

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2024-2025



ST. MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE
Growing in the Heart of Jesus

www.smmaschool.org
www.fastdir.com/smmaschool
4900 Ringer Road
St. Louis, MO 63129
314-487-1666

Philosophy of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School

The faith community of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque supports our Catholic elementary school as a response to the commission of Jesus to teach all nations. We are co-educators with parents, the first teachers of your children. We recognize each student as uniquely created and gifted by God, and we work to help each one discover, develop, and dedicate his or her gifts as citizens of God's Kingdom.

The instructional design incorporates various teaching techniques that are sensitive to individual needs. This curriculum teaches communication skills, as well as a knowledge and understanding of the world. It provides opportunities to participate in Christian worship and Christian service as expressions of a personal and community relationship with God.

2024-25 Faculty and Staff

Principal	Mrs. Peggy Visconti
Assistant Principal	Mrs. Tracey Miesner
Secretary	Mrs. Brandy Alonso
Director of Religious Education	Mr. Paul Cooper
Preschool (3 Year Old)	Mrs. Christine Skillman Mrs. Tish Preulfi, teacher aide
Preschool (4 Year Old)	Mrs. Terri Doerr Mrs. Melissa Amato, teacher aide Mrs. Courtney Uthoff Mrs. Terri Rell, teacher aide
Kindergarten	Mrs. Hannah Bruns Mrs. Marina Hastey, teacher aide Mrs. Bethany Tague Mrs. Kelli Linneman, teacher aide
First Grade	Mrs. Malinda Callanan Mrs. Cathy Touzinsky
Second Grade	Mrs. Laura Mosbacher Miss Kathleen Regan Mrs. Angie Farley, teacher aide
Third Grade	Mrs. Jenny Smith Miss Becky Smith Mrs. Lisa Kremalmeyer, teacher aide
Fourth Grade	Mrs. Michelle O'Connell Mrs. Cindy Schneider
Fifth Grade	Mrs. Mary Burke Mrs. Michele Gerth

2024-25 Faculty and Staff cont.

Sixth Grade	Mrs. Angie Purtell Ms. Jen Laspe
Seventh Grade	Ms. Kristen Cooper Mrs. Kellie Postawko
Eighth Grade	Mrs. DeAnn Appelbaum Mrs. Jean Wever
Learning Consultants	Mrs. Mary Mohre (<i>K-4th grade</i>) Ms. Jennifer Laspe (<i>5th-8th grade</i>)
Art	Mrs. Amanda Steffen
Librarian	Mrs. Debbie Juergens
Music	Mrs. Jennifer Schaeffer
Physical Education	Mrs. Holly Schoen
Spanish	Mrs. Cristina Moore
STEM Instructor	Ms. Madi Scace
Technology	Mrs. Chris Karcher
Aftercare Director	Mrs. Jen Garcia

WITNESS STATEMENT

For Those Whose Children Attend Catholic Education Programs

One of the supreme gifts of marriage is bringing forth new life. God entrusts children to parents who have a primary right and duty to educate their children in the practice of their faith. Parents carry out this responsibility by creating a home full of love, forgiveness, respect, and fidelity. The family is the community in which, from childhood, one honors God and learns moral values.

In the rite of the sacrament of baptism, Parents receive the call from God to evangelize their children, as here summarized: *You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him (her) in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him (her) up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor.... You will be the first teachers of your child in the ways of the faith. May you be also the best of teachers, bearing witness to the faith by what you say and do, in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

No wonder, then, that the Church understands the home to be the domestic church. It is the intimate environment of the family that parents are, by word and example, the first heralds of the faith with respect to their children. This environment is enhanced and deepened through the parish Eucharistic community that is the heart of the spiritual life for Christian families. Catholic schools and parish religious education programs are in partnership with the family in proclaiming and witnessing to the person and life of Jesus Christ. They assist parents in fulfilling their responsibility as the primary religious educators of their children.

Aware, then, of the dignity of this holy parental call, and with a reverent awe for that responsibility which is mine, I commit myself to be, in word and deed, the first and best teacher of my children in the faith. Practically, this means I should:

- Regularly participate in the Sunday Eucharist [if not Catholic, regularly participate in worship and prayer] with my family
- Commit to speak more with my children about God and to include prayer in our daily home life
- Participate in and cooperate with School or Parish School of Religion programs that enable me as a parent to take an active role in the religious education of my children, including sacramental preparation for Catholic children
- Support the moral and social teachings of the Catholic Church to ensure consistency between home and school
- Teach my children by word and example to have a love and concern for the needs of others
- Meet my financial responsibilities in supporting the Catholic School or Parish School of Religion

ABSENCE / TARDINESS

Students are considered absent whenever they are away from school during school hours, except for school sponsored or school sanctioned co-curricular activities. Students who must be excused for medical, dental, funeral, or other reasons during school hours are considered absent. Chronic or excessive absences without substantial cause can be a factor in determining a student's continued enrollment in school.

Parents should call school in the morning if a child is going to be absent. Please call 487-1666, then press 1 for the Absentee line. Kindly call before 8:30 A.M. to report an absence. At that time indicate preferences to receive homework arrangements. Homework to be picked up at the office will be available at the end of the day. It is the child's responsibility to check with his/her teacher upon returning to school if there is any other work that has been missed and needs to be completed. If a child is too sick to complete assignments before returning to school, please inform the student's teacher so that child can be given an extension to complete this work.

A student is truant if he/she is absent from school for a day or portion of the day without the knowledge and/or consent of the parent/guardian and school officials. Truancy is considered a serious offense and may result in a student's probationary status.

In accordance with Archdiocesan policy 5301.5, when a student has been absent 10 days or more, consecutively or otherwise, during a grading period, the grade of Incomplete ("I") is reported until the student has fulfilled the required work for that grading period.

In the event an email explaining the absence was not previously sent, upon returning to school, the student is to present to the homeroom teacher a written excuse stating the dates of absence, reasons for absence and signature of parent or guardian.

If a student misses over two hours of school on a given day, he/she will be marked a half day absent. This applies not only to children who arrive at school over two hours late, but also to those children who are gone from school for appointments longer than two hours. A student will be marked "out of building for less than 2 hours" if a child misses less than 2 hours of school.

A student is tardy who arrives after the time fixed by school policy for the start of the school day (*Archdiocesan Policy 4202*). Students are considered tardy if they arrive at their classroom after 7:50 a.m. It is not enough to be in the building when the tardy bell rings. Arriving on time requires a student to be present in their homeroom at the time of the bell at 7:50. Students who are tardy need to report to the school office.

A student is permitted to leave the school premises for illness only after the parent/guardian has been contacted. If parents cannot be reached by phone the individuals listed on the FastDirect

Family Profile Sheet will be contacted. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing transportation for the student leaving school due to illness.

ACCREDITATION

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School is accredited through the Missouri Nonpublic School Accrediting Association, affiliated with the National Federation of Nonpublic School Accrediting Association. Accreditation remains current by means of a yearly assessment of compliance with the state Accrediting Association membership standards.

ADMINISTRATION

The Catholic School is structured to encourage a spirit of cooperation and a state of shared responsibility. Within the school, specific roles are prescribed for the Pastor (parish administrator), the Principal (school administrator), and parents (School Board members).

The Principal is responsible for the immediate direction of the school and its instructional program. Problems and questions concerning school should be directed to the Principal. However, specific problems concerning a particular subject, class, or behavior should first of all be discussed with the teacher.

