

**ST. MARY ON THE HILL CATHOLIC SCHOOL
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**SCHOOL YEAR OFFICE HOURS: 7:30 AM – 3:00 PM
SUMMER HOURS: 9 AM – 12 NOON TUESDAY – THURSDAY**

2009 – 2010 Parent-Student Handbook

**THE SCHOOL IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF THE DIOCESE OF
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA
601 EAST LIBERTY STREET
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 30401-5196
(912) 210-4100**

THE ADMINISTRATION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO AMEND THE HANDBOOK FOR JUST CAUSE. NOTIFICATION OF ANY AMENDMENTS WILL BE WRITTEN AND DISTRIBUTED TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY AS WELL AS VERBALLY AT HOME & SCHOOL MEETING

**STUDENTS AND PARENTS MUST ACCEPT AND
ABIDE BY THE SCHOOL'S POLICIES AND
PROCEDURES IN ORDER FOR THE STUDENT TO
ATTEND THE SCHOOL**

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Savannah, Georgia admit all students to the rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to the student body. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age or national origin in the administration of its admission or athletic programs.

INTRODUCTION

ACCREDITATION

St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School is accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference and by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

MISSION STATEMENT

In a Christ-centered atmosphere, the mission of St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School is: to teach, to learn, and to become faith-filled servants of Jesus.

PHILOSOPHY OF ST. MARY ON THE HILL SCHOOL

St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School, in partnership with the families of students enrolled, assists in providing a quality Catholic education. The school provides a Catholic atmosphere of love, respect, responsibility and religious awareness. The school accepts the challenge of assisting in the development of the potential of each child: spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, morally and socially.

Entering its 49th year of educational leadership in its current location, St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School is a Florida Catholic Conference (FCC) and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accredited school with grades K-8. The parish of St. Mary on the Hill Catholic Church supports the school through Stewardship.

Historically, the school has been administered by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. Laypersons currently staff the school. The school serves St. Mary on the Hill Parish, other parishes and non-Catholic residents of the area.

Originally named Mount St. Joseph, the school was founded in 1913 by the Georgia province of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. The current school campus was erected in 1960 and the newest addition was completed during the 2001-2002 school year. St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School now has a total of 24 classrooms. Additionally, it has resources that include a guidance counselor, a library/media center, on-staff health room assistant, religious education office, art, music, Spanish, physical education, 3 computer labs and a science lab.

The St. Mary on the Hill program is designed to help students progress from dependence in early childhood to personal and intellectual independence as young adults. The academic program is separated into four departments: Early Childhood, Primary, Intermediate and Junior High. Class sizes are limited throughout the school so students, faculty, and parents know each other well. The Early Childhood and Primary Departments focus on establishing basic skills in a safe, stimulating and developmentally appropriate environment. Children from kindergarten through the first grade call the Early Childhood wing home. The Primary wing includes second and third grades. In the Intermediate grades, fourth through sixth, students begin assuming greater responsibility for their academic progress and work toward mastering increasingly complex subject matter. The Junior High students in the seventh and eighth grades benefit from a challenging program. Upon leaving the school, a St. Mary's graduate is expected to reason logically, read critically, write correctly, express thoughts articulately, and to both analyze and question vigorously.

St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School sets a priority of hiring practicing Catholics as classroom teachers. All classroom religion teachers at St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School participate in ongoing Catechist training to maintain their Catechist Certification. All students take daily religion classes. Each school day starts with student led school wide prayer. All students attend daily Mass at least once per week. All students attend a monthly school-wide Mass.

Prior to the first day of school, the administration hosts an information night for all new St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School parents. All parents and students receive a copy of the current St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School parent/student handbook that outlines policies and programs. At the beginning of the school year a "Back to School Night" for all parents is held so that teachers can share student academic and behavioral expectations directly with parents. At the end of the first quarter, each parent is invited to attend a conference with their child's teachers to discuss the child's academic and spiritual progress as well as grades on the child's report card. SMS is now using an online gradebook program called Edline. Parents and students receive an activation code that allow them to set up a private account. They will be able to access their teacher's website for homework assignments, announcements, etc. Grades will be posted online approximately biweekly and progress reports will be posted quarterly. Teachers in kindergarten through sixth-grade provide a daily "Homework Hotline" that students and parents can access after school hours. A mid-quarter progress report is issued to all students four times per year and a report card issued at the end of each quarter. Parents are encouraged to schedule conferences with their children's teachers whenever needed. Teachers also schedule conferences with parents when needed. Many teachers provide a weekly newsletter outlining class activities and alerting parents of upcoming events.

