocols necessary for the student to return to play; have provided the treating physician's or athletic trainer's written statement and have signed a consent form indicating that the person signing has been informed and consents to the student participating in returning to play per the "return-to-play" and "return-to-learn" protocols and understands the risks associated with the student returning to play and returning to learn and will comply with any ongoing requirements in the "return-to-play" and "return-to-learn" protocols. A sample acknowledgment is found in the link below:

[http://www.ihsa.org/documents/forms/current/Post-concussion%20Concent%20Form%\(RPT-RTL\).pdf](http://www.ihsa.org/documents/forms/current/Post-concussion%20Concent%20Form%(RPT-RTL).pdf)

A coach of an interscholastic athletics team may not authorize a student's return to play or return to learn.

LICENSED HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

For purposes of this policy, licensed healthcare professionals mean physicians licensed to practice medicine in all its branches in Illinois and certified athletic trainers.

CONCUSSION POLICY/FACT SHEET

Information on the school's concussion and head injury policy must be a part of any agreement, contract, code, or other written instrument that a school requires a student-athlete and his/her parents or guardian to sign before participating in practice or interscholastic competition. The IHSA/IESA has provided a Concussion Information Sheet and Sign-Off Form that schools may use to notify athletes and their parents/guardians about the dangers of concussions and head injuries.

The parent/guardian of each student athlete and the student athlete shall receive annually a concussion information sheet and they shall submit written verification(s) that they have read the information. A student athlete may not participate in practice or competition prior to the school's receipt of this written verification.

Each school shall also use education materials provided by the Illinois High School Association, and Illinois Elementary School Association see links below, to educate coaches, student-athletes, and parents/guardians of student-athletes about the nature and risk of concussions and head injuries, including continuing play after a concussion or head injury.

<http://www.ihsa.org/Resources/SportsMedicine/ConcussionManagement/ConcussionResources.aspx>

CONCUSSION OVERSIGHT TEAMS (COT)

Each school shall form a Concussion Oversight Team (COT). The COT's primary function will be to develop return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols for students believed to have experienced a concussion. The protocols should be based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence consistent with guidelines from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

These teams can contain a range of individuals based on the resources available to the school in their community or neighborhood but must include one person who is responsible for implementing and complying with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols.

Per the law, each concussion oversight team must include to the extent practicable at least one physician. If a school employs an athletic trainer, the athletic trainer must be a member of the school concussion oversight team to the extent practicable. If a school employs a nurse, the nurse must be a member of the school concussion oversight team to the extent practicable. At a minimum, a school shall appoint a person who is responsible for implementing and complying with the return-to-play and return-to-learn protocols adopted by the concussion oversight team. A school may appoint other licensed healthcare professionals to serve on the concussion oversight team.

COACHES TRAINING

All interscholastic coaches and licensed officials will need to complete a training program of at least two hours on concussions. Coaches, nurses, and game officials must provide the school with proof of successful completion of the training. Training must be completed every two years. Head coaches and assistant coaches must complete the required training. Compliant courses are available on the IHSA and IESA websites. IESA member schools may access the course through the IESA Member Center. It is recommended all elementary schools with athletics join the IESA-\$75 dues-to allow access to these materials.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Each school must also develop a school-specific emergency action plan for interscholastic athletic activities to address the serious injuries and acute medical conditions in which the condition of the student may deteriorate rapidly. There are certain provisions the plan must include, and it must be reviewed by the COT before being approved by the school. The plan must be distributed to appropriate personnel, posted at the school, and reviewed annually. Links to sample information may be found below on the IESA website and on the IHSA website.

http://www.ihsa.org/documents/forms/current/Emergency_Action_Plan_Form.pdf

Guidelines

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to issue Guidelines for the effective implementation of the requirements of this Policy.

Compliance

Failure to abide by this Policy or Guidelines will subject employees to discipline up to and including dismissal.

BIRTHDAY OBSERVANCES

It has been customary to bring in birthday treats for students who celebrate their birthdays during the school year. A small treat or dessert of some sort is acceptable as long as it is packaged to go. Also, student allergies should be taken into account when planning the treat; parents should contact the classroom teacher to find out what allergy considerations exist.

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY 5313

All elementary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Joliet shall actively seek to provide a supportive, caring environment in which all persons are safe from all forms of intimidation including bullying, which is unacceptable, unchristian, and strictly prohibited.

For this policy, bullying is defined in conformity with Illinois Law as follows:

“Any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student’s or student’s person or property.

Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student’s or student’s physical or mental health.

Substantially interfering with the student’s or student’s academic performance; or

Substantially interfering with the student’s or students’ ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.”

105 ILCS 5/27-23.7 (b)

BULLYING CONDUCT

Bullying conduct covered by this policy is conduct that occurs on school property or at school-sponsored activities or events; while students are being transported or walking to or from school or school-sponsored activities or events; while students are waiting at school bus stops; or cyberbullying as defined hereinafter.

CYBERBULLYING

This policy prohibits bullying and intimidation of students through the use of the internet and social media sites on any electronic device (private, public, or school-owned), whether on or off the school campus or during non-school hours.

Any student who engages in bullying will be subject to appropriate discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion, and referral to local law enforcement. Behavioral interventions may be included as a component of disciplinary actions. This may include but is not limited to mandatory counseling.

Retaliatory behavior by a student accused of bullying will also incur consequences. False accusations of bullying will result in disciplinary action taken against the accuser. Any reported bullying will be promptly brought to the attention of the appropriate party: the Pastor or the Principal or designee.

CHILD ABUSE 5460

According to the revised Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, school principals and teachers are mandated to report suspicion of abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Family Services. According to Illinois School Code licenses/certificates may be suspended and/or revoked if there is proof that professional school personnel had knowledge of **suspected** child abuse and/or neglect and did not report it. St. Mary Nativity Catholic School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Illinois. This law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Students at St. Mary Nativity are expected to be honest in every aspect of their academic work. All work presented as a student's own must be the product of her or his efforts. Plagiarism, cheating, academic misconduct, or any other submission of another's work as one's own is unacceptable. Students working in groups are each individually responsible for the academic integrity of the entire group project.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

Purchasing, copying, downloading, printing, or paraphrasing another's book, article, paper, speech, exam, portfolio, creative work, argument, or any other work and presenting it as one's own, either in whole or in part.