The School Board functions as a group to advise the Pastor and Principal in making policy for educational programs. The Pastor and Principal work closely with the School Board in determining local policy. The Pastor has final approval of all board decisions.

ADMISSION POLICIES

In keeping with the Archdiocesan policy of non-discrimination (4101), it is the policy of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School to provide a quality Catholic education to students enrolled in grades K through 8 regardless of race, sex, national or ethnic origin. Children of any faith are welcome in SMMA. Baptismal certificates are to be submitted for all students entering school for the first time.

Classroom size is limited to 25 students per homeroom for grades K-8 and 20 students for preschool. Names will be placed on a waiting list if the grade has reached capacity.

The registration fee per child is assessed upon entrance to school. This fee is the same whether entrance is at the Kindergarten level or any other grade level. This fee applies to in-house Kindergarten students and all new students.

A child may be considered for admission to Kindergarten if he/she is five years of age prior to August 1. In addition to the above policy, the child must demonstrate sufficient maturity, academic and social skill development appropriate for Kindergarten. Acceptable performance on the Kindergarten screening is required.

Entrance to SMMA will be subject to review of transcripts and parish records. If grades and records indicate any problem, testing may be required to determine appropriate placement. If exceptional educational needs exist, SMMA will determine whether or not we are able to meet these needs.

Students moving from a Home-Schooling situation may be required to provide the following: the log showing educational hours, samples of the student's academic work, all completed and corrected tests, Standardized Achievement Test results. SMMA will provide further testing in order to determine appropriate grade level placement. The administration makes the final decision on the appropriate placement for a student. A student may be admitted on a probationary basis.

Parents must sign a release form in order for records to be transferred to our school. Please request a transfer of records form from the school office or your current school.

The registration process includes verification of custody arrangements in cases in which the parents of the student are divorced. A copy of the portion of the divorce decree, which verifies custody arrangements and parenting plan, **must** be provided.

AFTERCARE

An after school care program is available from 2:50 - 6:00 P.M. Registration for this program is completed online prior to the start of the school year. The program will take place in the school cafeteria on most days. When the cafeteria is being used for the parish Fish Fry, AfterCare students will meet in the Middle School classrooms.

APPOINTMENTS

If a student must leave school for medical, dental, funeral, or other reasons during the school day, a written notice from the parent or guardian is required. The note or email should be addressed to the teacher and should state the date, length of time, and reason for the absence. If your child has an early morning appointment and will not arrive at school until after the appointment, a note or email sent the day prior to this appointment is appreciated.

Please pick up students for appointments at the front door by the office. Students should stop in at the school office to report they are leaving and again when they return. Children should use the front foyer doors when leaving for and returning from appointments.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Parents may bring students to school anytime between 7:00-7:30 A.M. for a fee. This early arrival (Beforecare) fee is for the entire school year and must be paid by the first day of school. A school staff member will supervise these students in the cafeteria. Please complete the

Beforecare form found on FastDirect and return it to the school office. This service will begin the first full day of school.

No students may be dropped off prior to 7:30 A.M. unless using the service described above, or in the case of special arrangements made with the principal. Students arriving at school between 7:30 - 7:50 A.M. should go directly to their classrooms.

Children may use the entrance by the school office (#17) or by the atrium (#16) in the circle drive. All walkers are asked to enter via the circle drive doors. Preschoolers who arrive at school via the back parking lot may enter their classrooms from the exterior entrance as directed by their classroom teacher.

When picking up students at 2:50 P.M. dismissal, cars should park on the church lot closest to Ringer Road. Teachers will walk the students to this lot at dismissal and will dismiss drivers when all students are safely connected with their ride. Preschool and Kindergarten parents have the privilege of parking in the lot closest to the Parish Center. Parents should avoid parking in neighboring subdivisions to pick up children who have been dismissed as walkers. Only students living in adjoining subdivisions are considered walkers.

To insure student safety, dogs or other pets should remain inside vehicles at dismissal time.

The common practice and expectation of our school is that all students are dropped off and picked up from school each day by a parent/legal guardian/or person appropriately designated by a parent/legal guardian. If you wish to have your child walk to or from school, please notify the teacher on the first day of school. In case of inclement weather, the school asks the parents/guardian to make appropriate arrangements to insure the safety and well being of the student. As a condition of allowing the student to walk to school or home after school, the parents/legal guardians of the student agree to indemnify and hold harmless the school, the parish, the Archdiocese of St. Louis, from any injury to student, damage or loss of personal property related to the student walking to or from school.

Students walking to and from school are expected to act in accord to the behavior guidelines established during school hours. Students should be mindful that their behavior is a reflection of our school outside of the school day and on field trips. It is their obligation to represent SMMA in a favorable light in all areas at all times.

At arrival and dismissal all cars must enter through the main entrance on the upper level. The circle drive is ONE-WAY. The back drive is reserved for Before Care, preschool drop-off, and preschool pick-up.

Dismissal Bells: 2:45 P.M. - After Care/Walkers/ Kindergarten/full day Preschool
 2:50 P.M. - 1st through 8th grade Carpools

Please be prompt in picking up children at dismissal time. In the event that your arrival is delayed, contact the school office so that your child is informed to wait in the school foyer until you arrive or arrange for alternate transportation.

Never offer to take home a child who is not a usual member of your carpool without prior arrangement and notes informing the school office of this change to normal student pick-up. Students who seem to be searching for their ride at dismissal should be directed to the teachers on duty or taken to the school office.

Please notify the teacher or the school office if a child is going home a different way than they normally do. It is also very helpful for the teacher to be notified in writing if a child is participating in an after school activity, such as Scouts, Run Club, Chess, Band, Dance, etc. One note at the start of each activity is sufficient.

The school is not responsible for the supervision of students when the student is not present on school property or if the student is present on school property after regular school hours.

ASSIGNMENTS

Parents should try to provide the child with a suitable atmosphere in which to study. The child may be helped, but too much help may destroy the spirit of independence necessary in the child's scholastic training. To encourage pride in their work, student assignments should be neat, legible, and complete.

Some students work more rapidly than others and may complete more assignments in school. Should this be the case, parents should encourage extra study, review or recreational reading, which have great educational value.

If you find that your child seems to be spending an *excessive* amount of time on homework, you should contact the teacher or a learning consultant and discuss the situation. As a general guideline, students can expect 10 minutes of homework per grade level (K and grade 1 approximately 10 minutes per night; grades 6-8 approximately 60-90 minutes per night).

In the event of student absence, school work can be sent home with another student or picked up from the blue bin located near the main entrance at the request of a parent or guardian. Contact the school office or your child's teacher to request homework for an absent student.

AWARDS

Some awards are given throughout the year to students participating in Speech Meets, Essay Contests, Poster Contests, Math Contests, Geography Bee, etc. The following two awards are unique to SMMA School.

SACRED HEART AWARDS: This recognition goes to eighth grade students who exemplify a loving, caring attitude toward others. The Sacred Heart Award is given at the end of each quarter and is typically presented at an all school Mass. Recipients of this award have been chosen by teachers with input from the eighth grade students.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE AWARDS (Grades 6-8): As we believe community service is a key element of discipleship, this recognition goes to 6th-8th grade students who complete 40+ hours of Christian Service in the school or local community. Christian Service Awards are presented to students during Mass at the end of the school year.

