

Dear Parents and Friends of St. Margaret of Scotland School,

St. Margaret of Scotland School administration and faculty are committed to teach and model Gospel values to encourage students to live their lives as a reflection of Christ. The philosophy of the school strives to recognize and respect the dignity of each person and to offer a positive, Christ-centered, safe learning environment.

Our goal is to make your child's educational experience both meaningful and productive. To accomplish that goal, every family must be informed of school policies and procedures. This handbook serves as the primary reference source for questions about the operation of St. Margaret of Scotland School.

We ask that you read the handbook thoroughly and keep it accessible. Of course, should you still have questions after referring to this handbook, the staff and I are available to assist you.

Many Blessings,  
Mr. Munz

**In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.**

## **I. OUR SCHOOL INFORMATION**

### **VISION STATEMENT / DEPARTMENT FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

The Vision for the Department for Catholic Schools is to promote and to sustain Catholic Schools of unparalleled quality, which integrate faith into every aspect of life and culture, producing graduates who continually strive for human and Christian perfection.

### **ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND SCHOOL'S MISSION STATEMENT**

St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic School exists as part of the teaching mission of the Church. A fully accredited faculty and staff offer each student the opportunity for academic excellence, spiritual growth, and service to others. All that is done is carried out in light of the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.

### **PHILOSOPHY OF SCHOOL**

It is the aim of St. Margaret of Scotland School to provide a Catholic, educational setting in which our students and their families can integrate Gospel values in daily living. We strive to create a climate in which each child can develop spiritually, intellectually, physically, emotionally, and socially, and in turn, enhance the world.

- *A Christ-centered atmosphere* fostering spiritual growth, gratitude for, and trust in God's goodness and mercy.
- *A deep sense of the Catholic faith*, which necessitates involvement in the traditions of and witness to the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church.
- *A commitment to Catholic social teaching*, which calls the School Community of St. Margaret of Scotland to respond to the larger community through acts of service.
- *Excellence in academics* through continual evaluation, updating of curriculum, and staff development in conjunction with Diocesan and Middle States Accreditation.
- *The development and encouragement of individual talents and gifts* combined with a sense of responsibility for the use of those talents and gifts.
- *A sense of self-discipline and self-respect* enabling students to uphold their value system and become responsible citizens in their communities.

### **MIDDLE STATES ACCREDITATION**

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools accredits St. Margaret of Scotland School. Middle States accreditation is an expression of confidence in St. Margaret of Scotland School's mission, goals and objectives, performance and resources and validates publicly the excellence in education. The Middle States Evaluation is an ongoing process requiring the submission of updated plans every three years. After ten years the school is re-evaluated for continued accreditation. We were re-accredited in May 2012.

### **CATECHETICS (Religious Education)**

Catechetics is the center of the Catholic school. A conscious effort is made to create a Christ-centered atmosphere by stressing Christian values and morality in the classroom as well as throughout the school. A conscious effort is made to integrate catechetics into every aspect of the school curriculum.

Our belief in Jesus has drawn us to this school community. Our beliefs are expressed in and strengthened by daily communal prayer. Students develop skills and a love for the Church's daily worship. Prayer includes a prayer each morning, prayers before and after lunch and at the end of the day.

Attention is also given to the seasons of the year, to the anniversaries of historical figures and peacemakers of our time, and to the civil holidays that have significance for our children.

Faith experiences are an integral part of catechetics. Opportunities for Eucharistic Liturgies, Reconciliation, Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, other Catholic prayers, classroom prayer and service to others are to be included. Community is at the heart of Catholic education, not simply as a concept to be learned, but as a reality to be lived.

The principal, in conjunction with the Pastor and the Catechetical Administrator, work with the teachers in the religious development and sacramental preparation of the students. Parent Preparation Programs for Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation are held during the year. These are parish programs and involve all eligible children and parents of the parish.

### **LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS**

Liturgy will be attended by students in all grades weekly.

*This day is subject to change.*

- Kindergarten attends monthly all-school Liturgies and all-school Liturgies for holy days of obligation.
- Non-Catholic students will attend Liturgies with their class, but they may not receive Holy Communion.
- Parents and family members are welcome to attend all school Liturgies; however, because the Mass is a sacred ceremony, photographing and videotaping are not allowed.
- Students have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent and Lent.
- Students in grade 2 are prepared for and receive the Sacraments of First Reconciliation and First Communion.
- Students in grade 8 are prepared for and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

- All students are expected to actively participate during liturgies through prayer, song, and verbal responses.
- Respect for the presence of God requires that students remain quiet before, during, and after Mass

## **CORE CURRICULUM**

St. Margaret of Scotland School follows the curriculum established by the Diocesan School Office. This program is in accordance with the Department of Education of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The following courses are offered at St. Margaret of Scotland School:

- Christian Doctrine (Religion)
- Pre School Program
- Kindergarten Program
- English
- Reading/Literature
- Spelling
- Phonics
- Handwriting
- Math (including Algebra)
- Music
- Art
- Physical Education
- Health
- Science
- Social Studies
- Spanish
- Computer Literacy

### **Admission/Registration Policies**

St. Margaret of Scotland School admits students of any race or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to all students formally accepted into the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race or national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admission policies, athletic or other school administered programs. Children who are not Catholic are expected to participate in religion classes and to attend all religious functions of the school/church.

A student entering kindergarten must be five years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Official certificates of birth and baptism are required at the time of registration.

New middle school students are admitted to St. Margaret of Scotland School on a probationary basis.

Immunization records must be complete **before any child may enter school**. The requirements are as follows:

- 4 doses of tetanus (1 dose after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday); 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age
- 4 doses of diphtheria (1 dose after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday); 3 doses if series started after 7 years of age
- 3 doses of polio
- 2 doses of measles
- 2 doses of mumps
- 1 dose of rubella
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella or written statement from physician/designee indicating month and year of disease or serologic proof of immunity

### **GRADES 7 & 8**

- 1 dose of tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis (Tdap)
- 1 dose of meningitis vaccine (MCV4)

## II. DAILY ROUTINE

### Absences

Regular attendance at school is a major factor in determining academic success. Students who are absent for more than thirty days during the academic year may be denied academic promotion.

Absences from school are defined as either **Excused** or **Unexcused** according to guidelines from the Pennsylvania School Code. Excused absences include illness, quarantine, impassable roads, recognized religious holidays, and urgent reasons, such as a death in the family or a court appearance. The state guidelines also permit an **Excused Absence for Educational Trips** if a request is sent to the school **prior** to the dates of the trip. If no **prior** notice is received, the absence is classified as **Unexcused**.

All parents must report their child's absence on the first day that he/she is absent from school. Give the child's name, homeroom teacher, and reason for absence. Unless the absence will be for an extended period of time, please make arrangements with another child to have assignments brought home.

**Upon returning to school from an absence, a student must submit a written excuse to his/her homeroom teacher as required by state law.** If this excuse is not submitted within three days following the absence, the absence will be classified as **Unexcused**.

A written excuse should be given to the teacher/principal for the following reasons:

- Following an absence
- Excused from gym class
- Permission for out of school appointments (child is expected to return when possible)
- Attending funerals
- Vacation
- Change of plans in leaving school (bus, ride or walk)**
- Early Dismissal

According to the Pennsylvania School Code, Section 1332, "The absence of any pupil who remains out of school with or without his parent's permission, and is not absent because of illness or for other urgent reasons, as defined in the School Code, shall be unexcused. Such absence will be recorded as 'unlawful-unexcused' for a pupil who is under the compulsory attendance age." Section 1333, "Any such child who has been absent three days, or their equivalent, during the term of compulsory attendance, without lawful excuse...shall be given written notice. If, after such notice is given..., attendance is again violated by the person, such person shall be liable... for referral to the magistrate."