Incorporating portions of another's work without proper acknowledgment and documentation.

Consequences for cheating or plagiarism will be:

1st Offense

- The student will meet with the teacher to review the plagiarism definition
- Student will be permitted to re-submit work for credit
- Parent notification

2nd Offense

- A zero on the assignment. (Assignment cannot be made up for credit)
- Parent notification
- Student will be unable to participate in athletics or other extracurricular activities

Multiple incidences of cheating or plagiarism will result in suspension or expulsion.

COACHING AT SMNS

We value our athletic program and find it to be an important part of our extra-curricular activities. All parents wishing to volunteer in any coaching capacity must be an SMN family member or active parishioner to be considered for a coaching position. All coaching positions are pending approval of the Director of Athletics, Principal, and Pastor. As with all volunteer positions, coaches are required to attend the Protecting God's Children Seminar.

CONCEALED CARRY LAW

Illinois Conceal Carry Law - Illinois' concealed carry law was passed in 2013 and allows individuals to apply for licenses to carry a concealed firearm. However, carrying a concealed weapon is PROHIBITED in school buildings or on school property, according to the law (430 ILCS 66/65). Signs are posted on all school/parish entrances.

CONDUCT

In accordance with the stated philosophy of the school, which emphasizes deep respect for the human dignity and uniqueness of every individual, each student will be considerate of the rights of others in all interactions.

All students are expected to cooperate with the spirit and policies of the school which are designed to foster mature development and personal responsibility. This requires courtesy in all personal relationships, promptness in fulfilling obligations, concern for the environment, and many other factors that the students' sense of appropriateness will indicate to them.

The Principal reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of an action if any doubt arises.

Items such as, but not limited to, questionable pictures, books, websites, white-outs, knives, guns, matches, tobacco products, radios, toys, trading cards, cell phones, cameras, laser lights, watches, or anything that will detract from a learning situation are not allowed at school at any time.

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 the students will be returned to the parents/guardians on the LAST DAY of the school year.

CRISIS TEAM

St. Mary Nativity Catholic School has implemented a "crisis plan" in case of a lockdown emergency. All teachers and staff are aware of the procedure to follow to keep children safe. In the event of such an emergency, circumstances permitting, the building will be evacuated, and students will be moved to one of the secure designated locations.

CURRICULUM RESPONSIBILITY 6410

The superintendent approves the curriculum of the school in accordance with the standards specified by the Catholic Schools Office. The local principal implements the system's basic curriculum expectations. (See Basic Curriculum Expectations: Appendix 6B.)

CURRICULUM DESIGN 6420

The instructional program reflects the philosophy of the school, responds to student abilities and needs, encourages teaching techniques consistent with the child as a learner, and provides relevant and developmental

content. Each school has a published school philosophy that is identifiably Catholic and is the basis for formulating school goals and objectives.

Each teacher writes classroom objectives that reflect the broader school goals and objectives.

CURRICULUM CONTENT 6430

A. Academic Disciplines

The required subject areas are Fine Arts (Art, Drama, and Music), Health, Language Arts (English, Oral Presentation, Phonics/Word Analysis, Reading/Literature, Spelling/Vocabulary, and Writing), Mathematics, Physical Education, Religion, Science, Social Science, and Technology.”

B. Religious Education (Faith Formation)

The curriculum developed by the Religious Education Office and the Catholic Schools Office is followed by all teachers of religion and integrated into other subjects when possible and appropriate. The General Directory for Catechesis, The Catechism of the Catholic Church, and the National Directory for Catechesis serve as the basic sources for religion curriculum. Church teaching defines parents’ role as primary educators of their children. The priority given to their own faith formation as parents as well as their direct involvement in the faith formation of their children is essential to making this role a reality.

DIABETES 66850

Students can self-manage their diabetes in the school setting if they are authorized to do so by their diabetes care plan. The diabetes care plan should specify the nature of the student’s self-management and may include allowing students to check blood glucose levels when and wherever needed; self-administration of insulin; self-treatment of hyperglycemia or hypoglycemia; and allowing the student to possess, always, supplies and equipment necessary for

diabetes management including, but not limited to, syringes, food, and drink. If a student has been diagnosed by a physician to have diabetes and to self-administer and to self-carry diabetes medication a signed parent permission notification and a signed physician diabetes care plan that would also carry a parent signature must be provided to the local Catholic School either at the start of a new school year, upon enrollment, or immediately following diagnosis of such requirement. Both the signed parent notification and the physician's diabetes care plan will be held on file at the school site where the student attends.

Diabetes Care Plan Requirements:

- It is the responsibility of the student’s parents or legal guardians to share healthcare provider instructions concerning the student’s diabetes management during the school day.
- The diabetes care plan shall include the treating health care provider’s instructions concerning the student’s diabetes management during the school day, including a copy of the signed prescription and the methods of insulin administration.
- The services and accommodations specified in the diabetes care plan shall be reasonable, reflect the current standard of diabetes care, include appropriate safeguards to ensure that syringes and lancets are disposed of properly, and include requirements for diet, glucose testing, insulin administration, and treatment for hypoglycemia, hyperglycemia, and emergencies.

- A diabetes care plan shall include a uniform record of glucometer readings and insulin administered by the school nurse or delegated care aide during the school day using a standardized format provided by the State Board of Education.
- A diabetes care plan shall include procedures regarding when a delegated care aide shall consult with the parent or legal guardian, school nurse, where available, or health care provider to confirm that an insulin dosage is appropriate.
- A diabetes care plan shall be submitted to the local Catholic School at the beginning of the school year, upon enrollment, or immediately after a student's diagnosis, or when a student's care needs change during any given school year. Parents shall be responsible for informing the local Catholic School on time of any changes to the diabetes care plan and their emergency contact numbers.

105 ILCS 145 states (a) A school or a school employee is not liable for civil or other damages as a result of conduct, other than willful or wanton misconduct, related to the care of a student with diabetes. (b) A school employee shall not be subject to any disciplinary proceeding resulting from an action taken in compliance with this Act unless the action constitutes willful or wanton misconduct.

DISCIPLINE

Parents are the first and primary educators of their children, thus self-discipline training begins long before a child is old enough for school. This training then continues in school and allows a proper environment for learning.