BIRTHDAYS / SPECIAL EVENTS

In keeping with our Wellness Plan, birthday treats sent from home are not allowed. In lieu of birthday treats, the students may be out of uniform on their birthday. If your child's birthday is on the weekend, he/she may choose Friday or Monday to be out of uniform. Summer birthdays may be celebrated as a half birthday. Please follow the same regulations as Out of Uniform Days.

Children should not bring birthday invitations to distribute at school unless all boys in the class or all girls in the class are included. Please plan your child's birthday celebration outside of school time. Do not send flowers, balloons, or decorations to children at school for any celebration. Children should not decorate other students' desks.

Children should not bring treats to celebrate a friend or a teacher's birthday. Students are not allowed to arrive or leave school by limousine.

BOOK/TECHNOLOGY FEE

The book/technology fee is separate from tuition and is assessed **per child** annually. The first child's book fee is due on July 1, second child (if applicable) on August 1, third child (if applicable) on September 1, and for the fourth child on October 1 (if applicable). Archdiocesan teachers who receive a tuition benefit are still responsible for the book/technology fee.

Please feel free to contact the finance manager, Mary Kelly, with any questions you might have regarding payments. She can be reached in the Parish Office at 314-487-2522, ext. 210.

BUZZ BOOK

The Buzz Book will be posted on the SMMA FastDirect site. This site is password protected for SMMA families only. Buzz Book information can be accessed on FastDirect at any time. If

during the course of the school year your address or phone contact information changes, please notify the office so that emergency information is current.

CALENDAR

The school calendar is created annually with consideration to the guidance provided by the Office of Catholic Education and Formation. The process involves input from the faculty and the members of the School Board each year. The school year is divided into two semesters, each having two quarter periods. It includes a minimum of 174 instructional days with 1044 hours.

A detailed SMMA School Calendar is posted on the SMMA FastDirect site. Extra holidays or any changes in the Calendar will be published in the school newsletter.

CHILD ABUSE SCREENING / PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN / PREVENT AND PROTECT/ CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

All persons who are working with children are obliged to complete a Child Abuse Screening. All teachers, employees, volunteers, coaches, priests, maintenance staff, scout leaders, etc. are required to go through the Child Abuse Screening.

All persons, employees, and volunteers working with children must also attend Protecting God's Children training for adults, sign a Code of Ethical Conduct and complete the web based Prevent and Protect series of videos.

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School abides by the state Child Protection and Reformation Act (RSMO210) that requires school personnel having reasonable cause to believe that a child known to them in their professional capacity may be an abused or neglected child to report to the Missouri Department of Family Services.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

SMMA will follow the recommended policies and procedures on communicable diseases established by the Missouri Department of Health and adopted by the St. Louis Archdiocesan Board of Catholic Education. (The full description of policies and procedures is on file in the principal's office and may be reviewed upon request.)

COMMUNICATION

It is very important that good communication exists among teachers, parents, and the administration in order to foster a true partnership with the goal of working in the best interest of the children.

If you wish to talk to a teacher, please phone the school to leave a message on voicemail. All of the classrooms are equipped with phones and teachers have been instructed to return messages

within 24 hours. Please refrain from calling teachers after school hours. While convenient, teacher personal cell phones should not be used for school related communications.

Each staff member has both a school email account (example: first initial last name@smmaschool.org) and is available through FastDirect. Although email is a quick and easy way to communicate, it is often not the most effective way to resolve serious issues. At times phone conversations or face-to-face meetings are better ways to ensure that messages are well received and conflicts are resolved in a timely manner.

An opportunity for a formal Parent-Teacher Conference for students in grades K-8 will be offered at the time of the first quarter report card. Conferences for Preschool are typically held prior to the start of the school year and again usually in February.

Parent-Teacher conferences can be arranged on an individual basis at any time throughout the school year when the need arises. Either the parent or the teacher may initiate a conference.

When a classroom concern arises it is beneficial to speak with the teacher first before taking your concerns to the principal. The principal is the second level contact when an issue cannot be resolved with the teacher.

CONDUCT

At St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School we try to develop virtuous, holy habits and focus our attention on discipleship.

If the students are allowed to help make “rules” for the classroom, they are much more likely to try to keep them because they have been allowed to become a part of the decision making process guided by the teacher. We focus on personal responsibility and self discipline. Parents are strongly encouraged to make necessary rules, set limits at home, and if these limits are broken, use logical or natural consequences.

Students attending St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School are expected to behave in a Christian and courteous manner, treating each other and the staff with the respect that each person is due.

Parents are expected to support the staff and cooperate with the school in its efforts to provide a safe and respectful environment for each and every student and staff member.

COUNSELING SERVICES

The social emotional well-being of your child can have a significant impact on academic success. A counselor from St. Louis Counseling is available at St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School during school hours four days per week. This service is available at no cost to SMMA families. To request counseling assistance for your child, complete the consent form posted on FastDirect under LINKS.

CURRICULUM

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School offers a solid, comprehensive religious and academic program for students in Grades preK-8. The school's curriculum is aligned with the Archdiocesan standards which provide a framework for all Catholic schools of the Archdiocese. Students differ in learning styles, abilities, interests, and speed in mastering concepts. Teachers aim to design classroom and homework activities within the classroom to motivate and challenge each individual according to his/her needs.

A "Year At A Glance" is shared with families at the start of each school year and can be found on the school website. This gives a brief overview of topics covered during the school year at each grade level.

DISCIPLINE

Teachers should never use corporal punishment, never touch a child, always refrain from sarcasm, ridicule, nagging, calling names, and public humiliation. Indiscriminate punishment of all students in a class for misconduct of one or some students should be avoided.

Individual classroom expectations and general consequences are communicated at the beginning of the school year. Specific expectations consistent with the students age and maturity level are shared with students at various times throughout the school year and should be familiar to parents following the annual "Back to School" parent meeting.

Teachers in grades 5-8 use a common system to consistently track repeated behavior issues and communicate with parents and students. The system is outlined during an annual parent meeting at the start of the school year.

Infractions involving drugs, alcohol, weapons, smoking, truancy, leaving school grounds, or any other more serious misconduct will be handled directly by the principal and pastor.

In the event of a single incident of serious misconduct or an emerging pattern of negative behavior, appropriate actions taken by the principal and pastor may include:

- additional parent/guardian conferences
- mandatory counseling
- probation: Probation *is the continued enrollment of a student, but with specified conditions. (4302.2)*
- suspension: Suspension *is the removal of a student from all classes for a specified period of time. (4302.1)*
- withdrawal for cause: Withdrawal for Cause *is the permanent end of enrollment of a student from a school. (4302.3)*
- legal action depending on the severity of the incident

If a student does not improve behavior or adhere to school rules and classroom regulations after notification, probationary status may result for a specified time, and parents may be asked to seek professional help. If improvement is not shown, the student may be asked to leave the school.

At St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School we believe discipline is an attitude and a response cultivated in a climate characterized by respect, which is conducive to positive self-growth and dynamic learning. The school's standard of behavior code is further shaped and defined by the following Archdiocesan statements on Harassment and Violence and the Threat of Violence:

Harassment (4303.7)

Catholic schools shall maintain a learning environment that is free from all forms of harassment. No student in the school shall be subjected to any type of harassment. Catholic schools forbid harassment because it is not in keeping with the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

Harassment is defined as any unwanted and unwelcome behavior that interferes with a student's performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. Harassment includes conduct that is verbal, physical, or visual.