At St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School teachers use the curriculum of the Diocese of Savannah. Teachers use these curriculum guidelines to provide the best Catholic education possible. All teachers are required to be state certified. As part of maintaining certification, teachers must earn six graduate hours or ten Staff Development Units (SDU's) every five years. St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School is required to submit a staff development plan to the Superintendent of Schools annually. In addition, all teachers are required to attend a two day Diocese of Savannah Staff Development Training Program. Curriculum guides outline Diocese of Savannah expectations of skills to be taught and mastered at each grade level in each subject area. Curriculum Guide revision at the Diocesan level is an ongoing process within each subject area. The Language Arts Curriculum Guide was revised during the 2001-2002 school year. The Social Studies and Religion Curriculum Guides were revised during the 2002-2003 school year. St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School added Spanish Classes to Kindergarten through eighth grades during the 2005-2006 school year. The Diocesan Curriculum in Spanish was completed in 2005-2006. A review and revision of the Science Curriculum was completed during the 2006-2007 school year and the Mathematics Curriculum was revised in 2007-2008. The Technology Curriculum was revised in 2008-2009 and 24 computers were replaced with new ones.

There are no plans for expansion of St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School because of property limitations. The maximum number of students per grade level K-8 is sixty. Kindergarten through third grade has three class sections each. Fifth and sixth grades have two sections each, but have an additional math and language arts teacher for the department. Seventh and eighth grades have three homerooms each.

In August of 2002, a five million dollar renovation and building project was completed. All classrooms received new windows, lights, ceilings, carpet, HVAC systems, and paint. A new media center and after school program area were created in the old St. Joseph's Convent. Also, a new state of the art gymnasium and cafeteria were constructed.

ST. MARY ON THE HILL CATHOLIC SCHOOL HISTORY

St. Mary on the Hill School is a Catholic elementary school (grades K-8). The parish of St. Mary on the Hill Catholic Church supports the school. Historically the school has been administered by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. Today, lay personnel staff the school. The school serves St. Mary's Parish, other parishes and non-Catholic residents of the area. The school is accredited by the Florida Catholic Conference.

Originally named Mount St. Joseph, the school was founded in 1913 by the Georgia province of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. The school, as it stands today, was erected in 1960 with the Junior High wing added in 1964. The Early Childhood addition was completed for the 1986 school year. Extensive renovation of the existing classrooms, as well as the addition of a gymnasium, new cafeteria and new library/media center, was completed in 2002. St. Mary on the Hill School now has a total of 24 classrooms. Additionally, it has administrative offices, health room, Religious Education Office, music room, art room, three computer labs, and science lab. Promethean ACTIVboards with new computers were placed in every classroom in 2006.

ADMINISTRATION

ADMISSION

Without discrimination, students who desire an educational experience founded on the Catholic philosophy of education and who fulfill the age, academic, and behavior requirements as stated below are eligible for admission to St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School.

ACCEPTANCE INFORMATION

Prior to acceptance, all new students are tested to ensure that the curriculum offered at St. Mary on the Hill School will accommodate the child's full educational potential. New pupils are required to have their latest report card and testing scores available at testing. Students are accepted according to the following order:

1. Present students at St. Mary on the Hill School
2. Siblings of present students in St. Mary on the Hill School
3. Students whose families are St. Mary on the Hill stewardship parishioners. A stewardship parishioner is defined as one, who is registered with the Church office, attends Sunday and Holy Day Mass on a regular basis, has turned in a Stewardship tithing pledge card, and uses church envelopes to make routine contributions to the parish.
4. Students whose families are St. Mary on the Hill parishioners and choose to pay tuition.
5. Catholic students from the area
6. Catholic students who have recently moved into the area and attended a Catholic school before moving
7. Non-Catholic students

AGE REQUIREMENTS

The school conforms to the state of Georgia, Diocesan, and Florida Catholic Conference guidelines with regard to age and immunization requirements for admission. A student entering kindergarten must be five (5) years old by September 1st or six (6) years old by September 1st to enter first grade.

REQUIRED CERTIFICATES

The following must be presented upon acceptance; a certified copy of the Birth Certificate, Baptismal Certificate (if baptized Catholic), copies of all immunization records and the Eye, Ear and Dental Form.

IMMUNIZATION/HEALTH RECORDS

Students entering Kindergarten, First Grade or a Georgia school for the first time must present a Certificate of Ear, Eye and Dental Examinations – Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3300 and a School Certificate of Immunization Form 3231 **prior to the first day of school**. Immunization/health records must be kept current according to Georgia law.

Georgia State law requires that **all students entering Sixth Grade** receive a **second MMR Booster**. Proof of this second immunization on a Georgia Department of Human Resources Form 3231 or on Form 3115 must be provided to the School Office **prior the first day of school** also proof of Varicella vaccination and booster or history of Chickenpox must be provided.

WITHDRAWAL INFORMATION

Families withdrawing students from school should notify the principal as soon as possible. Once all financial obligations are met, the child will receive a transfer card and records will be sent to the new school upon written request from the new school. If a family is unable to meet its financial obligations, the matter must be discussed promptly with the accounting department and pastor.

TUITION POLICY

Parishioners who are active, tithing members of St. Mary on the Hill parish may have the benefits of a parish - supported school, as space permits and according to the school's admission standards. All new St. Mary on the Hill School families who are parishioners, must meet with Fr. Ragan before testing will be scheduled. All others will pay tuition.