The code of student behavior at St. Mary Nativity School is based on self-discipline. This then leads to respect for oneself and for others, as well as the acceptance of one's own actions. Proper behavior, grounded on Christian principles, is expected of all students at St. Mary Nativity School.

Since students often represent St. Mary Nativity School while off school grounds and outside of normal school hours (athletic events, parish youth ministry activities, the public library, musical performances, on the bus, etc.), they are expected to obey the same rules, regulations, and discipline that are required in school. In other words, all students are to always conduct themselves in Christian manner.

When self-discipline fails, school rules and regulations provide guidelines for individual behavior. Students are expected to know and obey these rules and regulations, which are made clear both in the classroom and through administrative direction.

Behaviors that are unbecoming Catholic School students, and which will not be tolerated at St. Mary Nativity School are:

- Disrespect for God, adults, or other children
- Endangering the safety and/or security of the school, staff, and/or students
- Cheating of any kind
- Cyberbullying
- Fighting or physical aggression
- Use of unacceptable verbal or written language.
- Illegal actions
- Leaving school grounds at improper times without written permission
- Misbehavior of school bus or on field trips
- Misuse of technology
- Vandalism
- Theft

- Violation of uniform dress code

Students who fail to exhibit self-discipline, and respect for themselves and others, and who do not accept responsibility will be subject to the school's disciplinary action of issuing a Respectful Reminder or Behavior Report which will identify a Minor (to be decided by the teacher and administrator based on severity and frequency of behavior). More serious infractions of the preceding and related offenses will be directed to the administration (where a Major may be issued). Punishment will then be determined, and a penalty could result in placement anywhere on steps 1-6 depending on the severity of the problem. The principal may intervene at any time and, in all cases, the decision of the principal is final.

When discipline forms are sent home by the principal or teacher via FACTS or email, they should be signed by 8:00 am the following school day. Signing only signifies that you are aware. If you have questions, we are happy to address them but still ask that you sign to verify that you have seen the form. Refusal to sign the infraction does NOT mean the infraction will not be recorded.

Violation of the discipline policy is based on cumulative behavior from August - June each year. Each year, a student has a fresh start. If school rules are not adhered to, one of the following steps will be taken.

Respectful Reminder - 3 Respectful Reminder = 1 Minor Offense/Demerits

Each Minor will result in a detention as detailed below.

Minor Offense - 3 Minor Offenses/Demerits = 1 Major Offense/Demerits

1st Major Offense/Demerit - REFLECTION - write a two-page essay due the next school day. NO field trips and/or extracurricular activities, including practice or school events for one week.

2nd Major Offense/Demerit - 1 day after school detention and parent/teacher/student conference. No field trips and/or extra-curricular activities including practice or school events for two weeks.

3rd Major Offense/Demerit - 1-day in-school suspension, parent/teacher/principal/student conference. Ineligible for field trips, school events, and extra-curricular activities for the remainder of the school year.

4th Major Offense/Demerit - Expulsion or denial of readmission for the following school year.

DETENTION

For all students in grades 4th through 8th detention will be served after school by the teacher's schedule. Detentions will be served from 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm. During this time, students will not be allowed to complete schoolwork. Based on the reason for the detention, students will complete a written reflection. Once they have completed the reflection, they may sit in silence to pray. Students are to be picked up at school promptly after the detention period.

EXPULSION

The reason justifying expulsion from a Catholic school should be as serious as it is rare. As soon as it becomes evident that expulsion of a particular child may be necessary, the administrator should notify the pastor, parents of the child and the School Board. Expulsion may occur for the following reasons:

- When the moral, academic or physical well-being of the student body or staff is endangered.

- When there is a prolonged and open disregard for school authority
- The use of alcohol, tobacco, or dangerous drugs on school property
- Dangerous illegal acts
- Repeated truancy
- Willful and negligent damage to the school property
- Threats of violence

DRESS CODE POLICY

A principal goal of St. Mary Nativity Catholic School is to develop in the student respect for self and others, pride in one's appearance, and good conduct. These qualities aid in establishing a proper learning environment. To help develop these traits, St. Mary Nativity Catholic School has adopted a dress code policy which is considerate of our aim to promote a feeling of equality for all while discouraging competition in dress. A respectful dress code helps promote a safe and appropriate learning environment free from distractions while contributing to students' preparation for success beyond adolescence.

Our uniform was designed with the following factors and priorities:

- Affordability
- Neatness
- Distinction
- Character
- Spirit
- Comfort
- Consistency
- Modesty

Our dress code includes three classifications of uniforms:

1. Regular Dress: Regular Dress is the uniform worn on most school days.
2. Spirit Wear: Spirit Wear is blue jeans, gym shoes, and a school spirit shirt. Announcements will be made alerting students when Spirit Dress is appropriate.
3. Dress Down Day: Students may wear Full-length blue jeans, T-shirts, or sweatshirts (school-appropriate) with gym shoes. Socks covering the ankles must be worn.

***No boots are allowed.**

4. Dress up Dress: Announcements will be made when Dress up Dress is appropriate.

Examples of Special Occasion Dress include:

Boys: Dress pants and dress shirts, (Ties optional). Dress shoes must be worn with socks.

Girls: Dress/skirts are recommended. Dress shoes must be worn with socks or tights.

No sandals.

GENERAL APPEARANCE

Body piercings (apart from earrings for girls) and visible tattoos are not permitted.

- Boys must be clean-shaven with hair not longer than their bottom collar, off the face, and above the eyebrows. Ponytails, headbands, “man buns,” and coloring are not allowed. Extreme hairstyles (mohawks, etc.) are not permitted. The school reserves the right to define “extreme.”
- Girls’ hair must be a natural color. Extreme hairstyles are not permitted. The school reserves the right to define “extreme.” Hair accessories must be small and simple. No LARGE bows or hair pieces.
- Make-up and sports grease are not permitted. Clear nail polish is permitted for girls.
- Clothing with logos other than St. Mary Nativity is not permitted.
- A simple, non-distracting religious pin/necklace or medal may be worn.
- Students may wear a simple wristwatch. No Smartphones, Fitbits, or Smartwatches are permitted.
- No cologne or perfume is permitted.

REGULAR DRESS

The Regular Dress uniform is always appropriate school attire and can be worn in place of the Spirit Day wear or Dress up day Dress.