Parents and guardians of students who acquire excessive absences may be required to provide documentation from a physician indicating that the absences are relating to an existing medical condition.

Parents are advised not to plan vacations during the school year. If it is necessary to do so, the parents must notify the school office and their child's teacher(s). **Arrangements for making up the missed work is at the discretion of the teacher(s).**

## **Cafeteria**

All students must bring or buy a lunch. Those bringing lunch may purchase a drink.

Rules:

The use of good manners is encouraged and, therefore, the following cafeteria rules are to be observed:

Remain seated unless disposing of garbage, etc.

Refrain from abusing food; your own or that of others.

Always walk while in the cafeteria.

Refrain from shouting or screaming; enjoy the company of those nearby.

Be courteous and respectful to all those helping during the lunch period.

Do not take food out of the cafeteria.

Throwing food will result in a suspension from the cafeteria for a week. If a student throws food a second time, the suspension will be in effect for the remainder of the school year.

**Food purchased at a Fast Food Restaurant, such as Wendy's, McDonald's, etc., is not permitted in the lunchroom. at any time.**

The cafeteria is operated in accordance with U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, handicap, religion, or national origin.

## **Clothing Identification**

Parents are **strongly urged to mark their children's personal belongings with their names.** Since children do not readily claim lost items, proper identification helps us to find the owner and save parents the cost of replacement. The lost-and-found area is located at the school office. Parents and children are encouraged to look for lost clothing items there. Other lost items, such as glasses, watches and purses, if found, are to be taken to the office. Items that are not claimed by the end of each school year are donated to charity.

## **Communications**

We realize that parents and guardians will have questions or concerns. Positive communication between teacher and parent is vital to our total educational program. When communicating, please be as direct as possible. If your concern involves a teacher or coach, please arrange to meet with that person to discuss the issue. Any questions concerning your child should be directed to the teacher/coach. Please call the school office and the teacher will be notified to contact you. Another form of communication is through the Grade book email system. All teachers have an established email within the system. If the issue is not resolved in this meeting, then you should contact the principal. Parents are asked not to call teachers at their homes.

A packet of school information will be sent home each Wednesday with the youngest child in every family. Parents are asked to initial this envelope and return it to school the next day. Any information or fliers, etc. that a parent may want to distribute must be approved by the principal. Parents may return any necessary forms in the envelope.

Our website: [www.stmargschool.com](http://www.stmargschool.com) is another great form of communication.

The "School Corner" section of the St. Margaret of Scotland Sunday Bulletin also contains information for parents and includes special times for children's Masses. Parents and friends are welcome to join in these liturgical celebrations.

Parents are informed of the student's progress and other school information as follows:

- On-line Report Grades
- Quarterly report cards
- Parent/student/teacher conferences
- Conferences on request
- Conduct referrals
- Parent Teacher Guild meetings

### **Early Dismissals**

Parents should make every effort to schedule appointments at a time that school is not in session. However, if a child must have an early dismissal, he/she must have a written note for the principal's approval. For these dismissals, parents or an authorized adult must meet the child at the office and sign him/her out at the authorized time.

### **Emergency Cards**

At the beginning of each school year, parents are required to complete a Student Emergency Card. It is imperative that the school be able to reach you to inform you of illness or an emergency situation. It is also important to list the names of others who can be contacted should you be unavailable. Please keep the card updated by notifying the office.

### **Emergency Closings and Delays**

If inclement weather or some other emergency requires that the school be delayed or closed, this information will be announced on KDKA, WTAE and WPXI. This information will also be available on our website [www.stmargschool.com](http://www.stmargschool.com). Because of the number of public school districts represented in our school, it is important that you listen for an announcement that identifies St. Margaret of Scotland School. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL OR RECTORY FOR THIS INFORMATION.

In the event of a two-hour delay, specifically named St. Margaret of Scotland School, all children should report to school beginning at 10:00AM. Please follow your school district busing.

If the announced delay does not specifically mention St. Margaret of Scotland School, but does name one of the public districts that service our school, only those children should follow the announcement. Children who ride the buses of other districts who are not delayed or who walk or are driven should arrive at the normal time. PLEASE NOTE: Because our attendance registers are legal indicators of a child's presence at the times we are in session, children who arrive late or are absent because of busing when school is in session will be marked as Excused Tardy or Excused Absence.

### **Emergency Dismissals**

In the event that we would be required to dismiss school early, that information will be announced on the same stations noted above. The principal will initiate "the one-call now" phone system to notify parents as soon as possible. However, because phone service may be interrupted in the school, some emergency situations may not allow for this option. Children will be dismissed as parents are notified and transportation is arranged.



### **Extended Care**

St. Margaret of Scotland School offers a before and after school program for parents who need child care. Before school is available from 7:00AM to 8:00AM. Afternoon school care is available from 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM for a fee. This service is available on a daily, weekly or yearly basis. Parents should contact the school office for the fee schedule and contact person if they plan to use the service.

### **Field Trips**

Every class is permitted field trips during the year. Each student must have a signed permission slip before he/she is permitted to participate. Transportation, in accordance with diocesan directives, is provided by bus, and a fee is charged to cover costs.

Guidelines for both students and chaperones are in effect for each field trip. The teacher will send a copy of the student guidelines home so that the parent may help reinforce the guidelines presented.

### **Fundraising**

The Diocesan policy for funding elementary Catholic schools calls for each school to have fundraising activities to generate a minimum of 10% of their total operating budget. This enables us to keep tuition rates at 60% of the total cost. School parents are expected to participate in these fundraising activities through monetary donations, purchases and/or by volunteering.

### **School Supplies**

For the convenience of families, supply lists are available each June for the following year. Students provide their own school supplies but are expected to comply with individual teacher requirements.

### **Telephone/Cell Phones/IPods/IPads**

No child is permitted to use the telephone, including cell phones, except for emergencies. Forgotten homework, books, lunch, gym clothes or changes in afternoon plans are not sufficient cause to call home. In all cases, the office will make the phone call home.

All cell phone devices, including Smart watches, must be turned in to the office during the homeroom period in the morning. Forgetting to do this is not an excuse and the phone will be confiscated without warning. The school retains the right to restrict the usage of cell phones & devices during the school day and at school- related functions.

### **Textbooks**

St. Margaret of Scotland School participates in Pennsylvania's Act 195/90 whereby the state purchases textbooks and instructional materials of non-religious items. A parent form with permission to have their child use these books is kept on file in the school office. **All books are to be covered at all times.** Students are responsible for the condition of the books given to them at the beginning of the year. Students will be required to pay for the book if it is damaged or lost. Books taken to and from school are to be placed in a book bag.

## **Transfers**

When a student transfers to another school, parents should notify the school office as soon as possible. Academic records will not be forwarded until all financial obligations to the school have been met.

## **Volunteers**

The help of volunteers is always needed in the school and at school-sponsored events. Please consider using some of your time and talent to help enhance our quality program. The possibilities are endless. At St. Margaret of Scotland School parents play an integral role in the education of their children through the Parent Teacher Guild, athletics, fund-raising activities, homeroom parents, lunchroom aides and field trip chaperones. This partnership is invaluable to the success of our school.