Guidelines for Stewardship Families:

- The stewardship office will review tithing at the end of each month. If a tithing family is not current in honoring their pledge a letter will be sent to the family.
- If pledge is not fulfilled by the end of the second month the family will go to tuition at the beginning of the third month.
- If tuition is not paid the family will be asked to leave the school at the beginning of the next academic quarter.
- If pledge cards are not returned within 3 weeks of date of receipt, the family will be placed on tuition.

For a non-tithing family, tuition is paid as follows:

Tuition Payment Plans:

- 3% discount if paid in full.
- 10 monthly payments beginning August 10, 2009 and ending May 10, 2010
- Payment is due by the 10th of the month. A late charge of \$25.00 will be automatically added on the 11th if there has been no written notification prior to the 10th of the month.

Past Due Accounts:

- 30 days past due – payment must be received by the 10th of the next month to be considered current.
- 60 days past due – no re-registration will be allowed.
- 90 days past due – will require child/ren to be withdrawn at the next academic quarter.

The school will not issue report cards or mail transcripts to another school until all financial and tithing matters are in order and we have received notice from the Church that it is okay to send them.

An outstanding balance on tuition or tithes not being current for an eighth grade account on May 10th will prevent that student from participating in commencement exercise and receiving a diploma until all obligations have been met.

No current student will be allowed to return for the following school year, if the outstanding balance is not paid in full by May 10th, this includes outstanding Before and After Care bills.

Tuition and special fees are non-refundable.

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to Father Jerry Ragan in the St. Mary on the Hill Church office.

Many Catholic parishes subsidize tuition. It is your responsibility to contact your parish to find out if you qualify for subsidy. In order to receive Participating Catholic tuition, you must furnish a letter from your pastor stating that you are an active parishioner. All this information should be sent to St. Mary on the Hill Church, Attn: Fr. Ragan, 1420 Monte Sano Avenue, Augusta, GA 30904.

Check - Writing Privileges

A family will lose check-writing privileges after the bank refuses the second check for insufficient funds. From that point forward, all financial matters with the church and school must be paid by certified check, money order, or cash. The church office will make the decision regarding restoring these privileges.

DISCIPLINE CODE

The purpose of discipline code in a Catholic School is to bring about the self-discipline of each individual and of the school community as a whole so that their actions promote the Christian development of each member and thereby enhance the community. To fulfill this purpose, rules and regulations are administratively established in concert with the 2009-2010 Diocesan policies. These regulations affect the whole school community, students, faculty, and parents.

Behaviors considered inappropriate at SMS are:

- Possession of any type of weapon on the school campus
- Possession of drugs or controlled substances
- Bullying
- Fighting
- Striking a teacher or any member of the SMS staff
- Abuse of or threat of bodily harm to another student, member of the SMS staff or of school property
- Disruptive behavior on campus or at a school sponsored event
- Repeated violations of school rules
- Disrespect of any member of the SMS staff
- Taking another student's or SMS staff member's possession without permission
- Refusal to comply with a reasonable directive
- Use of profanity and/or inappropriate language
- Truancy
- Immoral behavior
- Leaving school grounds and/or classroom without permission
- Skipping class
- Forgery
- Copying another student's homework or test
- Providing answers to another student
- Uniform violation
- Gum chewing
- Inappropriate use of the internet
- Out of uniform

This list is meant to provide reasonable guidance to students and parents, but does not attempt to include all possible misbehavior. The school retains the prerogative to address other inappropriate behavior that may occur.

Consequences (based on nature of offense and discretion of administration) for inappropriate behavior include but are not limited to:

- Loss of class and/or school privileges (may include extracurricular activities and field trips)
- Detention
- Parent conference
- In-school suspension
- Suspension from school
- Expulsion from school

Students serving detentions will not be excused to participate in extracurricular activities.

Three behavior detentions will result in an In-School suspension. These detentions will be accumulative for the entire year.

Three In-School suspensions will result in out of school suspension and student will be placed on probation.

DRESS CODE

As a means of continuing our Catholic school identity, students are expected to be in proper uniform at all times. This includes tucking in of shirts and proper shorts/skirt/jumper length. The following dress code is required and will be enforced:

BOYS UNIFORM K – 8

1. **Plain** white polo style shirt, short or long sleeved (no logo – St. Mary on the Hill School crest is optional). No turtlenecks. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
2. Navy blue walking shorts (no logo), **no more than ONE (1) inch above the knee – measured from the bend in the back of the knee** or navy blue uniform long pants (no logo).
3. **Tan** buc shoes
4. **Plain white crew socks, no logo.**
5. Navy blue sweatshirt with St. Mary on the Hill School crest/SMS. (No other sweatshirt is permitted).
6. Navy blue cardigan sweater with SMS patch. (No other sweater is permitted).
7. **Dark colored belt must be worn with shorts and pants if they have belt loops.**
8. School Mass Uniform/Field Trip Uniform (or other designated days) will be white long sleeved, oxford cloth shirt, school tie, navy blue uniform pants, and buc shoes. **Only plain white t-shirt may be worn under shirts.**