- Tops: Navy blue Dennis Polo (logo required).
- Bottoms may consist of Khaki (non-denim) uniform slacks or fingertip-length (St. Mary Nativity pattern Dennis) skirt (5th grade and up), or (St. Mary Nativity pattern Dennis) jumper (Preschool through 4th).
- Uniform shorts (to the knee) in Khaki may be worn from the first day of school until October 15 and from April 15 to the end of the school year.
- Black, brown, or navy belts must be worn with slacks.
- Black, brown, or navy dress shoes or black gym shoes. During winter months, boots may be worn to school, but students must change out of them for class.
- White, navy, or black over the ankle socks. Girls may wear white, navy, or black solid-colored tights.
- Undershirts should be plain white crew neck or V-neck. Long sleeve undershirts are not permitted.
- Optional sweaters, activewear, and outerwear are available on the Dennis website.

SPIRIT WEAR

The Spirit Day Wear includes:

Students may wear Knight Spirit wear: T-shirts or sweatshirts with St. Mary Nativity’s spirit logos blue jeans, and gym shoes.

- No boots are allowed.
- No stretch, leggings, jeggings, skinny or yoga pants are allowed.
- Athletic uniforms are not allowed during these days.
- Uniform shorts, Capri (khaki or denim), or Knee-length Bermuda shorts (including denim) are allowed (effective from the dates released).

DRESS DOWN DAY

The Dress Down Days include:

Students may wear school-appropriate T-shirts or sweatshirts with full blue jeans, and gym shoes.

- No boots are allowed.
- No stretch, leggings, jeggings, skinny or yoga pants are allowed.
- Athletic uniforms are not allowed during these days.
- Uniform shorts, Capri (khaki or denim), or Knee length Bermuda shorts (including denim) are allowed (effective from the dates released).

DRESS UP DAYS

Dress-up days include, but are not limited to:

Church Attire: Church attire is defined as the Regular Dress uniform or dressier. This also applies to Graduation and Confirmation.

- Boys: dress pants, a collared dress shirt, and socks. Dress shirts must be always tucked in. Sport coats, sweaters, or ties are optional. Footwear should be non-skid.

- Girls: modest skirts or dresses that reach the knee or are longer. If tights are worn, they must be solid color. Relaxed-fitting dress pants that reach the ankle are also appropriate. Blouses and other types of tops should have sleeves or be worn with a relaxed-fitting cardigan or blazer. Necklines must be to the collarbone or higher. Footwear should be non-skid with a low-heeled shoe or ankle boot.

COVID 19 MASK

Students are expected to wear school-appropriate or disposable masks. Gator masks are not permitted.

PE UNIFORM

Students in 3rd-8th grades will be required to wear the St. Mary Nativity Catholic School PE uniform, purchased from the school.

DROP OFF/ PICK UP PROCEDURE

Drop-off is a drive-thru process. Parents should travel East on Lime Street, turn North on Vista Lane, and then West on Marble Street. This will bring you right along the side of the gym. Pull all the way forward to the stop sign. Approximately 3-4 vehicles should be able to drop off their children at the same time. Children will exit the vehicle on the parking lot side. Parents are asked **Not** to get out of their cars. As soon as your child/children are out of the car, please move forward through the 4-way stop at Marble and Broadway. There is no way (in advance) to know how many cars will be lined up waiting to drop off children at the same time. Should a "line" build up on Vista Lane, please use the back playground as a "holding area" until you see that it is your turn to pull along the gymnasium. Vista Lane is a street lined with homes and garages. Please do not block their exit while waiting to drop off your children... wait your turn in the back playground.

If you need to visit the school, school office, church or rectory **DROP OFF YOUR CHILDREN FIRST** and then proceed to the big lot across from the school and park your vehicle. This also applies if you have things to unload from your vehicle (such as from the trunk). There will be a crossing guard at the 4-way stop at Marble and Broadway.

During inclement weather, parents may pull up to the gym doors to drop off their children. When picking up your children, park in the Big Parking lot on Broadway St. across from the school and church. Parents should back in to the parking spaces. This is a safety procedure to avoid any child getting hit or run over after they are dismissed and in the parking lot. This will enable you to pull right out after your children enter your car. Teachers will walk

the students across the street with the help of the crossing guard at the 4-way stop at Marble St. and Broadway St. Children should not run or play in the parking lot but walk directly to their car. When leaving the parking lot, do not pull onto Broadway Street use the exits on Marble St. or Ruby St.

During inclement weather, parents may pull up to the gym doors to pick up their children.

DRUG/ALCOHOL/TOBACCO POLICY

- Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs by any student is the most serious violation of the school's code of conduct.
- A first-time offense will result in a suspension (either external or internal) and requires that the student enroll and complete a counseling or educational program. The suspension can be up to, but will not exceed, three days.
- A repeat offense will result in an immediate expulsion.
- Authorities will be contacted in a situation in which violence occurs.
- The sale of drugs or drug paraphernalia by any student will result in an immediate expulsion. The proper authorities will also be contacted. The student may face criminal charges.

EARLY RELEASE OF A STUDENT

Before an individual student can be dismissed early from school, parents must call or email the main office stating the reason, the time, and the person to whom the student is to be released. At that time the office will make the teacher aware. When the appropriate time for dismissal occurs, the child should be signed out by the parent or guardian and picked up at the main office. No child will be permitted to leave the school early unless accompanied by an adult.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

If a student needs a personal electronic device (cell phone, e-reader, iPod/iPad) after school due to, but not limited to, walking home from school, entering a house where no one is at home, or attending athletic or extracurricular activities, he/she will...

Place the device in the appropriate storage container upon arrival in the morning. These devices will be parked in three separate containers: one for car riders, one for extended days, and one for after-school activities (sports, drama, etc.). These containers will stay in the main office during the school day and will be taken by teachers or staff to the dismissal areas for each of those groups.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In the event of an emergency school closing, an announcement will be communicated via SMS and FACTS: a message will be sent via the SMNS system and delivered via text message and/or email.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

State Laws require that fire drills be held periodically throughout the school year. During the fire drills, students should follow these regulations:

- rise in silence when the alarm sounds.
- close windows and doors.
- walk to the assigned area briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence.
- return to the building when the appropriate signal is given.