## **III. HOMEWORK**

A reasonable amount of homework, according to grade level, is of great educational value and so is assigned every day. Assignments are not always written. Study and memory work are frequently assigned. Homework is assigned on a regular basis to:

- enrich school experiences
- provide practice and review
- develop good study habits
- teach responsibility
- foster originality

Parents can assist students with home assignments in the following ways:

- Provide a quiet spot away from the television, telephone, or other distracting elements.
- Check to see what was accomplished during the designated study time regarding completeness, neatness, and correctness.
- Be willing to listen to reading, spelling, and math facts and to explain procedures, but never do the assignment.

### **Consult the teacher's website. It is updated daily with assignments.**

Homework is assigned in grades K through 8. It is the student's responsibility to complete homework at home and turn all assigned work in on the specified day. All homework is a designated part of a student's grade.

### **Middle school homework policy:**

If homework is handed in late, partial credit will be given even if the assignment is 100% correct.

Specials' homework will be handed to the homeroom teacher on the day due.

### **Assignment books**

- The expectation at St. Margaret of Scotland School is that all students in grades 1 through 8 use a homework assignment book.
- Help parents to know and supervise what students must do at home.
- Provide communication between the school and the home.

### **Parents sign the homework assignment book each day after the student completes the homework.**

Teachers check this notebook according to their classroom rules.

### **Parties and Celebrations**

Other than Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day, parties are discouraged during school time. Small birthday treats for students in grades K–4 are permitted if agreed upon by the parents and teachers. To prevent hurt feelings, students in school may distribute invitations to home parties *only* if the entire class is invited. Otherwise invitations must be mailed to the student's home.

### **Programs and Assemblies**

Throughout the school year various special programs and assemblies will be scheduled for the students in order to enhance and supplement the school program of studies. Topics of such programs include fine arts, health and safety, information and entertainment, and education. Some programs can carry fees of \$300 to \$800. Students are asked to donate a one-time fee of \$10 for the year to help defray the costs of these assemblies. Information will be sent home when the fee is due.

### **Rights of Non-Custodial Parents**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act gives full rights to each parent, unless the school has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, State's statute or legally binding document relating to such matters as divorce, separation or custody that specifically revokes these rights. Such an order is to be on file in the school and those persons responsible for the child(ren) are to be informed of the circumstances. Every effort is made to keep the non-custodial parent informed of the progress of the child(ren) through reports, report cards and parent/teacher conferences.

#### **IV. Report Cards, Grading and Testing**

Communications are sent home periodically. Parents check their child's folders/book bags *daily* for important school information. For families with more than one child enrolled, these communications are sent home with the youngest of the family.

Parents have access to their children's grades on-line. Each child has a user name and password.

#### **Report Cards**

Reporting student progress to parents is one of the primary responsibilities of the school. St. Margaret of Scotland School combines parent conferences with written reports of a student's progress.

- For students in grades 1–8, written reports are issued four times a year (every nine weeks).
- For Kindergarten students, written reports are issued three times a year.

#### ***Grading for Kindergarten:***

- + Consistently Demonstrated
- \* Intermittently Demonstrated
- < Not Demonstrated

#### ***Grading for grades 1–8:***

- A Advanced Performance
- B Proficient Performance
- C Basic Performance
- D Below Basic Performance
- E Experiencing Serious Difficulty (Grades 3-8)
- S Satisfactory Progress (Grades 1&2)
- NI Needs Improvement (Grades 1&2)

#### ***Sub-codes***

- + Demonstrates a strength
- \* Satisfactory progress
- < Not demonstrating skill
- Material not covered

***Percents and letter grade equivalents:***

- A 100%–93%
- B 92%–85%
- C 84%–75%
- D 74%–70%
- E 69% and below

All student records are confidential. Release of these records from the school can be obtained only by written permission of the parent(s) or legal guardian.

**TESTING**

Standardized tests, textbook tests, teacher-made tests are administered to students throughout the year. These assessments require students to synthesize information, apply what they have learned and demonstrate their understanding of what has been taught.

**Achievement Tests:** Students in grades 2-8 are administered a standardized test to measure progress from one year to another. A component of the standardized testing program is an aptitude test that helps to define the ability of a student in relationship to the results of the standardized test. If a child should be absent due to illness, every attempt will be made to enable the child to make up the tests. However, since the tests must be mailed on the last scheduled test day, make-up testing often necessitates taking more tests daily than is ideal. To prevent this, **we ask that you do not schedule trips or appointments during the time of standardized testing.**

**Performance Assessment:** Each child in grade K-8 participates in a Performance Assessment. This task allows students to respond to open-ended questions and to demonstrate their ability to use higher order thinking skills.

**Teacher-made:** Tests that are constructed by teachers to measure, evaluate and determine what students have learned.

**Textbook Tests:** Tests that accompany textbooks adopted for use with students in a particular area and are administered at the conclusion of a chapter and/or unit

## V. TRANSPORTATION

It is important that we know the ordinary means by which each child arrives and departs daily. A note is to be sent when a change is necessary. For reasons of safety and insurance, each child is to ride his/her assigned bus.

### Changes in Transportation

***Because of insurance requirements, no child is permitted, for any reason, to ride a bus other than the one assigned.*** It is necessary for a parent or guardian to send a note or call the school if the child will not be following his or her usual dismissal pattern.

- If phoning, please call at least one hour before dismissal time.

**If there is no note or phone call, students will follow their regular method of transportation.**

### Bus

Students who live more than a 1.5-mile radius from St. Margaret of Scotland School are eligible to be bused to the school. Those who live along a route that has been declared "hazardous" are also eligible for busing. The Board of Education Transportation Division determines "hazardous route" claims. The student transportation policies and procedures of the local educational agencies responsible for busing students are applicable to all students in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior while in route on the bus. Every bus follows the guidelines that are within our own discipline code. If the bus driver/company recommends that a student be removed from the bus, the principal will support it. This will result in the student losing bus privileges. The student/parent will then be responsible to make other arrangements for transportation.

Students are expected to remain in their seats at all times. This insures their safety and the safety of others.

If improper conduct occurs, the driver prepares a report that is sent home to alert the parents to the problem. If the behavior persists, the bus company has the right to ask the school district to suspend the student's privilege of riding the bus, temporarily or permanently.

The following bus rules are to be obeyed:

Remain seated at all times until the correct stop has been reached. The driver of the bus may assign seats to the students.

Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.

In vehicles where seat belts are available, use them properly.

Do not ask to ride a bus other than the one to which you have been assigned or ask the driver to let you off at another stop. Only the Department of Transportation can authorize such changes.

Observe the same conduct as in the classroom. Quiet talking is permitted. Loud talking, etc. may distract the driver, prevent students from hearing instructions, or prevent the driver from hearing signals from emergency vehicles.

Be courteous; use no profane language.

Do not eat, drink, or chew gum on the bus.

Keep the bus clean.

Cooperate with the driver.

Do not put anything out the window of the bus.

Do not be destructive.

The driver is in charge. Any directives of the bus driver in addition to the above are to be followed.

## **Car/Walkers**

### **Morning Arrival**

Students arriving after 8:20AM report directly to their homerooms to prepare for the day. Students arriving before 8:20AM must report to the gym. **Car riders must be dropped off at the front door entrance.**

At dismissal students walking and riding in cars are dismissed shortly after the bus riders. Walkers are to go to the corner before crossing. Those picking children up by car should get in the pick-up lane. Do not leave your car unattended in the pick-up lane as this creates an unsafe condition.

## **VI. STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

***Instrumental Music/Band***—Offered by the Diocese of Pittsburgh at St. Margaret of Scotland School weekly to students in grades 4–8. An authorized music dealer provides an instrument rental/purchase program. The cost of this program will be in addition to regular tuition. Practice for competition for the Honor Band begins in September. The competition takes place at the beginning of November.