GIRLS UNIFORM K – 3

1. **Plain** white polo style shirt, short or long sleeve (no logo – St. Mary on the Hill School crest is optional). Only plain white t-shirt may be worn under polo shirt – no turtlenecks. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
2. Plaid jumper – **no more than ONE (1) inch above the knee – measured from the bend in the back of the knee**, navy blue walking shorts, (no logo) **no more than ONE inch above the knee – measured from the bend in the back of the knee** and navy blue uniform long pants (no logo) are optional.
3. **Tan** buc shoes
4. **Plain white or navy crew or knee socks no logo**, navy blue or white tights are permitted.
5. Navy blue sweatshirt with St. Mary on the Hill School Crest/SMS. (No other sweatshirt is permitted).
6. Navy blue cardigan sweater with SMS patch. (No other sweater is permitted).
7. **Dark colored belt must be worn with shorts and pants if they have belt loops.**
8. School Mass Uniform/Field Trip Uniform (or other designated days) will be white polo shirt, plaid jumper and tan buc shoes.

GIRLS UNIFORM 4 – 8

1. **Plain** white polo style shirt, short or long sleeve (no logo – St. Mary on the Hill School crest is optional). Only plain white T-shirt may be worn under polo shirt – no turtlenecks. Shirts must be tucked in at all times.
2. Plaid skirt (choice of style), **no more than ONE (1) inch above the knee – measured from the bend in the back of the knee**, navy blue walking shorts (no logo) **no more than ONE (1) inch above the knee – measured from the bend in the back of the knee** and navy blue uniform long pants (no logo) are optional.

3. **Tan** buc shoes
4. **Plain white crew or knee socks, no logo.**
5. Navy blue sweatshirt with St. Mary on the Hill School/SMS. (No other sweatshirt is permitted).
6. Navy blue cardigan sweater with SMS patch. (No other sweater is permitted).
7. **Dark colored belt must be worn with shorts and pants if they have belt loops.**
8. School Mass Uniform/Field Trip Uniform (or other designated days) will be white polo shirt, plaid skirt and buc shoes.

Students are required to be in proper uniform from the opening day of school until the closing day unless parents receive a notice that the students may be out of uniform. **Students are to keep shirts completely tucked in until they leave school property.**

Noncompliance with this dress code, including, but not limited to, rolling of skirts, un-tucked shirts, no belt, improper shoes, improper jewelry, or wearing make-up or nail polish, will be subject to a detention being issued. If the student continues to be in noncompliance, a parent conference with the principal will be necessary.

JEWELRY/MAKE-UP

Jewelry (bracelets, necklaces, dangling and/or multiple earrings, or multiple rings) **is not** part of the school uniform. Only stud earrings are acceptable for girls and only religious necklaces are permissible. Watches may be worn, but bracelets are not permitted. **Make-up, including fingernail polish, is not permitted during school hours.** Students with make-up and/or nail polish will be required to remove it.

GROOMING/HAIRCUTS

Proper grooming is expected of every student. Fad haircuts and coloring of hair is not acceptable and will be determined at the discretion of the principal. (Examples: rattails, ponytails or excessively long hair that hangs in the eyes for boys or inappropriately shaved hair.) Any infraction of the grooming code will necessitate a phone call to the parents to request that the student's haircut be corrected as soon as possible. Consequences will be at the discretion of the administration.

CURRICULUM

SPIRITUAL LIFE

The primary concern of St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School is the spiritual and intellectual development of its students. A mutual effort needs to be made by the church, administration, faculty, parents and students to attain these ends.

PRAAYER

Our school day begins and ends with prayer. Each class says grace before lunch.

A love and appreciation of the liturgy is fostered through active participation in the church. During the school year, children attend Mass weekly, school Mass (as listed on the calendar), and on Holy Days of Obligation. Student Mass participation includes carrying the Eucharistic gifts, being lectors, altar servers and singing in the choir. Students are encouraged to fully participate in every part of the Mass.

All parishioners are cordially invited to attend and share in any of these services.

The school is obliged to teach the basic foundation of the Catholic faith. However, the greatest obligation lies with the family to attend Mass regularly, to respect the church by sharing time and talent, and to set a Christian example to others.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION

Before any sacrament is received, a child must be prepared through regular attendance in a religious education program. Parents are actively involved in the preparation process. The parish provides parent meetings to educate and assist them in their role.

Parent and child weekly Sunday Mass attendance is a prerequisite for the child's reception of the sacraments.

FIRST RECONCILIATION

The child must be baptized, be in at least the second grade, have completed first grade religious studies, or received special permission from the pastor/parish staff to receive the sacrament. A six-to-eight week instructional period is required to prepare the child to receive this sacrament. This period includes one parent meeting and one family prayer service. Parents, the teacher and the pastor will decide when the child is ready to receive the sacrament. Celebration of First Reconciliation is usually in January or February.