Each Catholic school investigates every harassment complaint thoroughly and promptly. All investigations will be conducted in a sensitive manner and, to the extent feasible, confidentiality will be honored. The investigations and all actions taken will be shared only with those who have a need to know.

If, after investigation, the school determines that a student has engaged in sexual or other forms of harassment, appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and withdrawal for cause, will be taken.

Violence and the Threat of Violence (4303.3)

Catholic schools shall provide a safe learning environment for all members of the school community. The climate of the Catholic schools shall reflect Gospel values including an emphasis on the dignity of all persons which is necessary for respect, the interdependence of all persons that is the basis of community, and the rights and responsibilities of all persons which are the foundation of justice.

Violence is inconsistent with the unity and peace, which are essential to living the Catholic faith in community. Violence also inhibits human development and successful learning. Therefore, violence is not tolerated in Catholic schools. Violence consists of words, gestures, and actions that result in or have the potential to result in hurt, fear, or injury. Violence includes threats of injury, harassment; assault, possession, and/or use of a weapon; and theft or vandalism of property.

A weapon is anything used or intended to be used to threaten, intimidate, and/or harm persons. The possession or use of firearms, other weapons, or explosive devices on school/parish premises is not permitted.

All reported or observed instances of threatened or actual violence must be addressed by the school administration. Appropriate actions may include parent/guardian conferences, mandatory counseling, suspension, withdrawal for cause and legal action depending on the severity of the incident.

Drug, Alcohol & Substance Use and Abuse (4303.2)

The use and abuse of alcohol and other drugs poses a threat to the health of young people and creates an obstacle to their full development as Christian persons. In addition, under present federal and state laws, the possession and use of certain unprescribed drugs, including narcotics, depressants, stimulants, marijuana, and hallucinogenic drugs are illegal. Therefore, the possession, use, or transfer of un-prescribed or illegal drugs, or the use, possession of, or being under the influence of alcohol on the school premises or at school-sponsored functions are not permitted. Students violating this policy will be subject to suspension and/or withdrawal for cause from school. In addition, civil authorities may become involved.

Infractions involving drugs, alcohol, weapons, smoking, truancy, leaving school grounds, or any other more serious misconduct will be handled directly by the principal and pastor.

A student may be immediately suspended or withdrawn for cause if deemed a threat to self or others. Repeated failure to comply with discipline policies and procedures could become a factor in determining a student's continued enrollment in the school.

Parents will be contacted by the principal by phone or in writing, and given an explanation of the disciplinary action.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS TO STUDENTS

Archdiocesan policy states that school should not distribute information to parents or students in any form about programs, products, or services which are available from sources other than the school, parish, another Catholic agency, or with whom the school has a formal contract. St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School follows this policy. This includes information regarding private sports camps.

Any organizational representative or room parent wishing to share information via the students in a particular homeroom or grade using the Fast Direct system should also copy the school office in advance. All information will be previewed by the principal prior to being sent home with the

students. The principal retains the right to amend, edit, or reject submitted materials to assure compliance with school guidelines.

The following will not be sent home via students:

- announcements containing any references to alcohol in words or pictures
- monetary or item donation requests from personal businesses
- parent party invitations

DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual enrollment is a method of providing courses and programs to a student that the school itself cannot provide due to staffing and/or finances. Missouri state law also allows Catholic school students to be dually enrolled in public schools in order to participate in specialized programs or to receive special education, remedial reading and mathematics services, or gifted services.

(4204)

EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATION INFORMATION

In accordance with Archdiocesan recommendations, SMMA teachers/administration will not issue personalized letters of recommendation to high schools. Our school office sends all appropriate records requested by the high school. Visitation to high schools is offered to students in the second semester of seventh grade and in their first semester of eighth grade. We strongly encourage students to make these visitations when our school is not in session whenever possible.

Detailed information regarding Graduation will be sent home in March. We have a Graduation Mass for students and their families here at SMMA. After Mass the graduates and parents attend a dinner at the Parish Center organized by the seventh grade parents.

Financial Requirements - Payment in full must be made for all financial obligations to the school before the day of graduation. Within the 10 days prior to graduation, the local administration has the right to require a specific method of payment. If a student at the time of graduation has a balance to his/her account, the report card and cumulative record will not be issued until the account has been settled.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may not use cell phones, Apple watches/or similar wearable devices during the school day unless authorized by a teacher for classroom use. If a child is entrusted with a cell phone or Smart watch for after school events and emergencies, this device needs to be turned off during the school day and remain unnoticeable in the child's book bag. Teachers in grades 6-8 have established procedures and designated space for the collection of cell phones during the school day. We cannot be responsible for lost phones.

Phones or other electronic devices in use during school hours without the explicit permission of a teacher, will be confiscated and sent to the principal's office. The first time such an incident occurs the phone may be retrieved by the student at the end of the school day. Repeat infractions will likely result in the phone being returned only to a parent or guardian.

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School understands that students/parents have access to technology that enables them to record, either visually or audibly, a student of the school or member of the school staff. Out of respect for the students in our school, students and parents are not to publicly post any videos, pictures or audio recordings of students at school events unless the student/parent(s) have the express written permission from the school to do so. This includes, but is not limited to, online photo-sharing and posting videos on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat or similar applications.

Additionally, in order to ensure the privacy of members of the school staff, students and parents are not to record a member of the school staff without the express permission of the staff member. As such, students and parents are prohibited from recording classroom lessons/discussions and are prohibited from photographing or videotaping teachers without the teachers' permission. Likewise, students and parents shall not publicly post any videos, pictures or audio recordings of staff members unless the student/parent(s) have the express written permission from the school staff member. This includes, but is not limited to, online photo-sharing and posting videos to YouTube, FaceBook, Instagram or similar applications.

Archdiocesan Internet and Electronic Communications Conduct (4303.4)

A safe environment for all members of the school community should be a hallmark of a Catholic school. This is accomplished, in part, by fostering a climate based on Gospel values that emphasize the dignity of and respect for all persons. Words, actions, or depictions which violate the privacy, safety, or good name of others are inconsistent with that goal. Whether occurring within or outside of school, when students jeopardize the safe environment or act contrary to those Gospel values they can be subject to disciplinary action by the school.

This policy applies to communications or depictions through e-mail, text messages, or website postings, whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communications, which:

- a. are of a sexual nature;
- b. threaten, libel, slander, malign, disparage, harass or embarrass members of the school community
- c. in the principal's discretion, cause harm to the school, or the school community (collectively referred to as "Inappropriate Electronic Conduct").

Inappropriate Electronic Conduct shall be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences, including withdrawal for cause. Prior to any disciplinary action being taken, a student-parent-principal conference may occur to discuss the incident and course of action. Electronic communication hardware, software, and connectivity are provided at St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School to enhance learning. The above school policies are in place to assure responsible electronic and Internet behavior.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

To ensure the safety of each student in the event of a fire, tornado, earthquake or intruder, drills will be held throughout the school year to familiarize students and teachers with emergency procedures. The school day at St. Margaret Mary Alacoque will be suspended in the event of an emergency. An immediate assessment will be made, and steps will be taken to ensure the well-being and safety of all children and staff during this time, as well as any extended time period, should it be necessary. Communication of an emergency closure of school will be made using all avenues available at the appointed time including television, the school information system (FastDirect) and direct phone calls.

EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATIONS

Eucharistic liturgies are planned by the various classes in school throughout the school year. Parents are always welcome to celebrate with their children and our school and parish community at Mass. We hope that the children's active involvement will deepen their understanding and faith in the Mass as a personal meeting with Christ and a celebration with other Christians of their common faith.

Daily Mass is offered at St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Church at 8:00 A.M. Throughout the week, different grade levels attend Mass according to the following schedule:

Students in grades 1 and 2 attend Mass on Mondays.

Students in Kindergarten attend Liturgy of the Word on Tuesdays.

Students in grades 3-5 attend Mass on Wednesdays.

Students in grades 6-8 attend Mass on Thursdays.

Students in K through 8 will attend liturgy every Friday that school is in session.

All non-catholic students are required to attend religion classes and encouraged to participate in the liturgies to the extent which they are able.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

All school sponsored extracurricular activities (outside of school hours) must be approved by the principal. These activities must have an evident educational purpose. The purpose of the activity and the requirements for participation must be clearly defined. A member of the faculty or a qualified/responsible adult should act as moderator of the activity and should be present at all

times during the activity. Parents/guardians permission must be obtained for a student to participate in extracurricular activities. (5202.10) Examples of these activities offered at SMMA include chess, band, Bellarmine Speech League, Student Council and Run Club.

FACULTY MEETINGS / EARLY DISMISSAL DAYS

Faculty meetings are a necessary means of planning and sharing for the improvement of all facets of our school program. The calendar indicates days that are set aside for faculty meetings. Some are all day in-services, where no students are present, and some are early dismissal days for students. We typically dismiss at noon on early out days and Aftercare is not provided.

FASTDIRECT

We have a secure school information system for everything from grade reports to registration protocols called, "FastDirect." Activation codes and instructions to navigate this online program are provided through the school office. Calendars, reminders, report cards, general school information, School Board minutes, and cafeteria menus are all available on the FastDirect site. Parents can adjust personal settings in order to receive immediate notification when new information is posted.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can be a memorable experience that enhances classroom instruction and provides some real world learning opportunities for students. Special programs, displays, performances offered in the St. Louis area that coordinate with the subject matter being taught may be attended in a class group. All students are expected to attend field trips, as this is a school activity, however, field trips are privileges. No student has an absolute right to a field trip. Students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements.

Each student will be required, at the time of the trip, to pay the fee to cover transportation and/or other expenses. Parents will be informed about these trips in advance, and a permission slip will need to be signed and returned to school in order for a child to participate in the field trip.

Often parents will be invited to serve as chaperones for field trips. Parents who are leaving cars at school while they are on a field trip should park on the Upper Church Lot. DO NOT park on the lot by the Parish Center. This lot is used for recess. Chaperones should not bring along younger children in order that full attention can be focused on the student group assigned to each chaperone.

There are circumstances for which transportation in private passenger vehicles is appropriate. In this case the following criteria applies:

1. Drivers must have a valid, non-probationary driver's license and no physical disability that may impair the ability to drive safely.

2. The vehicle should have a valid registration and meet state safety requirements.
3. The vehicle must be insured for minimum limits of \$100,000 per person, \$300,000 per occurrence. Drivers should be experienced drivers and demonstrate the maturity necessary to provide for the safety of those they are transporting.
4. Every person in the private vehicle must wear a seat belt or use an appropriate passenger restraint system.
5. Adults should not be permitted to smoke or vape in the vehicle.

FUNDRAISING

The Home and School Association is largely responsible for organizing the community building and fundraising efforts of the school. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Information regarding upcoming fundraising events will be published in the parish bulletin, the school newsletter and on the school's social media accounts.

HEAD LICE POLICY

All suspected cases of head lice must be reported to the school office. Symptoms of head lice include severe itching behind the ears and on the neck, although some people may be asymptomatic.

When head lice is discovered at school, the child's parents will be contacted by the school nurse. The grade level affected will be notified through a written alert to parents who should check for symptoms and report any additional cases. If additional cases are reported, the administration, in consultation with the school nurse, will determine the need for a general screening of students involved and/or the entire school, as needed.

Children must be treated with the proper medication before returning to school. Upon return to school the child will be inspected by the school nurse before being re-admitted to class.

HEALTH PROGRAM / MEDICATION

All transfer students, as well as children entering Kindergarten, third and sixth grades are to have a complete physical examination. The form for these can be obtained from the school office or found under the LINKS tab on FastDirect. Some doctors' offices provide their own form which is also acceptable. These are to be completed and returned along with a copy of immunizations before classes begin in the fall.

The State of Missouri requires all students attending a public, private, or parochial school to have MINIMUM IMMUNIZATIONS against rubella, measles, whooping cough, polio, diphtheria, and hepatitis B. If these are not current, a child will not be admitted to school. Current health records must be maintained.

If your child is transferring from another school, his/her health records should accompany the cumulative record.

The Health Room at SMMA is staffed by one of two qualified nurses who is on duty from 7:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Health records are maintained for all students. The Health Room is located on the upper level near the school office. When a nurse is not on duty, the staff assumes the responsibility to care for illnesses and injuries.

Communications about health concerns as well as all medications that need to be dispensed must come directly to the school office or nurse's office. If your child has a specific physical problem, such as hearing, sight, speech, allergy, etc., please notify the homeroom teacher in writing at the beginning of the school year or when the problem is discovered. This prevents many problems, and it is necessary for parents to do this every year since your child's teacher changes each year.

To limit the spread of contagious illnesses all children MUST be fever free without the aid of medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

If it becomes necessary for a student to limit physical activity during the school day, PE only, or at recess for an extended period of time, a physician's note to that effect must be sent to the office. A physician's release form indicating that the student may resume normal activity will also be required. Notes or emails will be forwarded to the PE teacher from the school office staff or nurse on duty..

In regard to students with Significant Medical Conditions, Archdiocesan policy 4401.6, states that a student enrolled in a Catholic school who has a significant or potentially life threatening medical condition may require special consideration. St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School will take steps to obtain the information necessary to understand the condition, its manifestations in the school setting, and any specific adjustments or plans for an emergency response, which may be necessary in order to provide the student with a healthy and safe environment.

If you feel that your child has a special medical need, please call the school office directly. After pertinent information is provided by the parents and the student's physician, a plan of accommodations that may need to be considered or provided will be put into place. All appropriate staff will be informed of the special health plan. Any additional reasonable staff training to assure the physical well being of the student will occur.

MEDICATIONS

Administration of Medication policy 4401.4 states that ideally, all medication should be given at home. However, some students are able to attend school because of the effectiveness of medication in the treatment of chronic illnesses or disabilities. All medication sent to the school must be secured in a locked cabinet under the supervision of the administration.

School personnel will not dispense prescription medication of any kind to a student without the direct order of a licensed physician, signed and properly filed with the school *and* written permission of the parent which must accompany this order. A current prescription label on a container may serve as a physician's order.

Prescription medication must be brought to school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy. The parent will need two containers, one for home and one for school. For medications that will be given for the entire school year, the child needs a new prescription container each school year.

A parent may not give permission to administer medication differently than the physician's order and may not request that medicine prescribed for one child be used for another child in the family. The school may request from the parent the right to call a physician to clarify a medication order.