***Athletics***—St. Margaret of Scotland School sponsors basketball, football, soccer and cross-country programs as an opportunity for the development of discipline, cooperation, and a healthy spirit of competition. All school athletic programs are part of the school curriculum, and as a result, the school principal is ultimately responsible for the conduct of the coaches, players, and spectators. Any philosophy of athletics that is not consistent with the school philosophy will not be tolerated. Students participating in the program are representing the school and are expected to maintain a standard of behavior that also reflects the philosophy of the school. Any child who is absent from school is not permitted to participate in a sports event on the day of the absence. A physician's release is required for basketball tryouts and eligibility to play. The right to suspend or remove players is determined by the principal.

- **Forensics**—St. Margaret of Scotland School is a member of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Forensic League sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh. Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 can join the Forensics Team. The forensics moderator begins this at the beginning of September. Regional meets are held three times each year followed by the final tournament. Forensics coaching takes place after school.
- **Leadership Team-** The students are given an opportunity to developed leadership skills to enhance their ability to be successful.
- **PJAS**—Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science is an extracurricular science program. It provides a great opportunity for students to excel in the science area. Students of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade who choose to participate apply the scientific method to a science idea. Work on these projects begins in October after the Middle School Science Teacher makes a thorough presentation. An oral presentation of the project is given at a regional competition meet. If the project presentation is a first place, the student is given the opportunity to present his/her project at the state competition level held annually at Penn State University.

## **VII. AUXILIARY SERVICES**

The following services are offered through the Intermediate Unit:

### **ACT 89 SERVICES**

Intermediate Unit personnel work with and provide support to students in remedial math and reading. These teachers, in collaboration with the classroom teacher, identify educational needs and design educational interventions and strategies to help a child succeed.

### **Speech/Language**

Speech and language services are also provided through Act 89 funding. This is a special service offered to students to enhance communication skills that directly impact social and academic interactions.

### **Psychological Testing**

A certified psychologist is assigned to our school. Psychological testing is available by parent request or at the recommendation of the teacher in consultation with the principal. Parents make the final decision. Results are formally reported to parents, principal and teachers along with a list of recommendations made by the psychologist. **THIS INFORMATION IS KEPT CONFIDENTIAL** and not shared with anyone without parent permission.



### **Counseling**

A certified counselor provides individual and small group counseling sessions to children in grades K-8. Children are referred by parents, principal, and teacher and through self-referral. Individual counseling requires parent permission.

At St. Margaret of Scotland School, we value the social and emotional development of your child as much as their academic growth and success. Throughout the school year, the counselor from the Allegheny Intermediate Unit will be visiting classrooms to present lessons on topics including conflict resolution, anger management, feelings social skills, etc. The administrator and counselor will base the topics and grade levels chosen according to the needs of the building. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the school office.

### **Gifted Program**

Admission to the Gifted Program for students in the local school district is based on results of standardized academic testing, tests of cognitive skills, and academic performance. Students can be recommended by the teacher or a parent who submits a letter to the principal. St. Margaret of Scotland School completes the necessary forms and forwards them to the school district.

### **Student Assistance Program**

Act 211 of 1990 mandates the Student Assistance Program (E-SAP) in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is a comprehensive program of prevention, intervention, and support for students in grades K-12. The members of the Team are the principal and faculty members of the school who have received special training through Approved Agencies.

The program exists in order to promote the growth and development of the child. The team members work with students who are experiencing behavior difficulties which impact their social, emotional, and educational progress.

Faculty and/or parents make referrals for the program. Once the Team has received a referral, classroom teachers are asked to complete a form which helps identify the behaviors. The Team then makes informed assumptions as to what is needed to help the student, conveys this information to classroom teachers, parents/guardians and evaluates the results. If necessary, after consultation with parents, appropriate referrals are made to outside agencies.

Team members must maintain all information regarding students and their families under **safeguard of privacy and confidentiality**. Access is limited to those who have a legitimate educational interest

## VIII. ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND SCHOOL POLICIES

### Technology Policy

#### Guideline for "Internet Use Policy" Implementation and Practice St. Margaret of Scotland School

This guideline is established to ensure understanding and application of St. Margaret of Scotland School Internet Use Policy. St. Margaret of Scotland School reserves the right to amend these guidelines at any time. It is understood that the administration of St. Margaret of Scotland School will inform parents/guardians of any changes made in these Guidelines via the school's monthly newsletter. **Students' parents and/or guardians are required to review these guidelines with their child(ren) and complete and return the attached parent/guardian consent form.**

This guideline includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:

Information and news from a wide variety of sources and research institutions  
Public domain and shareware software of all types  
Discussion groups  
Access to any educational institutions and libraries.

#### Etiquette

Be polite when sending written messages to others  
Appropriate language is expected in all messages  
Anything pertaining to illegal activity is expressly forbidden  
Do not reveal access information, personal or otherwise  
Do not disrupt others' use of the Internet access  
All users should remember that deleted materials can be retrieved.

The following actions, which are not inclusive, are considered unacceptable actions by the administration of St. Margaret of Scotland School:

Placing unlawful information on the Internet  
Using the Internet for non-school related activities  
Sending messages that are likely to result in loss of the recipients work or systems  
Using the Internet for commercial purposes  
Using the Internet for political lobbying that does not support the expressed philosophy and tenets of the Catholic Church  
Sending or receiving copyrighted material without permission  
Plagiarism  
Using Internet access to send or retrieve pornographic material, inappropriate file text, files dangerous to the integrity of the system, violent or threatening material or messages  
Circumventing security measures on school or remote computers or networks  
Vandalism  
Falsifying one's identity

**Individual Student Internet Use Contract**

Parents/Guardians:

Be advised that your child(ren) will not be permitted to access St. Margaret of Scotland School's Internet access until this agreement is signed, dated, and returned.

**Student(s) Agreement:**

I have read the St. Margaret of Scotland School Policy on Internet Access and the guidelines established from that policy. I understand fully and agree to abide by the policy statement and the guideline statements expressed or implied.

Each child in the household who attends St. Margaret of Scotland School, grades 2-8, must sign this agreement.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature : \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Agreement:**

I have read the St. Margaret of Scotland School Internet Access Policy and the guidelines established from that policy. I understand fully the information that is contained therein. I agree to not hold school administration and faculty responsible for materials my child(ren) acquires as a result of inappropriate Internet use.

I accept full financial responsibility if and when my child(ren) access the Internet without an account on equipment provided on the school site.

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Return this document to St. Margaret of Scotland School via your oldest child's homeroom teacher.

## **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Sexual harassment constitutes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate oral, written, computer generated, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when made by any student to another student. Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to, verbal harassment or abuse, pressure for sexual activity, repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications, and unwelcome touching. Students/Parents are required to report this information to the principal.

Violation of this policy will result in appropriate student discipline, subject to this Student Handbook. This may include the loss of privileges and/or criminal or legal proceedings if a law has been violated.

## **Non-Violence Policy**

It is the responsibility of the administration to provide as safe an environment as possible for all students.

Therefore, the following directives will be enforced in school and at all school-related activities.

- If a child attacks another student, verbally or physically, in any context, it is against school policy and he/she will be penalized according to the following directives.
- If a child is attacked, verbally or physically, it is the victim's responsibility to remove him/herself from the situation and seek adult help. The moment the victim retaliates, all parties will be penalized. They will be removed from class for the remainder of the day and will receive a written warning.
- If any additional infraction(s) occur within the school year the student will receive an in-school suspension(s). The length of the suspension or an expulsion will be determined by the principal depending on the severity of the attack.