State law also requires that tornado drills be held periodically throughout the school year. The procedures for a tornado drill are:

- rise in silence when the alarm sounds.
- walk briskly to the assigned area in a single file.
- while in the assigned area remain silent for directions
- return to the classroom when signal is given.

Please note that if a tornado warning is announced near dismissal, students will NOT be allowed to leave the school until all clear signals have been given.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Cooperation is given to Civil Defense and Disaster Preparedness Programs of the local, state, and federal government. It is the principal's responsibility to develop a comprehensive plan for use in the event of tornadoes or other emergencies. This plan includes:

- A warning system different from the fire alarm.
- The designation of places to which children will be taken.
- The supervision of practice drills at frequent but irregular intervals as specified by the Illinois School Code and other statutes, laws, and regulations.

TORNADO

Age-appropriate procedures followed in the event of a tornado warning are prominently displayed in each classroom. Children are not sent home while a tornado warning is in effect. Tornado drills are conducted regularly and recorded in the same Diocesan form used for recording fire drills.

CRISIS

If an emergency of any kind occurs, the school immediately implements its Crisis Management Plan

FIRE DRILLS

Local schools must comply with the directives regarding fire drills as stated in the Illinois School Code and other statutes, laws, and regulations. Schools conduct at least the minimum number of fire drills required by local/state fire codes. The first recorded drill is held as soon as possible but no later than two weeks after school begins.

The date of drills and the amount of time necessary to evacuate the building is recorded on the approved Diocesan form and kept on file at the local school. Age-appropriate visual directions for emergency exits are posted in each classroom. To assure no fire hazards are present in the building, the principal makes regular inspections of the premises. Fire alarms pull boxes, sprinkling systems, heat or smoke detectors, emergency lighting systems and fire extinguishers are checked regularly.

EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM

The Extended Day Program is available to families of St. Mary Nativity School for a fee.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students may choose to remain after school for the various extracurricular activities offered by St. Mary Nativity Catholic School. Parents should know when students are staying for such activities and arrange for transportation home. The school does not assume responsibility for children who are not picked up at the stipulated time.

If an extracurricular activity is not held immediately after dismissal, the student must go home and return at the time of the activity or go to Extended Day (charges will be applied accordingly) while waiting.

FAMILY VACATIONS

Parents considering a vacation that requires a child's absence from school should discuss the matter with the principal and the child's teacher(s) **well in advance** of departure. Make-up work should be completed as directed by the teacher(s) upon return to the school. A written request must be sent to the office requesting permission for the student to be released from the class for the days in which he/she will be gone.

FIELD TRIPS

- Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
- All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.
- Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and experience ensure a successful learning opportunity.
- 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.
- 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 before any student will be allowed to attend a specific field trip.
- A telephone call will NOT be accepted in lieu of the proper field trip permission slip.
- Although it is not encouraged, 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 due to parental choice, will remain at home with the parent and will be marked absent for the day.
- All monies collected for a field trip are non-refundable.
- Cell phones are not allowed on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.

FUNDRAISING

At all levels, Preschool - 8th grade, the tuition cost is not the actual cost to educate your child. To offset the difference between actual per-student cost and tuition, we must generate income through third-source funding, also known as fundraising.

Each family with students in Preschool - 8th grade is responsible for fundraising for St. Mary Nativity in the following manner:

- Mandatory: \$400.00 Cash Calendar Raffle or \$500.00 if not participating.
- Highly Encouraged: Picnic raffle, Limited tickets raffle, March Madness, and Trivia Knight.
- 4 Volunteer Hours- Activities to be determined.

GIFTS

Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students.

Invitations to birthday parties or slumber parties should be sent to the home of students via the U.S. Mail unless an invitation is being given to every student in the entire grade.

GRADING SCALE

The following is the grading scale that is mandated by the Diocese of Joliet.

- A. Students in the Preschool and Early Childhood Care Program receive formal reports from the school after each trimester.
- B. Students in Grades K-3 use the Joliet Diocesan standards-based report card indicating student progress in terms 4, 3, 2, and 1.
- C. The following is the code officially approved by the Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Joliet:
 - a. 4 (Exceeds Expectation),
 - b. 3 (Meets Expectations),
 - c. 2 (Approaches Expectations),
 - d. 1 (Needs to Improve to Meet Expectations),
 - e. NG (Not Graded),
 - f. and * (Not Offered).

The categories with their explanation are listed below.

- 4 – Work Exceeds Expectation ~ Students demonstrate an in-depth understanding of concepts, skills, and processes that exceed the grade level expectation of the curriculum.
- 3 – Work Meets Expectation ~ Students consistently demonstrate an understanding of grade-level concepts, skills, and processes taught to date to meet the expectations of the curriculum. Students complete tasks with little teacher assistance. (Most students will achieve in this range.)
- 2 – Work Approaches Expectation ~ Student's work demonstrates that he/she is approaching an understanding of grade-level concepts, skills, and processes taught to date to meet the expectations of the curriculum. Students require some teacher assistance: prompts, directions, and reminders.
- 1 – Needs to Improve ~ Student has not yet demonstrated an understanding of grade level concepts, skill, and processes taught to date and needs consistent support. Students require significant teacher assistance with prompts, directions, and reminders.
- NG – Not Graded ~ Used when a particular subject is not taught.
 - Not Offered ~ Used for subjects not offered at the school/grade level.

c. Students in Grades 4-8 use the Joliet Diocesan standards-based report card indicating student progress in terms of letter grades based on the following achievement code:

A = Outstanding Achievement A+ = 100% A = 99-96% A- = 95-93%

B = Very Good Achievement B+ = 92-91% B = 90-88% B- = 87-85%

C = Good Achievement C+ = 84-83% C = 82-79% C- = 78-77%

D = Improvement Needed D+ = 76-75% D = 74-72% D- = 71-70%

F = Little or No Progress F = 69% or lower

HEALTH EXAMINATIONS

The State of Illinois requires the following:

- Pre-K Health Physical Exam
- Kindergarten Health Physical Exam
- Dental Examination
- Eye Examination
- 2nd Grade Dental Examination

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Home-school communication is an essential element for a positive educational experience. The school office will use SMS to send announcements and daily reminders. On your family FACTS portal, you will be able to access the school calendar, daily/weekly announcements, school sign-ups, and school lunch. It is your child's responsibility to make sure that his/her classroom mailbox is emptied each day before they depart from school. Students should all have "take home" folders for their daily classroom communiqué. You must look for and review your child's classroom correspondence or FACTS portal daily.