FIRST EUCHARIST

The child must be baptized, be in at least the second grade, have completed first grade religious studies, or received special permission from the pastor/parish staff to receive the sacrament, and have made First Reconciliation. A ten-to-twelve week instructional period is required to prepare the child to receive the sacrament. This period includes one parent meeting, one retreat, and one family prayer service. Parents, the teacher and the pastor will decide when the child is ready to receive the sacrament. Celebration of First Eucharist is held in the spring.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities include:

- Chorale/Drama (grades 3 – 5)
- Soccer (grades 6 – 8)
- Basketball (grades 6 – 8)
- Tennis (grades 6 – 8)
- Golf (grades 6 – 8)
- Cheerleading (grades 6– 8)
- Cross-Country (grades 6 – 8)
- Volleyball (grades 6 – 8)
- Baseball (grades 6 – 8)
- Safety Patrol (grade 8)
- PAGE Academic Bowl (grades 6 – 8)
- Junior Beta Club (grades 7 – 8)
- Student Council (grades 3 – 8)
- Science Club (grades 3 – 8)

A student must have passing grades and satisfactory conduct in order to be eligible for extracurricular activities. They will be evaluated by their teachers on a weekly basis for eligibility status.

SPORTS PROGRAM

A well-organized sports program is in full operation at SMS. All coaches are parent or teacher volunteers and they will be responsible for determining which players make the teams as well as the playing time each player receives.

Students are expected to attend all practice sessions and games. Additionally, students must maintain their academic grades in the subject areas as well as in effort and conduct. **An “F” or “U” makes a student ineligible for athletic competition.** Grades and conduct are reviewed on a weekly basis. Each athlete and parent will sign an academic and behavior contract. Good sportsmanship is a requirement for participation in St. Mary’s athletics both as an athlete and as a spectator.

Parents are expected to arrange transportation to and from practices and games.

All sports teams will consist of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students.

PROGRAM OF STUDIES

The curriculum followed at St. Mary on the Hill Catholic School is prescribed by the office of Catholic Schools, Diocese of Savannah. It is kept current and reviewed by the Diocesan Curriculum Committee.

Religion, language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science are taught every day. The length of time varies according to the subject and grade level. Art, Spanish, French, computer, library, music, and physical education classes are offered throughout the school year. Advanced Math is offered to students who meet the requirements.

Children in kindergarten through sixth grade are taught in self-contained classrooms. Students in grades seven and eight are departmentalized.

HOMEWORK

The purpose of homework is to foster habits of independent work-study, to reinforce learning that has taken place in school, to bring the partnership of home and school closer together, and to relate school learning to out-of-school interests.

Homework includes written and/or studied work, projects and leisure reading. A student who fails to complete an assignment will be issued a homework slip notifying the parents. Both the missed assignment and the signed parent form must be returned on the following day.

After a student receives a third homework notice in a given grading period, the student will attend a mandatory after school study hall program for 5 days. The study hall is scheduled for one hour after school dismissal, Monday through Thursday. Any behavior detentions received during this period will be served upon completion of the 5-day study hall. Students in mandatory study hall will not be excused to participate in extracurricular activities.

The average length of time that students should spend on homework is as follows:

Kindergarten	15 minutes
Grade 1-2-3	30 minutes
Grade 4-5-6	60 – 75 minutes
Grade 7-8	90 minutes

MAKE-UP WORK FOR ABSENT STUDENTS

When absent, a student should check assignments on the homework hotline. Make-up work may be obtained from the homeroom and subject area teachers when the student returns to school. Absentees should check with their homeroom teacher regarding the time frame for make-up work. Having a homework “buddy” helps the child who is absent keep up with missed work.

GRADING SCALE

A = 94-100 **B** = 86-93 **C** = 77-85 **D** = 70-76 **F** = below 70

HONOR ROLL

Students in grades four – eight are eligible for the Honor Roll.

To merit “A” Honor Roll, a student must obtain an “A” or “S” in all subjects, including “Specials”, and a satisfactory grade in general conduct/effort.

To merit “A-B” Honor Roll, a student must obtain an “A”, “B” or “S” in all subjects, including “Specials”, and a satisfactory grade in general conduct/effort.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Midterm progress reports are sent to all students in grades K – eight. A conference may be necessary at this time. These reports are posted on Edline for parents to access.

REPORT CARDS

Grades in each of the subjects are given on the basis of the actual achievement of the child according to grade or level of instruction. These grades are based on the daily performance of the child, the results of unit tests, and the results of tests given at the end of the marking period. All financial obligations must be paid before report cards will be issued.

PROMOTION/RETENTION

A student shall be considered for promotion if the following standards are met:

- Kindergarten: 1. Mastery of reading readiness skills and math skills.
2. Regular attendance – less than ten (10) unexcused absences per semester.
- Primary: 1. Mastery of reading and math skills at the assigned grade level.
2. Regular attendance – less than ten (10) unexcused absences per semester.
- Intermediate
and Junior Hi: 1. A passing final grade in all major subjects.
2. Regular attendance – less than ten (10) unexcused absences per semester.