## **Weapons Policy**

Any person carrying a weapon onto school property—including, but not limited to, a school building, outdoor areas, outdoor facilities, vehicles used to transport students, or school-related activities—poses a clear and present danger to other students and staff. For the purpose of this policy, a weapon is defined to be a gun, knife, laser pointer or any other article that could be used to cause injury. Such a person in possession of a weapon violates state criminal statutes and school regulations and shall be subject to the following discipline and penalty (Diocesan policy 560.03):

Parents will be immediately notified.

The local police will be called.

The student will be expelled.

## **Drug and Alcohol Policy**

- St. Margaret of Scotland School has a zero tolerance policy for drugs and alcohol. No drugs or drug related paraphernalia are tolerated at SMS. (Ex., inhalants, cigarettes).
- No alcohol-based products of any kind will be tolerated at SMS (ex, Binaca, anti-germicidal gels, cologne, hair spray, and aerosol deodorants).
- If any of these substances are found on a student in school or at any school-related function, the following will occur:

The sponsoring adult will hold the student.

The principal will be notified immediately.

The parent will be notified immediately. If it is an after-school function, the parent must come to pick up the student at the function.

If it is at an after-school function, the parent will be responsible for bringing the student to school on the next school day. At this time, the parent and the student will meet with the principal, the SAP (Student Assistance Program) Team, the school counselor and the pastor.

The school will find a program to help the child and will work to help put the program in place.

If the parent/student do not cooperate and participate in the program, the student will be expelled immediately.

## **Expulsion Rational and Procedure**

An expulsion is a severe punishment and will only be applied in very serious circumstances. Every attempt will be made during earlier offenses, if any, to provide guidance and counseling to the students and parents under the direction of the principal and pastor.

An expulsion may be necessary for persistent and willful disregard of school rules and regulations. The following examples are illustrative but not exhaustive:

chronic undesirable conduct detrimental to the physical and/or moral well-being of self or other students

continued malicious disobedience or disrespect for school authority

continued refusal by parents and/or students to comply with school policies.

An expulsion may also be necessary for a single serious incident or event or situation involving disregard for or a clear violation of a school rule or regulation. The following examples are illustrative but not exhaustive:

selling or using drugs or alcohol

violation of the Weapons Policy

physical abuse of other students or staff

arson

theft

refusal to adhere to the Technology Policy

### **Locker Search Policy**

- Lockers/desks are the property of SMS and are placed in the school for the convenience of the student. Because lockers can conceal many “items” and for the safety of all school students, the administration reserves the right to search lockers at any time during the school year. If you do not agree with this policy, your child will not be issued a school locker/desk.

### **Medicine at School Policy**

The school is not permitted to dispense any type of medication to students. If the student is under a doctor’s care and must take medication during the school day, the following policy and procedure must be followed:

Parents or guardians must obtain a written prescription from their doctor to be directed to the school nurse.

The prescription must include the student’s name, diagnosis, kind of medicine, and the time and amount of medication to be given.

Medications are to be locked in a secure place in the school office.

Non-prescription (over-the-counter) medication **must not** be sent to school without a prescription from a doctor. Parents or guardians may come and personally administer medication that they wish their child to have during the day. If this is to be done, parents are asked to notify the school office in advance.

Prescriptions are to be updated each school year.

If a student has an inhaler because of asthma, this must be kept in the school office.

## DRESS CODE

St. Margaret of Scotland School is a Catholic elementary school that maintains the right to establish a uniform dress code for its students. It is recognized that proper school attire and good grooming are conducive to a student's educational and social development. This Dress Code was developed:

- to promote a Christian atmosphere
- to free children for academic concentration
- to de-emphasize competition among children regarding clothing
- to allow more economical dress for school,
- to provide some choice to accommodate individual differences.

This Dress Code is required of all students in grades first through eighth grade. This policy is intended to maintain a standard of dress that is neat, economical, modest and attractive.

### Pre-School and Kindergarten

There is no uniform code for Pre-School and Kindergarten. Students may wear casual, neat clothing. Tennis shoes are permitted.

### Boys—Grades 1–8

#### *Trousers/Walking Shorts*

- Tailored navy blue or khaki
- Worn with a belt or fitted at the waist
- Must be worn at the waist
- **Shorts may only be worn beginning April 15<sup>th</sup> through October 15<sup>th</sup>**

#### *Ties/Mass Attire*

- ***Ties must be worn with dress shirt on days the student will attend Mass***
- ***Girls must wear jumpers, skirts or skorts.***

### Girls—Grades 1–8

#### *Uniform*

- Uniform plaid, khaki or navy skirt. **Skirts must be at the student's knee.**
- Uniform plaid, khaki or navy jumper
- Walking shorts or skorts – uniform plaid, khaki or navy. **Shorts or skorts must be at the knee.**
- Tailored navy blue or khaki slacks belted at the waist
- Girls are permitted to wear dress pants for Mass

## **Girls and Boys Grades 1-8**

### ***Blouses/Dress or knit shirts/turtle necks***

- White or navy with collar (short or long sleeve). T-shirts worn under the uniform shirt must be white without logos.
- Oxford or Peter Pan collar for girls
- **Must be fully tucked in**
- **No logos except St. Margaret**

### ***Sweaters/Hoodies/Sweatshirts***

- Solid white, navy or gray
- Round/V-neck, pull over or cardigan
- Must be worn with a shirt or turtleneck
- No logos except for the St. Margaret logo
- **Hoodies may not be worn in class during the months of May, June, August or September.**

### ***Shoes***

- Low-heel or flat-soled, closed shoes
- Loafers or athletic shoes
- **No sandals, open shoes, boots ,or shoes with wheels**

### ***Socks***

- Must be worn .
- Solid color – white, navy, black or gray
- Nylons or tights may be worn by the girls – white, navy, or black
- leggings

### **Miscellaneous**

#### ***Jewelry***

- Watches are permitted
- **Pierced earrings are permitted on the lower lobe.** Only one earring per lobe is permitted.
- Bracelets, rings and necklaces are not permitted.



### *Hair*

- Neatly groomed, off the face
- Outlandish or inappropriate styles that cause distraction to the educational environment are unacceptable.

### *Make-Up*

- *No make-up at anytime.*
- *No perfume or after shave.*

### **Dress-Down Days**

- Clothing must be neat and modest (not too short or tight).
- Jeans are permitted but must not have holes or rips in them.
- T-shirts with inappropriate words or pictures are not permitted.
- Sleeveless tops and tight clothing are not permitted (this includes tank tops of any kind).

### **Dress-Up Days**

- Clothing will be the dress clothes that the students wear for a special occasion.
- **Skirts must be at the knee.**
- T-Shirts and jeans are inappropriate.
- Sleeveless dresses must have three finger wide straps.

\*\*Please note: Any inappropriate styles or clothing that cause distraction to the educational environment are unacceptable. It is at the Principal's discretion whether a change of clothing is needed.

## **TUITION PAYMENT POLICY**

St. Margaret of Scotland School is an important parish ministry that emphasizes academic excellence in a value-oriented Catholic environment. Because significant expenditures are necessary to provide such quality education, it is necessary to charge tuition and to seek compliance with the payment schedule. Parents enrolling their children in the school are expected to fulfill this responsibility.

### **Tuition Collection Policy**

St. Margaret of Scotland School is an important available ministry which emphasizes academic excellence within a value-oriented Catholic environment. Because significant expenditures are required to provide a quality education, it is necessary to charge tuition and to seek compliance with the payment schedule. Parents enrolling their children in the school are expected to fulfill the following responsibilities:

The payment schedule extends over a 10 or 12 month period with tuition installments due on the first of each month, beginning in July (12) or September (10) ending in June. Payments will be made through Smart Tuition.