HOMEWORK

Educators recognize the wisdom of continuing in out-of-school hours the instruction begun in the classroom. Formal homework is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement and enrich class work, and to prepare for certain lessons through various experiences. The parents must provide a place and time conducive to study. Homework time does not necessarily have to be spent writing. Reading and studying are considered homework. Parents should never do a child's homework or permit anyone else to do it for the child. Parents should, however, frequently check the work when completed. The time spent on homework varies with the grade level and the study habits of the child.

HOMEWORK POLICY DUE TO ILLNESS

When a student is absent for three or more days, a parent may call the school office before 9:00 am to arrange for homework assignments to be picked up. Homework assignments may be picked up from 2:30 – 3:30 pm. For short absences (1 or 2 days) students must check their respective teacher's website for schoolwork on the day(s) they are absent. NO absent student homework page will be sent to the office for short absences. Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes, or tests. For example, a student who was absent for three days would be given three school days to complete the missed work.

INTERNET USAGE

All students are expected to use the St. Mary Nativity network to access the Internet in a responsible way. Although the SMN staff makes every effort to prevent access to inappropriate material, it is still the student's responsibility to avoid such material. It is also the parent's responsibility to monitor the student's computer and Internet usage when not on school grounds. No student shall intentionally attempt to bypass security measures on the computer they are using, on the network, or governing Internet access. Attempts to bypass security include but are not limited to:

- The use or attempted use of someone else's password or other credentials.

- The use or attempted use of outside computers, devices, or networks to gain access to restricted parts of the SMN network or restricted websites.
- The attempt to disable any firewall or content filter.

All students are required to read, sign, and follow the published Internet Usage Policy. Any violation of that policy or any attempt to bypass security measures as stated above will be considered a serious offense. In addition, some attempts to bypass security or gain unauthorized access to the SMN network can be considered for civil penalties.

LOST AND FOUND

Any items found in the school building or on school property should be given to the main office. All items placed in Lost and Found remain there for 30 days. After 30 days, items will be donated to charity. Parents **SHOULD** mark their child's name on all articles of clothing and supplies. Students who lose a textbook or a workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping.

LUNCH AND RECESS

The St. Mary Nativity Hot Lunch Program is designed in a way that your family may participate on any or all days of the week.

Reduced-price meals are available for those who fill out the proper paperwork and are approved.

To prevent accidents and to ensure good order, certain lunch hour procedures must be followed. The children are informed of these and we expect their cooperation. Students may not leave school grounds during lunch or recess. A violation of this will be considered a serious matter and will be treated as such. Weather permitting, the students will have recess outdoors. Children should dress appropriately for the temperature, as all are required to participate. Exceptions to going outside will be granted for up to three days, for reasons of illness when requested by a parent. Exceptions beyond three days will be given only when a doctor's excuse is on file at the office. Roller skates, roller blades, skateboards, and scooters are not permitted on school grounds at any time.

MISSING PERSON and HIS/HER SCHOOL RECORD 1430

Each school shall follow the provisions of Section 5(a) of the Missing Children Records Act, 325 ILCS 50/5, which requires each school to have a system in place that flags records requests for any current or former student reported as a missing person by the Illinois State police.

The procedure is as follows:

Upon notification by the Illinois State Police of a person's disappearance, a school in which the person is currently or was previously enrolled shall flag the record of that person in such a manner that whenever a copy of or information regarding the record is requested, the school shall be alerted to the fact that the record is that of a missing person. The school shall immediately report to the Illinois State Police any request concerning flagged records or knowledge as to the whereabouts of any missing person. Upon notification by Illinois State Police that the missing person has been recovered, the school shall remove the flag from the person's record.

NON-DISCRIMINATION 5110

Schools operated under the auspices of the Diocese of Joliet admit students of any race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally available to students at the schools. Questions and/or concerns regarding discrimination in admissions should be directed to the principal (if applicable) the pastor (or parish administrator) and the Superintendent of Schools in the Diocese of Joliet. The names of the elementary and secondary schools can be found in the OFFICIAL CATHOLIC DIRECTORY, published annually.

OFF-CAMPUS CONDUCT

The Administration of St. Mary Nativity Catholic School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with the behavior expectations of its students during the school day. This off-campus behavior includes but is not limited to, cyberbullying.

OFFICE RECORDS

Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change of address, 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.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS AND INOCULATIONS 5410

Physical examinations as prescribed by the Department of Public Health are required of all students immediately before or upon entrance into pre-school, kindergarten, (or the first grade), and the sixth and ninth grades. Physical examinations of students are required immediately before entrance into school if such students have not previously been examined according to Illinois law.

All students are immunized according to the Illinois School Code. Students are excluded from school (by October 15) for noncompliance with this law. The law allows for medical and religious exemptions.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Illinois State Law requires that every child's parent present to the school proof of immunization from communicable diseases. The information must be on file for every child in school. If you have a religious objection to immunizations, you must have a legal form on file in the school office.

MEDICATIONS

As a rule, no over the counter or prescription medications will be dispensed to students. If possible, we ask that medication times be adjusted to before or after school so that the dispensing of medication does not have to take place during school hours. If necessary, a parent/guardian request form to administer the medication to the student here at school by a school staff member must be completed and on file in the school office. The pharmacy label can serve as the written consent of the doctor.

EMERGENCIES

If a child becomes ill and must be sent home, the school will make every effort to contact the child's parents or guardians. Emergency information must be on file at the school with your home, cell, and business phone numbers. Also, if there are any special procedures to follow in the case of an emergency those should be on file at the school as well. Accidents that occur at school or on the playground are reported to the parents as quickly as possible.

ILLINOIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

IESA requires that all students who participate in athletic activities must pass an athletic physical PRIOR to practices/games.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

As partners in the educational process at St. Mary Nativity Catholic School, we ask parents to set rules, times, and limits so that their child:

- Get a good night's sleep.
- Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day.
- Is dressed according to the school dress code.
- Completes all assignments and projects on time.
- Has either a hot lunch or a nutritional sack lunch every day.