A student may be retained once in kindergarten through third grade and once in fourth through eighth grade.

MEDIA CENTER

Each student in K – 8 may visit the Library to check out books and to receive instruction in library/research skills. Books are checked out for one/two weeks.

Reference books and visual aids remain in the library for students’ careful use.

To avoid a past due fine or the need to pay for a lost and/or destroyed book, students should return books on the due date.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education classes are held for all students in grades K – 8. A written note from a parent is required for a student to be excused from participation in physical education class. Non-participation of more than three consecutive PE classes requires a written excuse from a physician.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

A Diocesan-testing program takes place each spring. The CTB/McGraw-Hill Achievement Tests are administered to students in grades 1 – 8. The tests are machine scored and a comprehensive report is given to the parent.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks belong to the school and are used by students. Any damage, defacement or loss of a book will require payment.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE

The Diocesan Attendance Policy states, **“Students in grades K – 8 shall not miss more than 10 days per semester in order to be promoted to the next grade level.”** Absences must be excused by a written note or phone call to the teacher. Three (3) consecutive absences must be excused by a written note from a physician.

Arriving at school on time must be a priority for everyone. The first bell rings at 8:00 am and the tardy bell rings at 8:05 am. Students should be in their classroom, in their seats and ready for class at that time. During this time, homeroom teachers take lunch count and collect papers and money. When your student is late for class, he/she disrupts the entire class. This takes time away from the other students who are on time and decreases the amount of teaching time.

To support an orderly, on time beginning to the school day the following policy will be in effect. After five (5) tardies (this does not include coming in late due to a doctor’s/dentist’s appointment) the student will have to serve a detention. If the student receives 3 additional tardies after serving a detention, a parent conference will be scheduled.

BEFORE/AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Before and After School Care is available for a fee for students of St. Mary on the Hill School. Children in the morning program may arrive as early as 7:00 AM and will be under the supervision of an adult. Any student who arrives before 7:45 AM will automatically be sent to the Before School area. Parents will be charged a fee. Children in the After School Care program will participate in outdoor activities, indoor games, and arts and crafts and with quiet time provided for homework. A snack is provided.

After School Care will be available for St. Mary students until 6:00 PM Monday through Friday, except on scheduled half days before Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter vacation, Field Day, and the last day of school. There will not be After Care on days that school is not in session.

Students, who are not picked up before all cars in the carline leave, will be taken to After School Care. If he/she is picked up by 3:15 pm on regular dismissal days or by 12:15 pm or 2:15 pm on early dismissal days, there will be no charge. From 3:15 pm to 3:45 pm (or 12:15 pm to 12:45 pm or 2:15 pm to 2:45 pm) there will be a charge of \$5.00. After 4:00 pm or 1:00 pm or 3:00 pm respectively, the full day charge of \$11.00 for regular dismissal days or \$14.00 for early dismissal days will occur.

All money for the Before and/or After School Care should be sent into the office in an envelope marked Before/After School Care with your child’s name on it. A receipt for cash will be sent home with the student. A statement will be sent at the end of the month and payment is due by the 10th of each month. A late fee will be charged after the 10th if the office has not been notified beforehand. There will be a \$25.00 service charge for all returned checks.

Before and After School fees must be current at the end of each quarter for service to be offered during succeeding quarter and for report cards and/or transcripts to be issued.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

According to state guidelines, all suspected and observed cases of child abuse/neglect must be reported to the proper authorities.

EMERGENCY DRILLS (FIRE/TORNADO)

Emergency drills are conducted on a monthly basis.

FIELD TRIPS

St. Mary on the Hill School augments classroom learning with selected field trips. Students whose conduct, effort and work have been satisfactory are allowed to go on educational field trips. To participate in field trips, students must have a permission slip signed by a parent or guardian, be in the proper field trip uniform, and follow school rules while off campus. Parents are not to make unscheduled stops for snacks, etc.

Parents who drive for field trips must have a current volunteer driver's form on file. Any changes in their insurance policy/vehicle/tag number etc. must be noted on this form before driving on field trips. Also required are the following: the school background check, VIRTUS training, and a signed Diocesan Code of Conduct for Those Working with Minors. Parents, who are driving more than their own student on a field trip, may not bring younger children on the field trip.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of inclement weather, students will follow instructions given to the local radio and/or TV stations by school authorities. This information will also be posted on the website.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Lunches are available for purchase in our cafeteria through our federally funded lunch program. Free or reduced lunches may be obtained if a family qualifies for assistance. Forms are available from the cafeteria supervisor.

Weekly meal tickets must be purchased. No more than four weeks may be purchased at a time. Milk may be purchased on a daily or weekly basis.

Lunch monies must be current at the end of each quarter for the service to be offered during succeeding quarter and for report cards and/or transcripts to be issued.