Non-prescription medication will be administered only if written permission is given by a parent and the medication is brought in an original container.

School personnel will not administer the first dose of any medication. Students may not carry medication on their person, with the exception of metered-dose inhalers when properly registered with the school. Proper documentation must be kept on every dose given.

HOMEROOM HELPERS / HOMEROOM COORDINATOR

Homeroom Helpers are parents who volunteer to help teachers with various activities throughout the school year. These activities are such things as field trips, holiday parties, art activities, etc. Parents wishing to volunteer time where children are present must comply with Archdiocesan guidelines by attending a Protecting God's Children workshop, completing the Prevent and Protect program, reading and signing the Archdiocesan Code of Ethics, and submitting Child Abuse Screening forms.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event school is canceled due to inclement weather all school families will be notified via FastDirect. Notification will also be shared with local television stations via their storm alert systems.

Once school is in session, there will be no school-wide early dismissal for inclement weather. If you choose to pick your child up early should weather begin to deteriorate, you must notify the school office. No other carpool children will be allowed to leave with you unless those children's parents have contacted the school office prior to your arrival and given permission for that to occur.

If your child normally walks home, but you decide to pick them up on inclement weather days, please notify the school office so that your child is aware of that change and can meet you on the car dismissal lot. All cars that pick up need to use the main lot near church. Unexpected cars and bad weather make walking extremely dangerous. Your cooperation in this regard is greatly appreciated.

KINDERGARTEN

We offer an all day Kindergarten program that largely follows the regular school calendar. School uniforms will be worn by Kindergarten students. The purchase of a PE uniform is optional at this level and the regular school uniform is acceptable for all kindergarten PE classes.

Prior to entering Kindergarten, a readiness screening will be administered to all incoming Kindergarten students. Results of the screening will be shared with parents as soon as possible following the screening.

LIBRARY

The Library is located near the school office on the main level of school and it is staffed Tuesday through Thursday each week during the school year. Students in grades 3-8 may check out books for a two-week time period. If the books are not returned on time, there will be a 10¢ fine daily on each book until the books are returned.

LOST AND FOUND

Children should be encouraged to be responsible for their personal belongings. Please label your child's clothing with a permanent marker to ensure that if an item is lost, it will be able to be returned to the proper person. Gym clothes, jackets, water bottles, lunchboxes and sweaters are easily misplaced. There will be a barrel located in the school foyer by the boys' restroom on the upper level in which lost items may be placed. Please feel free to check the contents at any time. Unclaimed items are donated to a worthy cause at the end of each semester.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Food Service Consultants, Inc. will provide a hot lunch program on a daily basis and the cafeteria menu for each month will be posted on FastDirect. A plate lunch will be available, along with many a la carte items that can be purchased by students in grades 3-8. A letter about the hot lunch program and the purchase of lunch cards can be found in LINKS on FastDirect. The school does receive some subsidy from the lunch program.

It is suggested that each family place a \$50 minimum deposit through the system administered by Food Service Consultants. The money in this account is never lost as it transfers from year to year and is returned in the event a child leaves the school.

Students who do not have money at the time of a meal service will be served a plate lunch and the cafeteria manager will contact parents regarding payment for the charged meal. Payment for charged meals and additions to your child's meal account can be sent to the school office. Checks should be made payable to "Food Service Consultants" or "FSC." Cash should be placed in an envelope with the child's name and "Food Service Consultants" written on the envelope.

Questions about the hot lunch program can be directed to the cafeteria manager via FastDirect.

Children may also bring their lunch from home. If children bring their lunch in a bag or lunch box, it should be marked with the child's name and homeroom.

If your child forgets his/her lunch, someone may bring a lunch to the school office and it will be delivered to your child's classroom. Deliveries from local fast food restaurants are strongly discouraged.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Acknowledging different interests and talents, many extra-curricular activities are available to the children at SMMA. The SMMA Parish Athletic Association provides the opportunity to join sporting teams. Scouting Programs are available to the students at a variety of grade levels. Dance, Robotics, Run Club, and Chess classes are available after school. Band instruction is offered weekly before school. Information about fees and schedules for these enrichment programs will be available through the weekly school newsletter.

PARTIES

Classroom celebrations are a memorable part of the elementary school experience. Children in grades K-4 have classroom parties to celebrate Halloween, and Christmas complete with age-appropriate activities, snacks and crafts. Students in grades 5-8 will have a Christmas party while other holiday celebrations are much more limited.

All parties will begin and end at the same time, with the exception of Preschool and Kindergarten. Students may not leave school at the conclusion of the party. All students are asked to remain until the normal dismissal time rather than leaving with a parent who helped during the party.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The PE schedule for your children will be sent home the first week of school. Students in grades 1-8 may wear PE uniforms in place of regular uniforms on PE days. All uniform items are available through our uniform provider, *Just Me Apparel*.

Clothes for P.E. class are as follows for grades 1-8:

GIRLS AND BOYS:	Gym shoes
	SMMA PE shorts
	SMMA PE shirt (not to be worn under school uniform)
	SMMA logo sweatpants/joggers

Students in Kindergarten have the *option* of wearing the PE uniform or their regular school uniform on PE days.

Children who are unable to participate fully in Physical Education class need to provide written documentation from a physician or notification from a parent in writing or via email.

PICTURES

School pictures will be taken in the fall. The children need not wear the school uniform on this day. You will receive pertinent information concerning school pictures at the proper time.

QUESTIONING OF STUDENTS

Except at the direction of a caseworker from the Division of Social Services (DSS), no minor student should be questioned by law enforcement authorities or officials of other public agencies unless a school administrator is present. Every effort will be made to contact parents and provide them the opportunity to be present.

Law enforcement authorities may question minor students only with a parent / guardian or deputy juvenile officer present. The principal should make every effort to notify the parents / guardians and arrange for them to be present during the questioning. If they are unable to be present, the principal and another school staff member should be present during the entire questioning.

Minor students may be questioned **without** a parent / guardian or deputy juvenile officer present if the investigation is related to a child abuse "hot line" report. In these cases, investigations are conducted primarily by the DSS caseworker. In these situations the principal should take the following steps:

- ask the caseworker to share appropriate identification;
- request permission to contact the parent / guardian prior to questioning the student;
- if permission is denied, document this request and then request permission for school personnel to be present for questioning;

- cooperate with the decision of the caseworker in regard to this request. Based on the nature of the investigation, the DSS caseworker may determine that the principal's presence is not appropriate.

Law enforcement authorities may remove students from school property only upon presentation of a valid arrest warrant or upon probable cause to believe that the student has committed a crime. The proper place for questioning a student who is considered a witness to a crime is the student's home with the parents present. In such cases, school officials are not required to allow law enforcement authorities to question the student at school.

REGISTRATION

Registration for the subsequent school year usually opens for current school families in early January. The process is then extended to those who will be new to the school. Notification of the exact dates and times of registration will appear in the newsletter and parish bulletin. Any family enrolling a child for Kindergarten must submit a copy of the child's birth certificate and baptismal certificate at registration. In addition, if applicable, verification of the dates of other sacramental celebrations must also be provided when enrolling students at other grade levels.

It is the financial policy of SMMA that all financial obligations be kept current within their established payment plan in order for registration for the next school year to be accepted. No student records will be sent unless financial obligations are met. No student records will be issued to high schools or a school to which a family is transferring for students whose financial responsibilities have not been met.