It is important that Parents:

- Actively participate in school-sponsored activities.
- Notify the school with a written note and/or phone call when the student has been absent or tardy.
- Notify the school office of any changes of addresses or important phone numbers.
- Meet all financial obligations to the school.
- Inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health.
- Inform and communicate to their children (before they come to school) how they will be transported home (i.e., by car, bus), and whether they will attend extended day. If their means of transportation is different than usual, please send a note indicating the change with your children to give to their teacher on that given day.
- Complete and return to school, promptly, any requested information.
- Read school notes and newsletters and show interest in the student's total education.
- Support the religious and educational goals of the school.
- Support and cooperate with the discipline policies of the school.
- Treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing your child's education.

PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

We, at St. Mary Nativity Catholic School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of their children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life—physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically.

Your choice of St. Mary Nativity Catholic School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life. A good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church/Parish community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life. Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at St. Mary Nativity Catholic School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment.

During these formative years (Pre-K to 8th Grade), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. Both parents and teachers must remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect to all authority. If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your very first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security. A child must take responsibility for the grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. This responsibility also extends to times of absence. Together, let us begin the school year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she can become.

Parent–Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for the parents of all students during the school year.

In addition to these formally scheduled conferences, our teachers are always happy to speak with parents regarding their child's progress. We do ask that you make an appointment with the respective teacher. It is not acceptable to proceed down the school hallway at the beginning or end of the school day to speak with a teacher without an appointment or prior approval from the administration.

If you wish to contact a teacher, please call the school office during the day. Leave your name, telephone number, and the name of the teacher you wish to contact. If you wish, you may e-mail any teacher simply using the teacher 's first initial and last name @stmarynativity.org. For example, mteacher@stmarynativity.org. You should expect a response to your call or email within 48 hours.

PLEASE NOTE: Because the teachers are busy teaching their students during the day, they are not always able to check email throughout the day. If you have an urgent situation (change of dismissal, etc.) please call the office instead of sending an email.

PRE-K REQUIREMENTS

All preschool students must be FULLY potty trained before entrance into the preschool program. They must be able to use the restroom with no assistance from the teacher or teacher's aide.

Pre-K3 children must be 3.

Pre-K4 children must turn 4 by September 1st of the current school year.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

Advancement to the next grade in St. Mary Nativity Catholic School is based on a student's daily performance, daily attendance, 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 a 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.

REPORTING DRUG VIOLATIONS TO AUTHORITIES

Each school shall follow the provisions of the School Reporting of Drug Violations Act, 105 ILCS 127 which provides that the superintendent of the school or his or her designee shall report all instances of "drug violations" to local law enforcement officials or to the office of the county sheriff of the municipality or county where the school is located.

A "drug violation" is when any of the following occurs on school property, on a public way within 1,000 feet of a school, or on any property owned, leased, or contracted by a school to transport students to or from school or to or from a school-related activity:

A person knowingly manufactures, delivers, or possesses with intent to deliver, or manufacture, cannabis in a school, in violation of the Cannabis Control Act, 720 ILCS 550, Section 5.2; or

A person delivers a controlled, counterfeit, or look-alike substance to a person under 18 years of age, in violation of the Illinois Controlled Substances Act, 720 ILCS 570, Sections 401(b) and or 407; or

A person knowingly possesses, procures, transports, stores, or delivers any methamphetamine precursor or substance containing any methamphetamine precursor in standard dosage form with the intent that it be used to manufacture methamphetamine or a substance containing methamphetamine, in violation of the Methamphetamine Control and Community Protection Act, 720 ILCS 646 et seq. Reporting. Upon receiving any report from any school personnel regarding a verified incident involving drugs in a school or on school-owned or leased property, the superintendent or his or her designee shall report such drug-related incident occurring in a school or school property to the local law enforcement authorities immediately and to the Illinois State Police. Reports to the Illinois State Police can be made through the School Incident Reporting System ("SIRS"), a web-based application used by schools to report incidents electronically.

Note that reporting through SIRS does not satisfy the requirement to report the incident to local law enforcement authorities as well. 105 ILCS 5/10-27.1B

REPORTING FIREARMS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY TO AUTHORITIES

Upon receiving any report from any school personnel regarding a verified incident involving a firearm in a school or on school-owned or leased property, the superintendent or his or her designee shall report such firearm-related incident occurring in a school or on school property to the local law enforcement authorities no later than 24 hours after the occurrence of the incident and to the Illinois State Police. Reports to the Illinois

State Police can be made through the School Incident Reporting System ("SIRS"), a web-based application used by schools to report incidents electronically. Note that reporting through SIRS does not satisfy the requirement to report the incident to local law enforcement authorities as well. 105 ILCS 5/27.1A, 5/34-8.05

REPORTING ATTACKS ON SCHOOL TO AUTHORITIES

Upon receiving a written complaint from any school personnel, the superintendent or his or her designee shall report an incident of battery committed against a teacher, teacher personnel, administrative personnel, or educational support personnel to the local law enforcement authorities immediately after the occurrence of the attack and to the Illinois State Police's Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting Program no later than 3 days after the occurrence of the attack. Note that reporting through the Uniform Crime Reporting Program does not satisfy the requirement to report the incident to local law enforcement authorities as well 105 ILCS 5/10-21.7

REGISTRATION

Pre-registration for current St. Mary Nativity Catholic School families will take place in February of each year. Open pre-registration begins in March for new and interested families.

PLEASE NOTE: Fees and tuition from the previous school year must be fully resolved before registration for the new school year is finalized. Registration for families with outstanding balances will not become official until those balances have been paid or a payment plan has been established and approved by the Administration.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

"Catholic education is an expression of the mission extended by Jesus to the Church He founded. Through education, the church seeks to prepare its members to proclaim the Good News and to translate this proclamation into action." (To Teach as Jesus Did - National Conference of Catholic Bishops; 1972)

The Catholic school works in conjunction with parents in the religious education of their children. Parents are the primary religious educators of their children. The values and attitudes of parents are communicated to their children by how parents live their daily lives. Parents who love Christ and His Church, who reverently participate in the Eucharist, who live lives based on justice and love, who are actively involved in their parish community, who see their lives as lives of service, and for whom prayer is a natural response in life, communicate these values to their children. Parents cannot impose their faith on their children, but they can help their children realize and appreciate the meaning of faith in life.