Because of the importance of maintaining a continuous cash flow to meet ongoing school expenses, it is necessary that the payment plan be enforced. If a family is temporarily burdened by a financial problem, a parent should contact the principal in advance of the due date. If such unusual circumstances exist, the school authorities will arrange for an alternate payment plan.

If payments for tuition and fees are not made on schedule and parents have not contacted the school, the following steps may occur:

- Access to the on-line grading system may be denied.
- Report cards may be withheld, but not if they are distributed in the classroom or any public forum.
- . The student may be asked to transfer at the end of the second quarter or at the end of the year.
- Student records will not be sent to another school, with the exception of health and discipline records which must be sent.
- No student may receive a transcript or a diploma.

## **Scholarship Monies**

Scholarship monies are available for eligible families. The FACTS Management System application is used. These applications are assessed by an independent evaluator. This one application is used for Scholastic Opportunities Scholarships, Bishop's Education Fund and the Angel Fund and must be filed by March 15<sup>th</sup>. Application forms are available in the school's office.

## **IX. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Illness**

It is often difficult to decide if your child should stay home from school when complaining of illness. An objective sign is an elevated temperature. It is recommended that a child be kept home from school until the temperature has remained normal (below 100°) for 24 hours.

If a child has a temperature of 100° or more, skin rash, diarrhea/vomiting, strep throat, or evidence of lice, the child will be sent home. Parents are asked to use discretion in sending their children to school if they display any of these symptoms. Please inform the school office if your child becomes sick with a contagious illness. Notes will be sent home with the other children to warn parents of contact and incubation of communicable diseases.

### **Accident and Injury**

In the case of accident or illness at school, parents are contacted to take the child home, to the doctor, or hospital. It is important for your child's safety and comfort, as well as the effective operation of the office, that emergency information needed to locate parents is available for each child and that this information is kept up-to-date by parents.

Parents of children who have any type of physical disorder should contact the principal, school nurse, or teachers to make them aware of the problem. All cases of head lice should be reported immediately.

### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills are held monthly. Exit directions, which are posted in prominent places in each room, are used. **No one may remain in the building during fire drills.** When the students hear the bell, they are to leave the room quickly and quietly in single file. Students remain outside until summoned back to class.

Students are to remain in absolute silence during all fire drills. Misconduct of any nature is to be reported to the principal. This is a very serious offense and will be dealt with immediately.

### **Weather Emergency Drills**

Weather emergency drills are practiced twice a year. Teachers follow the policy governing weather emergencies for student safety. Students must maintain silence at all times during a weather emergency drill. Staff assists all handicapped students.

**Visitors**

For security reasons, anyone entering St. Margaret of Scotland School is to report to the office or receptionist immediately regardless of the purpose of the visit. *For the safety of all students, a visitor's badge must be worn.* Communication with teachers and students will be handled by the school office and will be done in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process in the school.

Any articles or items to be left for a student will be left in the school office or with the receptionist. This will eliminate any unnecessary interruptions to classes and instruction.

**Security**

All doors to the school will be closed and locked during school hours. Parents and visitors should use the buzzer on the main school door to gain entrance to the building.

**Playground**

Every school day, weather permitting, the students enjoy an outside break supervised by a staff member. Organized play is encouraged.

Students are never to leave the playground area without the permission of the principal and the knowledge of the playground monitor. In case of illness or accident, the student is to report to the school office.

The following rules are to be observed on the playground:

Not to re-enter the building unless for an emergency

Display good sportsmanship and exercise self-control

Play in assigned areas.

Stay on school grounds (This includes not retrieving a ball that has gone off school grounds.)

Obey the directives of the playground monitors, courteously and promptly.

Stop playing at once when the first bell rings and walk quietly to line when the second bell rings.

If inclement weather makes it necessary to stay indoors at lunchtime, classroom rules are to be observed:

Engage in quiet activities.

## **School Nurse/Nurse Practitioner**

One school nurse is assigned to St. Margaret of Scotland School each year and is present in the building on Tuesday. She is also available in any emergency situations. The responsibilities of the school nurse include:

Keeping updated health records for all students.

Screening students for hearing—grades K, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup>.

Assuring the completion of a physical examination before entrance to school and in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade

Screening students for vision—yearly.

Scoliosis screening—grade 7.

Recording height and weight for students—yearly.

Recording required immunizations. (Seventh grade: Hepatitis B and 1 dose chicken pox vaccine.)

## **Dentist/Dental Hygienist**

The Dentist/Dental Hygienist makes routine visits to our school and is responsible for maintaining all dental records. The Pennsylvania School Health Law requires dental examinations for students entering grades K, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>. These grades were selected because they represent critical periods of growth and development in a child's life.

We recommend that your family dentist do these examinations. School dental health evaluations will be provided for students who do not furnish proof of a private dental examination within the last six months. These forms are given out to the students before school ends so that appointments can be scheduled over the summer.

## X. DISCIPLINE

### Introduction

St. Margaret of Scotland School administration and faculty are committed to teach and model Gospel values to encourage students to live their lives as a reflection of Christ. The philosophy of the school strives to recognize and respect the dignity of each person and to offer a positive, Christ-centered, safe learning environment based on the Social Teachings of the Church. Discipline is considered an element of moral guidance not as a form of punishment.

Every teacher and staff member shares the responsibility to model appropriate behavior and to support the structure necessary for learning self-discipline. Students are encouraged to assume responsibility for their actions, develop self - control, and accept responsibility and consequences for inappropriate behavior.

A Christ-centered school environment fosters the following behaviors:

Recognizing and fostering the uniqueness and dignity of each individual  
Nurturing respect in all relationships involving school and parish community  
Developing a sense of rights and responsibilities and commitment to the entire school and parish community.

Social skills are taught, modeled, practiced, and infused into the daily life and experience of the school family.

### Guiding Principles

The following seven principles are the basis of Catholic Social Teachings and are the principles that guide us in all of our interactions.

We believe in the **life** and **dignity** of the human person. Each person is sacred.

We believe we are called to **family, community, and participation**. It is our duty to support each other by our actions.

We believe that we have **rights** and **responsibilities**. Every person has the fundamental right to life and responsibility to and for one another.

We believe that we have an **obligation** to the **poor** and **vulnerable**. We are called to put the rights of others before our own.

We believe that we are called to **care for God's creation**. We are all stewards of the earth..

We believe that **solidarity** is our call. We are one family regardless of our differences.

We believe that **workers have rights** and that **work has dignity**. Work is a form of participating in God's creation.

## **Expectations**

As a matter of safety, students are expected to behave in the following manner:

### Before school

- to arrive after 8:00AM
- to gather in the designated area
- to engage in quiet conversation
- to line up quietly when the school bell rings

### In school

- to walk quietly through the halls
- to use proper language at all times
- to follow the dress code for school days and dress up/down days
- to respect school property and the property of other students
- to have a note from their parent/guardian if they change their mode of school transportation
- to leave toys, hand held video games & cosmetics, at home.

### In the classroom

- to follow the classroom rules of each teacher
- to be responsible for submitting homework on time and making up assignments missed within a reasonable amount of time
- to have a respectful attitude toward teachers and one another
- to be responsible for appropriate supplies
- to be honest in all communications
- to use computers and school equipment appropriately
- to respect our school by not chewing gum
- to respect each student by not taking or violating another students personal desk/locker property
- to never enter a classroom unless a teacher or designated adult is present.