REPORT CARDS/HONOR ROLL

Electronic Report Cards are issued to the students in grades K-8 at the end of each quarter. Grade Reports will be accessed through FastDirect.

Kdg. Marking Code:

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

***** = Item not evaluated at this time

T = Taught, but not graded

1st - 2nd Grade Grading Scale:

E = Excels (95-100)

P = Progressing Well (85-94)

I = Is Developing (70-84)

N = Needs Improvement (69 and below)

3rd - 8th Grade Grading Scale:

A+ = 98-100

C = 77-81

A = 93-97

D+ = 74-76

B+ = 90-92

D = 70-73

B = 85-89

F = 69 and below

C+ = 82-84

Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 have the opportunity to qualify for the Honor Roll each quarter by showing above average academic achievement, appropriate behavior, and responsibility.

The criteria for achieving First Honors include: Earning an *A* in all subject areas, behavior ratings of *S*, and no marks on the Respect and Responsibility Card. Second Honors will be awarded to students who have earned a combination of *A* and *B* grades, behavior ratings of *S* and no marks on the Respect and Responsibility Card.

RESOURCE PROGRAM

Two teachers serve as learning consultants for the students at our school. One teacher works with students in grades K-4, and the other assists students in grades 6-8. Grade 5 is a transition year in which both consultants work together with students and teachers in order that services are maintained without interruption.

The learning consultants will assist classroom teachers and parents in identifying and implementing curriculum adjustments, instructional changes, and environmental changes to better serve students with special needs. The learning consultants may also be invited to come into the classroom to assist with class lessons or small groups.

Teachers might consult with a learning consultant for assistance on a regular basis or occasional basis in areas such as:

- reinforcement of classroom instruction
- addressing areas of weakness in skill development
- strengthening fine motor skills
- assisting with organization or study skills
- providing help with note taking
- conducting small group review for quizzes or tests
- administering of tests to allow for rephrasing
- monitoring of focus and comprehension

The learning consultants will coordinate and assist with the completion of paperwork required for formal student evaluations, and conduct the required classroom observations. They will also assist in interpreting multidisciplinary evaluations for parents and regular classroom teachers.

RETURNING TO THE BUILDING AFTER SCHOOL

Students may not be in the school building after school hours unless they are closely supervised by a teacher, scout leader, coach, or attending After Care. Students will be denied access to their classroom for forgotten items after 3:10 PM as most teachers will have left the building for the day.

SACRAMENTS

There will be mandatory meetings for parents of children receiving sacraments. It is very important to include parents in the preparation and undertaking of the sacraments their children will receive.

Sacrament of Reconciliation - Wednesday evening of the first week of Advent. (grade 2)

First Holy Communion - Saturday before Mother's Day weekend. (grade 2)

Confirmation -. The date of Confirmation is determined by the Bishop, and parents will be notified in ample time. (grade 8)

SAFE TOUCH PROGRAM

The Safe Touch Program educates students about child sexual abuse and personal safety. School personnel, who have been trained by the Archdiocese of St. Louis to present this program in our school, facilitate it. The goal is to teach children the difference between safe and unsafe touching and to let children know that if anything happens that makes them feel uneasy, they should tell another adult.

This is an annual program that consists of one lesson. Materials for students are provided by the Office of Child and Youth Protection of the Archdiocese. Along with the Safe Touch Program, there is a voluntary education program for parents, to provide them with information about sexual abuse, guidelines about providing a safe environment, and practical examples of how and when to discuss issues of safety and touching with children.

SAFETY - WALKING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

The safety of all SMMA students is important to us. As a result of our concerns we urge your child to:

- GO DIRECTLY HOME FROM SCHOOL
- refuse to enter automobiles of strangers
- be considerate of small children
- do not play games on the road
- do not cut through yards, trespass, or destroy property

Students should use the crosswalks when crossing the circle drive. Walkers should use the crosswalk to cross Ringer Road and remain on the side of Ringer that corresponds to where their home or after-school destination is located.

The school is not responsible for the students on their way to and from school.

SCHOOL BOARD

The School Board consists of nine elected members, each serving a three year term. All members shall be registered members, or married to a member, of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Parish. A minimum of five (5) of the nine (9) members must have a child attending St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School. In addition, the Pastor, Associate Pastor, and the School Principal shall be ex-officio members without the right to vote.

It is the duty of the members of the School Board to serve as an advisory committee to the administration on matters of policy concerning educational programs, facilities, transportation, finance, discipline, and extracurricular activities. If policy recommendations are approved by the administration, these are implemented by the principal through specific rules and regulations.

If you wish to speak at a School Board Meeting, please contact the president at least five days prior to the meeting, and your concern will be placed on the agenda. Meetings are typically held in the Teachers' Lounge on the third Tuesday of each month with the exception of December and July.

SCHOOL CORRESPONDENCE

School newsletters, monthly calendars, lunch menus, School Board minutes, and other important items will be posted on FastDirect. Hard copies of school information are available upon request from the school office. Whenever the need arises to send home written correspondence, it will be sent via the oldest child in the family.

SMMA school will not distribute information to parents or students in any form about programs, products, or services which are available from sources other than the school, parish, or other Catholic agency, or with whom the school has a formal contract. This includes programs which are offered by individual parents or parishioners, but are not formally sanctioned by the parish or school.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

Each child is responsible for the school property she/he uses. If through carelessness, furniture, equipment, books, etc. are damaged or destroyed, the child will be expected to compensate school for the expense involved. This includes the use of school technology devices that are in need of repair due to misuse or neglect.

SEARCH AND SEIZURE

Lockers and desks are school property and as such are subject to search by school officials. A student's jacket, backpack, purse and the like are personal property which may be searched in the event the school has reason to believe a student has engaged in conduct prohibited by school policy.

SECURITY

Anyone entering the building should use the front foyer doors and check in at the school office. They will be required to sign in at the school office and be given a visitor's badge to wear while they are in the school building. They should report back to the school office to sign out. This will help to ensure the safety of our students and staff. When you bring items forgotten at home to school for your children, remember to use the front foyer doors.

Outside doors are NEVER to be propped open for any reason.

In order to provide a safe environment, the carrying or possession of any type of firearm or other dangerous weapon on the premises is strictly prohibited. This prohibition expressly includes those persons licensed to carry concealed firearms.

SMOKING ORDINANCE

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School is a smoke free environment.

SPECIAL NEEDS

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School will work to accommodate students with special needs to the best of its ability, taking into consideration the available resources and qualified staff. If after working with the student and consistently consulting the parents, the teacher and administration feel that SMMA cannot provide the necessary services, they will assist the parents in finding another educational setting that will be able to better accommodate the needs of the student.

The school will obtain current diagnostic evaluations and authorization to exchange information with specialists and agencies in order to make informed decisions about admitting students with special needs and providing them with appropriate adjustments during their term of enrollment. These evaluations and related documents should be part of a student's cumulative record.

STANDARDIZED TESTING PROGRAM

Annually, standardized tests are administered to children in schools throughout the Archdiocese. The results of these tests enable the teacher to adjust instruction in order to foster optimal learning experiences and measure growth of students. Guidelines for Standardized Testing of students with special needs are located in the Addendum.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Student Council (StuCo) is composed of middle school students under the direction of a teacher moderator. The purpose of the council is to develop leadership and responsibility, to promote good citizenship, to inspire school spirit, to demonstrate the practical application of democracy, and to advance the welfare of the school and its members.