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

Report Cards are important tools for communication. Report cards will be given three (3) times during the academic school year or every twelve weeks. Progress Reports will be given to all students at the midpoint of each trimester. Subsequent Progress Reports will be sent home if a significant change in a particular student's grades has occurred. These reports are meant to update parents in any areas of concern.

ONLINE GRADE BOOK (FACTS)

Parents can check on their child's grades at any point in the year through our online grading system. All families should have a FACTS login and password. It is encouraged that parents and students view their grades weekly to monitor progress.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The sacramental life of Catholic children is an important component of the religion program at St. Mary Nativity Catholic School. Preparations for two sacraments, Reconciliation and First Eucharist, form the core of instruction in 2nd grade. Parents are required to be active partners in the preparation of their children for these

sacraments. The sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation are only conferred to students baptized in the Roman Catholic tradition.

SCHOOL BOARD (PRE-K-12)

The St. Mary Nativity School Board provides advice and counsel to the administration on matters of policy and procedures, on finances and the budget, and the growth and advancement of the school. If a parent(s) wishes to attend a School Board meeting, they must call in advance to arrange to be scheduled on the agenda. If you are scheduled to attend a School Board meeting, it is recommended that you call ahead of time to confirm the date and time. School Board bylaws allow for a change of day or time with only three days of notice.

SCHOOL HOURS

Grades Pre-K – 8th: 7:50 am - 2:50 pm

Homeroom begins promptly at 8:00 am. Students who are not in their respective classroom/homeroom by 8:00 am are considered tardy. All students should be in their respective classrooms at that time.

Morning Prayer and school announcements begin promptly at 8:00 am.

At SMN Catholic School, we work in partnership with parents to enable each child to develop as an independent learner. Parents should allow their child(ren) to enter the school building on their own each morning. Walking students to their classrooms in the morning is not recommended. All students get dropped off at the gym door and proceed to their classrooms with their respective grades.

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

The school office is open on all school days from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

The parent or guardian of a child who carelessly destroys or damages any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property will be obligated to pay the full amount for repairs and labor or replacement.

SCHOOL SAFETY

St. Mary Nativity Catholic School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making threats, be it seriously, in jest, or online will be considered in defiance of the SMNS Bullying Policy and may face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. Harassment of any type is not tolerated. The Principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

SCHOOL SECURITY

To ensure the safety of the students during the school day, all doors leading into the school buildings will be locked at the start of school. Any person entering the building after the start of school must signal the office staff who will then open the door, allowing the individual(s) to enter the building. All parents and visitors should go directly to the office window to sign in the Visitor Logbook. The office may require the visitor to produce appropriate identification. Anyone not following these directives will be deemed a trespasser.

No student will be permitted to leave the school without supervision. If a parent wishes to remove his/her child from the school building or premises during regular school hours, he/she must enter through the main school entrance, register at the office, and sign the child out.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Engagement in online blogs or photo-sharing sites such as, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. may result in disciplinary actions if the content of the student's blog includes defamatory comments or pictures regarding St. Mary Nativity Catholic School, the faculty, and other students. The decision to pursue disciplinary action resides solely with the principal.

SOCIAL MEDIA 6745

The Catholic Schools Office recognizes that the use of social media is being used in a variety of methods as an important evangelizing, educational and marketing tool to promote school and ministerial programs. However, those using the Internet should bear in mind that certain comments and information may harm the school, parish, the Diocese of Joliet, its reputation, and its employees. Considering this possibility employees and volunteers are required to adhere to the following policy regarding the use of social media sites, networks, and blogs.

This Social Media Policy (the "Policy") applies to all online or mobile-based tools for sharing content and discussing information, whether controlled by the diocese, local school or local parish or hosted on other platforms (such as Facebook), on which employees/ volunteers of the school /parish engage in activities relating to the school, parish, or diocese. The term "social media" refers to activities that integrate technology, telecommunications, and social interaction through the use of words, images, video, or audio tools. Examples include, but are not limited to, social websites, blogs, message boards, wikis, podcasts, image- and video-sharing sites, live webcasting, and real-time communities. Because this is a constantly evolving area, this policy applies to all new social media platforms whether they are specifically mentioned in this policy.

STUDENT RECORDS

St. Mary Nativity Catholic School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Mail. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school. No records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.

TELEPHONE USAGE

Permission to use the office telephone must be obtained from the school administrative assistants. If a student leaves a class to use the phone, they must submit a note from their teacher indicating that they have permission to come to the office to ask for permission to use the phone. The office phone is a business phone and students are permitted to use it only in case of an emergency.

Forgotten homework, athletic equipment, etc. do not constitute emergencies. Arrangements for after-school visits with friends should be made at home.

TESTING

- Students in grades K-8 will take Diocesan Assessments in all subjects.

- The Iowa Test of Basic Skills is administered to students in grades 3-8 each year.
- The ACRE Test will be given to 5th and 8th graders each year to assess religious growth and knowledge.

VISITS TO SCHOOL

Parents and all other visitors must sign in at the office before going to a classroom. Parents are asked to refrain from going to the classroom before or after school without having first made an appointment with the teacher and registering in the office. Teachers are unable to effectively monitor their students while conducting discussions with parents. The teacher will be busy with classwork and will not have time for a conference during that visit.

VOLUNTEERS

All individuals who choose to volunteer at St. Mary Nativity Catholic School must fulfill the Diocesan Mandates for Volunteers which include:

- The completion of a Protecting God's Children Seminar
- The completion of a background check. (As of 7/1/09 background checks must be completed every 5 years.)
- Completion of the Diocesan Acknowledgement Form for Volunteers indicating that each volunteer has received and reviewed a copy of:
 - The Diocesan Pastoral Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors
 - The Diocesan Standards of Behavior for Those Working with Minors

WEATHER EMERGENCIES

In the event of an emergency school closing, an announcement will be made over FACTS and SMS: a message will be sent via the SMNS FACTS system and delivered via text message and/or email. Important information such as daily announcements, monthly calendars, as well as links to classroom pages are available on our school website at www.stmarynativity.org. We encourage you to log on to the school website daily.

**** RIGHT TO AMEND****

St. Mary Nativity Catholic School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent home to the parents via the student folders and/or actual U.S. Mail.