If a parent brings a lunch that a child has forgotten, it should be marked with the child's name and grade and given to the receptionist.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

In those special cases when a student needs to take a prescribed or "over the counter" oral medication during the regular school day, but the parent cannot personally administer it, the following shall apply:

1. The appropriate physician request and parent release forms must be on file and available to SMS's Health Supervisor before the student will be allowed to begin to take the medication in school.
2. Medication (prescribed or over the counter) is brought to the school office **by the parent** in the original container. (If you request it, the pharmacy will provide a second bottle with the same label for use at school).
3. For each prescribed medication, the label on the container will list:
 - student's name
 - name of physician
 - date
 - name and telephone number of pharmacy
 - name of medication

- dosage
 - frequency and any special handling and storage instructions
4. Each prescribed and over the counter medication will be locked and secured in the Health Supervisor's room.
 5. A log will be kept for each medication brought to school. The Health Supervisor will document each occurrence of overseeing a student taking his/her medication.
 6. New request forms must be submitted each school year and whenever the medication or dosage is changed.
 7. Any unused medication, not claimed by the last day of the school year, will be destroyed by the Health Supervisor.
 8. Please call the Health Supervisor with any questions regarding dispensing of medication.
 9. If you want your child to receive an over the counter medication, such as Tylenol or cough medication, you must provide it with your child's name on it. **No medication will be given to your child that you have not provided for him/her.**

MONIES COLLECTED

All monies for tuition, registration, Before/After School Care, various fees, lunch/milk tickets, school pictures and missions should be placed in an envelope and properly labeled (purpose, name, grade and amount enclosed). Students will give these envelopes to the teachers in the morning who will send them to the office.

St. Mary on the Hill School will follow policy established by St. Mary on the Hill Church regarding the handling of all monies.

NEWSLETTER/SCHOOL NOTICES

The monthly school newsletter is sent to families by email and is posted on the school website. A paper copy will be given to the youngest student in the family if requested. Messages and announcements will also be emailed, posted on the school website and/or sent home with the students.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Parents will have ample opportunity to visit with teachers. A parent meeting with each department on separate nights is scheduled at the beginning of the school year. The purpose of the meeting is to share academic and behavioral expectations with parents and answer parents' questions regarding expectations. All parents should plan to attend the meeting for each department in which they have children enrolled. Throughout the year, parents may make appointments for teacher conferences. Conferences with teachers or the principal may be arranged by calling the school office, 706-733-6193 or by written request. We welcome conferences with you as issues arise. It is recommended that parents discuss issues of concern first with their child's teacher and then with the principal as desired. Messages may also be left on each teacher's voice mail or email addresses available on the website.

Classes will not be interrupted while school is in session for phone calls or visits. All parents and visitors to St. Mary on the Hill School will report directly to the receptionist and sign in. All visitors must wear a name badge. **Visitors and parents are not to go into a classroom without advance permission from the teacher.**

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The welfare of the children attending St. Mary on the Hill School, and the promotion of a close relationship between parents and teachers working together to give total Christian education to each child are the objectives of the PTO.

St. Mary's PTO strives to promote a supportive relationship among parents, teachers, the administration, the pastor, and the parish staff. The PTO endeavors to provide opportunities at its regular meetings for informing parents about school activities.

The PTO sponsors many activities throughout the year including academic/cultural events for the students.

VOLUNTEERS

St. Mary on the Hill School PTO coordinates an active volunteer program to assist in the operation of the school. Please contact a PTO representative or the school office for more information about school volunteers. All volunteers must have a background check done, attend VIRTUS training, and sign the Diocesan Code of Conduct for Those Working with Minors.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The School Advisory Council (SAC) consists of representatives from the PTO, faculty, administration, and the Pastor's designee. Council meeting dates are published and meetings are open to all St. Mary on the Hill School parents. Any individual may be part of the Council's agenda by notifying the school office in writing, either by email or letter, one-week prior to the meeting date. SAC will meet four times per year as noted on the school calendar. If there are no agenda items, the meeting may be canceled.

PLAYGROUND SAFETY AND EQUIPMENT

All students are expected to follow the established rules for the playground.

Personal toys, trading cards, athletic equipment, stereos, tape recorders and computer games may not be brought to school. Any equipment that is brought to school without the permission of the teacher will be turned in to the assistant principal.

REGISTRATION AND OTHER FEES

Registration fees are due at the time of registration. In-school families will register first in January; all other families are allowed to register after that time. Families are accepted according to the admission policies, on a space available basis.

Re-registration Fee Payment

Registration for returning families will begin on January 4, 2010. Re-registration forms must be completed and returned with payment no later than January 15, 2010. Open registration will begin on January 18, 2010.

Payments may be made as follows:

- Paid in full by January 15, 2010
- One-half amount owed paid by January 15, 2010, and the remaining amount due April 19th. Any other payment arrangements must be made **in writing** to the school office before January 15, 2010. **All registration fees must be paid in full before a student is considered enrolled for the following year.** Tuition and/or tithes and Before and After Care bills for the current school year must also be up to date before a student is put on a class list.

Supply fees vary according to the grade level.

All fees must be paid before report cards or transcripts can be released.