### During recess

- to never re-enter the building unless for an emergency
- to display good sportsmanship and exercise self control
- to play in assigned areas only
- to stay on school grounds at all times (This includes not retrieving a ball that has gone off school grounds.)
- to obey the directives of playground monitors, courteously and promptly.
- to stop playing at the first bell and walk quietly to their designated line when the second bell rings.

#### During lunch

- to remain seated until finished eating and the "recess" bell rings
- to clean up, pick up all papers, scraps of food, etc., and dispose of them properly
- to obey playground supervisors at all times

#### After school

- to follow dismissal procedures
- to walk to assigned place to wait until bus or car ride arrives
- to leave the school grounds immediately

#### At athletic events and assemblies

- to practice good sportsmanship as spectators and participants
- to show respect towards coaches, referees, and visiting teams
- to maintain an appropriate silence during special performances

#### Outside school

- to behave responsibly off school property. (If the principal is made aware of misconduct off school property of a child recognized to be a student in St. Margaret of Scotland School, parents may be contacted; however, it is important to note that the school is not responsible for student's actions that occur off school property.)

Principal will forward disciplinary notices given by public school bus drivers to parents to support the disciplinary report of the bus driver.

### **Consequences**

Please be aware that any disrespect, destructive act, or inappropriate behavior will be dealt with accordingly. If an individual student does not meet his/her personal responsibility for good conduct, the school may discipline the student.

The severity or repetitive nature of non-compliance to the above expectations will determine the appropriate consequences. To remediate unacceptable behavior, the following actions may be taken:

- Teacher/student conference to develop a plan for remediation
- Notification to parents
- Administrative referral
- Referral to the E-SAP Team
- School service required
- Loss of recess
- Detention
- Denial of participation in school activities, including sports
- School probation
- Suspension (**In-school/Out-of-school**)



Discipline is the key to good conduct and to respecting the rights of others and is essential to learning. In the event of a serious act of misbehavior or repeated acts of misbehavior, a student may serve either an in-school or out-of-school suspension. If misconduct continues, a student may be asked to leave the school. These decisions rest with the administration and may be necessary for the benefit of the total program.

Classroom standards and expectations for student behavior vary according to age and are determined by the individual teacher. If behavior warrants action, a student may be issued a detention by any member of the faculty. Depending on the severity, this detention may be served either during recess or after school hours. After school detentions will be held from 3:00PM to 4:00PM in a classroom with a teacher present. If the detention is after school, parents are responsible for transportation.

### **DISCIPLINE CODE – MERIT PROGRAM – 5<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADES**

- PK THROUGH 4<sup>TH</sup> GRADES WILL USE DISCIPLINE POLICIES STATED ELSEWHERE IN THIS HANDBOOK AND ESTABLISHED IN EACH CLASSROOM. YOUNGER STUDENTS MAY RECEIVE ADDITIONAL WARNINGS/PROMPTS, AS THESE ARE TEACHABLE SOCIAL MOMENTS; STUDENTS WILL BENEFIT FROM THE DIRECTED INSTRUCTION RATHER THAN THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES.

Rationale:

The code has been devised to provide guidelines for all persons responsible for the education of the student. The purpose of the code is to assure the safety and welfare of all students within St. Margaret of Scotland School and to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning. Any and all actions that may disrupt, impair or hamper the educational process must be controlled, minimized, or eliminated. This can only be done by considerable effort and understanding on the part of all concerned. *Because of their day-to-day interaction with the students, teachers have the primary responsibility for identifying infractions and applying disciplinary action.* Student accountability is the foundation for successful behaviors. Therefore, three key principles will be followed to guide efforts to improve school behaviors, issues and problems:

1. TEACHER INTERVENTION WITH STUDENT – the teacher will reach out to the student in an attempt to resolve the issue, behavior, or problem.
2. TEACHER INTERVENTION WITH PARENT – the teacher will reach out to the parent with either a phone call or meeting to resolve the issue, behavior, or problem.
3. PRINCIPAL INTERVENTION WITH TEACHER, PARENT, AND STUDENT – a joint solution will be decided upon.

Those actions constituting serious offenses should require disciplinary action of a different nature than minor infractions. The Pastor and Principal in each case shall have the final responsibility for determining the action to be followed.

**Merit Card Program:**

How does the Merit Program work?

- ❖ An orientation for all students will take place during the first week of school.
- ❖ After this orientation period, each student will receive his or her first quarter Merit Card. On the merit card will be 6 merits.
- ❖ Each student, at the start of each quarter, will receive a fresh card.
- ❖ If and when a student is guilty of a minor infraction, a merit will be taken away, their card will be signed by the teacher.
- ❖ The teacher will send a message through the Option C conduct portal, to the parent informing them of the demerit. Also, the following will apply: Loss of 3, 4 & 5 merits = 1 lunch/recess detention each. Loss of 6 merits = Detention for 1 hour after school or five lunch/recess detentions.

Repeated loss of merit over several months results in a probationary status. A meeting with the Principal, parent(s) and student will develop a program for a remediation. Should this fail, conditions for expulsion of students will apply.

It is believed that the Merit Card Program is a positive approach to student behavior. (A reward system for good behavior)

**Academic/Uniform**

<b>Minor Infractions</b>	<b>Disciplinary Action (at the discretion of the teacher)</b>
Failure to follow dress code *Warning issued prior to loss of merit	Loss of Merit
Lack of preparation for class	Loss of Merit
Homework not done or incomplete (includes materials to be signed)	Loss of Merit

**Behavior**

<b>Minor Infractions</b>	<b>Disciplinary Action (at the discretion of the teacher)</b>
Use of school equipment and facilities without supervision	Loss of Merit
Being late for class	Loss of Merit
Loitering in the hall or in the lavatories	Loss of Merit
Chewing gum or eating candy	Loss of Merit
Writing or passing notes in class	Loss of Merit
Misuse of school property (includes books, lockers, and desks)	Loss of Merit
Inappropriate handling of food	Loss of Merit
Disruptive behavior (classroom, playground, bus, etc.)	Loss of Merit

<b>Major Infractions</b>	<b>Disciplinary Action</b>
Throwing Food in the Cafeteria	Loss of 6 Merits
Leaving school grounds without written permission	Loss of 6 Merits
Fighting	Loss of 6 Merits
Disrespect to teachers, persons in authority, or fellow students	Loss of 6 Merits
Cheating (Academic)	Loss of 6 Merits
Profane, offensive language, obscene gestures/literature	Loss of 6 Merits
Truancy	Loss of 6 Merits
Stealing	Loss of 6 Merits
Extortion/Bullying	Loss of 6 Merits
Vandalism	Loss of 6 Merits
Forging parent signature	Loss of 6 Merits
Willful disobedience, as determined by repeated (4 times) minor offenses	Loss of 6 Merits
*Possession of an object with intent to endanger the welfare of fellow students. (Diocesan policy)	Suspension pending expulsion
*Weapons. (Diocesan policy)	Suspension pending expulsion
*Drug/Alcohol use	Refer to Diocesan policy

\*Hearing/Review Committee to be comprised of Pastor, Principal, child's teacher.