STUDENT RECORDS

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect and review the official active file of their children. This information includes report cards, progress reports, attendance records, notices of disciplinary actions, test scores and similar information. A request to review records should be made by phone, email, or personal visit to the school office so that an appointment can be arranged at an agreeable date and time. (4601.2)

The right of school personnel to access the records of students is limited to those who have a legitimate purpose for the information the record contains. In addition, the person must also have a professional responsibility for a specific individual student or a clearly identified group of students. This includes teachers, school counselors, administrators and special education personnel. (4601.3)

There should be no release of student records to other schools, institutions, agencies, or individuals without the prior written consent of a parent/guardian, or the former student if age eighteen or older. Records are not released to parents or students but are transferred directly for the school to the institution designated to receive them. (*Transfer of Records* 4601.4)

Student discipline information is not part of a student's cumulative or permanent record file, and as such, is not included when parents authorize information to be provided to another school or agency. Making this information available to any person or institution must only be done with the specific written consent of the student's parent or guardian. This applies to providing both written and/or oral information. (4601.6)

SUPERVISED PLAY

Research indicates that fresh air and physical activity help to improve brain function. All children in grades K-4 will have a morning recess of approximately 15 minutes and all grades will have 15 or 20 minutes during their lunch break to play outdoors. Children should be dressed appropriately for the weather throughout the school year. Consideration to staying indoors will be weather related and is at the discretion of the playground supervisors in collaboration with the administration.

To ensure the safety of the children on the premises, teachers and parents will supervise the playground during recess times.

SUPPLIES

A list of supplies will be made available on FastDirect so parents may purchase the necessary classroom supplies before school begins.

TECHNOLOGY

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School provides 1:1 devices for all students. Along with many basic software programs, the use of the Internet will be available. With that use comes certain expectations. It is expected that students will use this privilege appropriately and responsibly. In other words, the use of the Internet must be in support of education and research consistent with the educational and moral objectives of the school. School families assume the cost of damage to student devices that are caused from intentional misuse or neglect. If necessary, a student may lose the privilege of using a personal device completely for a period of time determined by the Technology Coordinator, in collaboration with the classroom teacher and administration.

At the beginning of the school year every student and parent will be expected to read and sign the Technology Acceptable Use Policy which provides additional information and direction regarding the use of technology at school.

TRANSFERS

If your child is entering our school from another school, please authorize the school from which your child is coming to release to us the cumulative record and health record of your child.

Our school office will request records from or forward our records to any school, however, records will be held if tuition is not current.

TUITION POLICY

The tuition policy will be reviewed by the School Board on an annual basis. This will be done in conjunction with providing a budget to the Finance Committee. Any changes in this policy will be communicated to the school families in the spring of the year and will commence on July 1 of that year.

All school families will need to provide banking information at the time of registration so that an ACH (automated clearing house) can be taken from their account on the 15th of the month. Payments are drafted monthly over 10 months from August 15 until May 15. Parents are expected to notify the parish finance office if banking information is changed during the course of the school year.

If you wish to pay your tuition in full at the beginning of the tuition cycle, you will receive a 3% discount. This must be paid by August 1 in order to qualify. If you choose to pay this amount by check, your check must be received *prior to* August 1.

Payments in full must be made for all financial obligations to the school before the day of graduation. Within the 10 days prior to graduation, the local administration has the right to require a specific method of payment. If a student at the time of graduation has a balance to

his/her account, the student's final report card and cumulative record will not be issued until the account has been settled.

Through the generous support of parishioners, we are able to continue to offer financial assistance to families in need. Please call the Finance Manager's Office (Mrs. Mary Kelly - 314-487-2522 ext. 210) for the proper forms.

UNIFORMS

Uniform regulations are reviewed annually and posted on FastDirect. Our regular uniform provider is *Just Me Apparel* located at 232 Old Sulphur Spring Road, Manchester, MO.

Students are excused from wearing their school uniform on birthdays and when using passes purchased at the annual parish auction. SMMA Spirit Wear days which are held at various times throughout the school year are noted on the school calendar and highlighted in the newsletter. Appropriate spirit wear includes any shirt, sweatshirt or team uniform that is specific to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque School.

Students are expected to dress and present an appearance consistent with standards of good taste and appropriate for school and school events. Any dress or wearing of insignia which conveys the image of gang membership, supports the beliefs of hate groups, makes sexual innuendos, or promotes drugs, alcohol, or tobacco is inappropriate for school and is not allowed. (4303.6)

VACATIONS

The administration does not give "permission" for children to take family vacations during the school year. This is up to the discretion and judgment of the parents. If, after careful consideration, parents wish to take their children out of school for a vacation, teachers should receive notification in writing at least three days prior to the intended departure.

If the parents believe it is in the best interest of their child and/or family to take a vacation during the time classes are in session, they assume full responsibility for the academic progress and class work missed during the period of time that a child is absent due to vacationing. The teacher will give homework at his/her discretion. Although most teachers are inclined *not* to prepare assignments ahead of time, some assignments may be given out before the trip and others upon return. Consideration will be given to the subject matter to be covered, the type of student involved, and the nature of the assignments.

Assignments given prior to the trip must be completed upon return to school. Assignments given upon return to school should be completed within two school days. Tests must be made up within two days of the child's return to school.

VOLUNTEERS

Opportunities for volunteering time include monitoring the cafeteria or playground during the lunch hour, assisting the teachers with classroom activities or projects as requested. Parents wishing to volunteer time where children are present must comply with Archdiocesan guidelines by attending a Protecting God's Children workshop, completing the Prevent and Protect program, reading and signing the Archdiocesan Code of Ethics, and submitting Child Abuse Screening forms.

The presence of preschool siblings can sometimes inhibit parent volunteers from helping where needed. Parents should always check with the coordinator of an activity or the classroom teacher about bringing preschoolers to designated activities.

WELLNESS PROGRAM

The issues of obesity, lack of physical activity, and foods of poor nutritional quality have gained increased attention in recent years. This has become a special concern for the youth of our country. It is being addressed at the national level through Federal legislation and programs, and through state and county health department initiatives.

Developing and implementing a wellness plan is now required for those schools which participate in the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, or the Special Milk Program. Some of the requirements we have fulfilled are:

- only serving 1% fat free milk
- offering fruits and vegetables
- half of grains served are whole grain
- food service staff is trained in nutrition
- NO birthday treats - these have been replaced by an "out of uniform day" for the birthday child
- encourage hand washing before eating
- limit food served at classroom parties to no more than one item that does not meet nutrition standards
- physical exercise will be provided in a variety of ways
- teachers will limit the amount of sweets given to children
- nutrition education will be promoted

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

The school office should be notified in writing if it becomes necessary to transfer your child to another school during the academic year. Classroom teachers will be informed and records will be prepared for transfer to the new school if all financial obligations are satisfied.

This Family Handbook contains established policies and procedures for the 2023-2024 school year. Since it is not possible for a Handbook to address every situation that may arise during a school year, the school administration reserves the right to amend or revoke the policies and procedures in this Handbook at any time as circumstances may require. When changes are made to the Handbook, parents and students will be informed of the change in writing in a timely manner, and this will include a statement about when the change will take effect.