Registration and other special fees are non-refundable unless a family moves out of town or there is no space for the child.

SCHOOL HOURS (8:00 AM – 2:50 PM)

7:40 AM	Teachers in rooms for class preparation
7:45 AM	Students may begin going to classrooms
8:00 AM	Bell (organizational time)
8:05 AM	Tardy bell (All exterior doors will be secured. Students arriving late must report to the receptionist for a tardy slip.)

8:05 AM	Morning prayers and announcements
2:45 PM	Afternoon prayers and announcements
2:50 PM	Dismissal begins

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES/INVITATIONS

Social activities may be planned during the course of the school year. An activity will carry the sponsorship of the school only when the announcement for it comes from school authorities and has their endorsement

No party invitations may be distributed at school per the Diocese.

STUDENT ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Students may not be in the building before 7:45 AM without supervision. Students who arrive at school before 7:45 AM **must** attend the Before School Care Program in St. Joseph’s Center. **The only exception will be students who are on Safety Patrol. Students who are not picked up by the time carlines have cleared, are sent to the After School Care Program. A fee is charged for both programs.**

Students are not allowed on the school grounds or in the school building before school hours, at recess, or after school hours unless accompanied by an authorized adult and participating in a school activity.

Students arriving at school after 7:45 AM should go directly to their homeroom classroom.

Morning traffic should use the Monte Sano Avenue or Helen Street entrance when dropping off their children. Safety Patrol members will be available to help students exiting cars and to direct them to their classroom.

Parents are urged to respect the safety regulations regarding arrival and departure of students. Drivers must park and pick up children in designated areas only. All drivers are cautioned to drive carefully at all times.

One-way traffic will remain in effect on Helen Street (by the school) from 6:00 AM – 4:00 PM Monday through Friday. Two-way traffic on Helen Street will be in effect 4:00 PM – 6:00 AM Monday through Friday. During the two-way flow period, street parking on the south side of Helen Street will not be permitted.

For the safety of students, parents are asked to register at the beginning of the school year for one of three dismissal pick-up carpool sites – Monte Sano parking lot, Gym pick-up on Arsenal Avenue, or Helen Street pick-up. Students riding in carpools will be dismissed to these locations. Only registered cars will be allowed to assemble in carpool lines during afternoon pick-up. Students registered for carpools will be dismissed first. After the carpool lines have cleared, the walkers and all other students will then be dismissed.

WALKERS

Students who walk to and from school are to leave for home immediately after school. They are to use the crossing guard area or corner crossing to ensure their safety.

TRANSPORTATION BY BIKE

If a bike is ridden to school, the student should walk the bike to the bike rack provided. Bikes are not to be ridden on the school grounds or the adjoining sidewalks at any time. Bike riders will be dismissed after walkers. The school is not responsible for the security of the bikes. Motorized bikes are not allowed on school grounds at any time.

SAFETY PATROLS

The principal, assistant principal and teacher/moderator work with the SMS Safety Patrol to provide maximum safety for children as they come to and from school.

Eighth grade students are eligible for the patrol and are selected based on recommendation of SMS staff. They attend regular meetings and assume leadership responsibilities for the safety of the school children.

All students are expected to obey the patrols. Any misconduct by a student will be reported to the patrol moderator or assistant principal.

Safety Patrols are expected to be an example to the students and may be suspended from patrol duty for misconduct.

INFORMATION

For further information about our educational programs, please telephone the school administration at 706-733-6193 or email at dlryan@knology.net, or visit our website at www.stmaryssaints.org. We also encourage you to visit our school and receive a personal tour.

STUDENT HEALTH RECORDS/CARDS

All students, in accordance with Georgia state law, are required to have a Georgia Immunization Form #3321 and an Eye, Ear and Dental Form #3300 on record in the school office by the first day of school. These forms will be kept in the permanent record file folders in the school office. Out of state health records must be evaluated and recorded by a physician or the Health Department on the Georgia Immunization Form. Parents will also be asked to fill out an emergency medical card on each student. This information must be kept current with any changes throughout the year.

STUDENT INSURANCE

All students are covered by a Diocesan accidental insurance policy to cover injuries that happen while students are in school, participating in a school event or school sports program. This is a secondary insurance policy that will cover most expenses not covered by the primary insurance carrier. A 24 Hour Student Accident Insurance policy is available through the Diocese. Additional information about this is available in the school office.

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Students have adult supervision at all times. A teacher, teacher assistant or principal's representative is with students in the classrooms, the cafeteria, the playground and other areas of the school when school is in session.

SUPPLIES FOR STUDENTS

A school supply list for the upcoming year is posted on the school website at the end of the school year. A paper copy of the supply list may be obtained by calling the school office.

TELEPHONE

Students will be permitted to make telephone calls only when given permission by a teacher or office personnel. Students are not allowed to use cell phones and/or beepers during school hours. If a student has a cell phone at school, it must be turned off and kept in their book bag until dismissal. Violations of this policy will cause the cell phone to be confiscated. A parent or guardian will have to pick it up from the school office.