## **SUSPENSION**

Suspension occurs only after every possible resource has been exhausted in severe disruptions. A student may be temporarily suspended by the Principal for a serious infraction of school regulations or for repeated detentions. The length of suspensions should be from one to ten days. All suspensions become effective only after the Principal meets and/or discusses the situation with the parents/guardians. However, no prior notice is required if health, safety or the welfare of the school community is threatened. A Notice of Suspension will be kept on file in the Principal's office and a copy will also contain an agreement between the student, parents, and the Principal describing the student's future cooperation in a program designed to resolve the student's problem(s). Some causes for suspension are:

- ❖ Serious bodily harm or possibility of harm to oneself or others
- ❖ Serious repeated disruption of the school program
- ❖ Destruction of school/parish property
- ❖ Insubordination
- ❖ Possession of tobacco products

Suspension should be held in school, and the student not marked absent, unless the offense is particularly intolerable, in which case, out of school suspension is the remedy. Out of school suspensions follow the same guidelines as in-school suspensions except that the time should not exceed more than three (3) days during which time assignments are given in the various subject areas. The parents will meet during this period with the Principal and teachers to define expectations upon the student's return.

When there is an out-of-school suspension/expulsion the Diocesan Educational Consultant should receive a copy of the Notice of Suspension/Expulsion.

### **EXPULSION OF STUDENTS**

Expulsion is a severe punishment and should only be applied as a last resort and after serious deliberation. The expulsion process should be as follows:

1. EVERY ATTEMPT should be made during earlier offenses to provide guidance and counseling to student and parents under the direction of the Pastor and Principal.
2. Although the authority of expulsion rests with the Pastor and Principal, consultation should be made with the Superintendent for Catholic Schools prior to any final decision.
3. A written report of expulsion is to be completed as soon as possible and forwarded to the Department of Catholic Schools.
4. Parents may appeal the decision to the Department for Catholic Schools.

Reasons for which a student may be expelled are:

1. Extremely grave infractions of school regulations such as the selling or use of drugs or alcohol, possession of knives, guns or other weapons on school property, physical abuse of students or staff, theft, indecent behavior or arson.
2. Chronic undesirable conduct detrimental to the physical and/or moral well-being of self or other students.
3. Continued WILLFUL disobedience or disrespect for school authority.
4. Continued refusal by parents and/or students to comply with school policies.

## **BULLYING**

### **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

Bullying can be defined as repeated (three or more) and systematic harassment and attacks on others. Bullying can be perpetrated by individuals or groups. Bullying takes many forms, and can include many different behaviors, such as:

- ❖ Physical violence and attacks
- ❖ Verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs
- ❖ Threats and intimidation
- ❖ Extortion or stealing of money and possessions
- ❖ Exclusion from the peer group

Racially or ethnically-based verbal abuse and gender-based put-downs are also found in the bullying situation.

### **What can parents do if their children are being bullied?**

Work with the school immediately to make sure your child is safe, that effective consequences are applied toward the bully, and that monitoring at school is adequate. Advocate for involvement of the bully's parents. If the bullying is happening on the way to and from school, arrange for the child to get to school with older, supportive children, or take him or her until other interventions can take place.

### **What to do if your child is aggressive or bullies others?**

- ❖ Talk to your child, talk to his or her teachers and administrators. Keep in mind that a bully will try to deny or minimize his/her wrong-doing.
- ❖ Arrange for an effective, non-violent consequence, which is in proportion with the severity of your child's actions, and his or her age and stage of development. Corporal punishment carries the message that "might is right".
- ❖ Co-operate with the school in modifying your child's aggressive behavior. Frequent communication with teachers and/or administrators is important to find out how your child is doing in changing his or her behavior.

The following behaviors will result in immediate administrative referrals and can result in referrals to law enforcement or other government agencies:

Violations of weapons policy  
Violations of the drug/alcohol policy  
Any purposeful action that results in bodily harm to another

## **Student Responsibility**

Teachers are to encourage students to meet their responsibilities enumerated in school handbook:

- Be accountable for their actions at all times
- Respect the rights of others, including the right to learn in an environment that is orderly and disciplined
- Recognize that all administrators, teachers and monitors assume the authority of parent/guardians to all students during school hours and at all school functions
- Attend school regularly and punctually
- Maintain habits of neatness and personal cleanliness; adhere to the dress code
- Be prompt, thorough and neat in the completion of class work and homework
- Obey all school regulations
- Respect personal property, school property and the property of others.

## **Discipline Policy Applies**

- While attending school
- While arriving at or departing from school
- While on school property for any reason
- While riding school buses or vans
- While waiting at the bus stop
- While attending any school related functions, e.g. sports events, field trips, assemblies, skating parties, church activities, community programs, Brownies/Girl Scouts, after school practices, etc.

***The safety of any student on school property after school hours is the responsibility of the adult leader.***

Order within any educational setting permits learning to progress, as it should. A disciplined person and a disciplined atmosphere promotes:

- Individual and group learning
- Development of self control
- Expected individual and group social behavior
- Self respect and respect of others
- Making right choices and accepting consequences of choices
- Good listening
- Recognizes one's rights and the rights of others
- Pride in self and in one's work
- The implementation of Christian principles of community, charity, kindness, justice, good sportsmanship, etc.
- An emphasis on doing one's best.

St. Margaret of Scotland School realizes that the foundation for all of the above is taught and caught, in the home. With this in mind the student is expected to display proper behavior at all times.

St. Margaret of Scotland School

Bullying Notification Form

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Location of Incident:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Offence(s) pertaining to the referral: (Check all that apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Teasing <input type="checkbox"/> Name calling <input type="checkbox"/> Gossiping / Rumor Starting / Spreading <input type="checkbox"/> Purposefully Embarrassing <input type="checkbox"/> Pushing/Shoving <input type="checkbox"/> Name Calling with Profanity <input type="checkbox"/> Purposeful Exclusion <input type="checkbox"/> Repeated Classroom Disruption	<input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Cruelty <input type="checkbox"/> Racial/Religious Slurs or Insults <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Fighting <input type="checkbox"/> Extortion <input type="checkbox"/> Intimidation/Threats <input type="checkbox"/> Destruction of Property <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Details: _____ - _____ -	

Previous Interventions Used: (Check all that apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Loss of Privileges <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal Reprimand <input type="checkbox"/> Conference with Student <input type="checkbox"/> Phone Call Home <input type="checkbox"/> Conference with Parents <input type="checkbox"/> Sent to Principal's Office	<input type="checkbox"/> Guidance Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of Recess <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Contract <input type="checkbox"/> No Bullying Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Details: _____ - _____ -	

-BELOW IS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY-	
Action(s) taken for Referral: (Check all that apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Counseling <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of Recess <input type="checkbox"/> Suspension – Out of school <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> No Bullying Contract <input type="checkbox"/> No Contact Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Quiet Lunch <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Contract
Details:	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Note: Students in grades K, 1, and 2 may receive additional warnings/prompts as these are teachable social moments; students will benefit from the directed instruction rather than the negative consequences.

**Responsibility of Faculty and Staff:**

1. Anyone observing aggressive behavior or hearing about it from students will complete a St. Margaret of Scotland School Bullying Notification form.
2. The principal or her delegate will investigate (if behavior was reported by students and not seen by faculty and staff) and identify the appropriate consequence. The student and the principal will call parents at that time.



ST. MARGARET OF SCOTLAND SCHOOL  
915 ALICE STREET  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15220

It is important that parents/guardians, students and staff know the policies and procedures of St. Margaret of Scotland School. To ensure that the process of communication is complete, please review the revised Parent/Student Handbook with your children.

When you have reviewed the contents, please sign and return this form to the school office via your child's homeroom teacher.

**Family Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Children's Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**I have reviewed and understand the contents of the Parent/Student Handbook of St. Margaret of Scotland School.**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Furthermore, please sign and return the St. Margaret of Scotland School Internet Use Policy. This signed document will permit your child access to the computer lab Internet system.

Thank you.